



**HARDEEP M. SINGH, M.D., F.A.C.P., A.G.A.F.**

Diplomate of the American Board of Internal Medicine  
and the Subspecialty Board of Gastroenterology

**Gastroenterology,  
Hepatology, Pancreaticobiliary Disease**

1010 West La Veta Avenue, Suite 570,  
Orange, CA 92868

16300 Sand Canyon, Suite 301,  
Irvine, CA 92618

Phone 714.835.7700 | Fax 714.835.8145

DrSingh@SouthernCalGI.com | SouthernCalGI.com

### **Dietary Recommendations for Gas/Flatulence**

Gas produced in the colon is from a healthy mix of bacteria. Most of these are odorless, but the sulfide ones are not. They rely on the beverages and food we swallow. The amount produced can vary for individuals – with males producing more flatus than females. This amount of gas can be controlled by modifying the soluble fiber in the diet.

Insoluble fiber is not acted on by colon bacteria, and so does not create colon gas. Soluble fiber dissolves in water and is fermented by colon bacteria, which then create colon gas. However, you should not eliminate soluble fiber entirely because it provides so many health benefits to the colon and body! The key is balance, so that the situation is tolerable for you.

Reducing the amount of sulfur-containing foods and beverages ingested can alter the composition of these gasses. Another type of recently discovered soluble fiber, referred to “prebiotic” (not to be confused with “probiotic”), can also aid this process by making the colon more acidic. Bacteria in the colon cannot grow in an acid environment.

So the first step to controlling flatus is to moderate the amount of sulfate you take. And the second step is to acidify your colon.

### **Foods which are particularly high in soluble fiber, and ought to be considered in moderation**

- Oats, in any form
- Apples, oranges, grapefruit, peaches, grapes, pears, cranberries, prunes
- Carrots, beets
- Beans
- Psyllium (found in supplements)

### **Direct sources of sulfate we ingest, may need to be regulated as well**

- Drinking water (20% may come from this alone)
- Beverages such as beer, wine, juices, and even milk
- Animal protein in the form of meat, fish and poultry
- Supplements used for bone and joint disorders (chondroitin, glucosamine sulfate, MSM)
- Carrageenan, a thickening agent in many prepared foods
- Dried Fruits
- Cruciferous vegetables (broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, Brussel sprouts)
- Peanuts and almonds

### **It's advised to increase consumption of prebiotic fiber sources (inulin and oligofructose)**

- Wheat
- Barley
- Asparagus, leeks, Jerusalem artichoke, chicory root

### **Other tips you may wish to consider**

- If you happen to have little or no flatus, then you are likely not getting an adequate amount of soluble prebiotic fiber in your diet!
- Chewing gum can contribute to flatus, due to all the air that is swallowed.
- Soaking, or over-cooking, beans may help reduce gas formation.
- Bean-o is an over-the-counter product that only works on the enzymes in beans – and only if it mixes with the beans while in the stomach.
- Not chewing well enough, or eating too fast, can also increase the amount of air that is swallowed with your food.
- Over-the-counter remedies like Gas-X or charcoal tablets have not been proven to be as effective as reducing sulfur in food and acidifying the colon.

These dietary recommendations are specifically meant for the condition which it treats.