

Worst Foods for Digestion

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Fried Foods

They're high in fat and can bring on diarrhea. Rich sauces, fatty cuts of meat, and buttery or creamy desserts can cause problems, too.

Choose roasted or baked foods and light sauces that feature vegetables instead of butter or cream.



Citrus Fruits

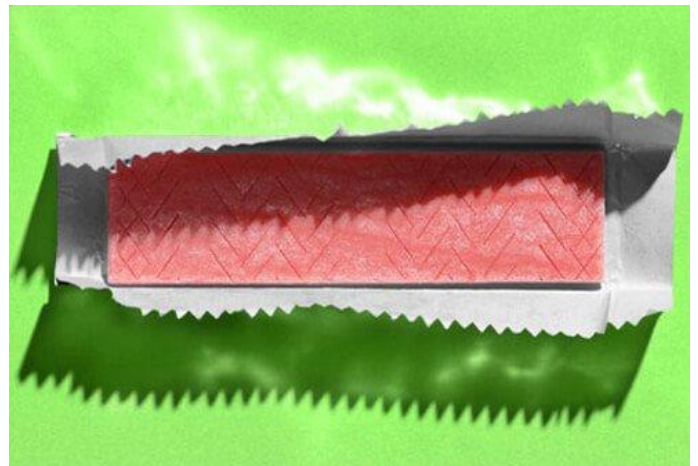
Because they're high in fiber, they can give some folks an upset stomach. Go easy on oranges, grapefruit, and other citrus fruits if your belly doesn't feel right.



Artificial Sugar

Chew too much sugar-free gum made with sorbitol and you might get cramps and diarrhea. Food made with this artificial sweetener can cause the same problems.

The FDA warns that you might get diarrhea if you eat 50 or more grams a day of sorbitol, though even much lower amounts reportedly cause trouble for some people.



Too Much Fiber

Foods high in this healthy carb, like whole grains and vegetables, are good for digestion. But if you start eating lots of them, your digestive system may have trouble adjusting. The result: gas and bloating. So step up the amount of fiber you eat gradually.



Beans

They're loaded with healthy protein and fiber, but they also have hard-to-digest sugars that cause gas and cramping. Your body doesn't have enzymes that can break them down. Bacteria in your gut do the work instead, giving off gas in the process. Try this tip to get rid of some of the troublesome sugars: Soak dried beans for at least 4 hours and pour off the water before cooking.



Cabbage and Its Cousins

Cruciferous vegetables, like broccoli and cabbage, have the same sugars that make beans gassy. Their high fiber can also make them hard to digest. It will be easier on your stomach if you cook them instead of eating raw.



Fructose

Foods sweetened with this -- including sodas, candy, fruit juice, and pastries -- are hard for some people to digest. That can lead to diarrhea, bloating, and cramps.



Spicy Foods

Some people get indigestion or heartburn after eating them, especially when it's a large meal.

Studies suggest the hot ingredient in chili peppers, called capsaicin, may be a culprit.



Dairy Products

If they trigger diarrhea, bloating, and gas, you may be "lactose intolerant." It means you don't have an enzyme that digests a sugar in milk and other forms of dairy. Avoid those foods or try an over-the-counter drop or pill that has the missing enzyme.



Peppermint

It can relax the muscle at the top of the stomach, which lets food move back into your esophagus. That can cause heartburn. Other culprits include chocolate or coffee.

Experts say you can lower the pressure that pushes the food back up if you lose extra weight, eat smaller portions, and don't lie down after eating.

Also, learn what foods give you problems, so you can avoid them.



Sources:

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