

6 Tips to Reduce Belly Bloat

A large waist is linked to many health problems from high blood pressure to diabetes. The best way to battle your bulge is with diet and exercise, but you can reduce belly bloat by following these simple tips.

1. **Cut back on sodium.** Avoid salt, salt-based seasonings and highly processed foods, which can cause fluid retention and bloating. Keep your sodium intake to no more than 2,400 milligrams a day (roughly 1 teaspoon of salt).
2. **Eat carbohydrates in moderation.** Too many carbs can lead to bloating and temporary water weight gain. Aim for 45 to 55 percent of your diet from carbohydrates.
3. **Add more fiber to your diet.** Strive for 25 to 35 grams of fiber a day from fruits, vegetables, beans and grains. Fiber can help to reduce your waistline, control your blood sugar and lower your cholesterol.
4. **Avoid fried foods.** Not only do fatty foods contribute to excess abdominal fat, but they also take longer to digest, creating a heavy, bloated feeling.
5. **Stay hydrated.** Drinking water can help to flush sodium out of your body and reduce bloating. Try to drink 64 ounces of fluid per day. Water is best, but other beverages with little or no calories, caffeine or sodium are good choices, too.
6. **Reduce intake of artificial sweeteners.** Consumption of diet foods, nutrition bars and sugar-free candies can lead to excess gas and bloating.

