

# SIBO and Digestive Health

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In this class we will teach you some simple strategies to address the causes of SIBO, acid reflux, nausea and heartburn, and bowel irregularity. This will include self-massage maneuvers you can learn to do for yourself, and specific herbs and foods that help heal and resolve SIBO, support healthy bile flow and elimination, and provide foundational keys to overall digestive wellness.

## 5 Main Underlying Causes of SIBO

1. Poor hydrochloric acid production and low digestive fire
2. History of chronically poor elimination with occasional constipation and/or loose stools and an irritated intestinal lining
3. A diet high in refined sugar and processed foods
4. Medications
5. Stress – upward moving pressure/Vata

SIBO is an acronym for small intestine bacteria overgrowth and involves fermentation and inflammation in the intestines. This condition can be present in up to 90% of people living with digestive issues like IBS, obesity and liver issues. It can also be found in 2.5 -22% of healthy populations. SIBO and IBS (irritable bowel syndrome) symptoms are similar, these conditions are known as dysbiosis.

From an Ayurvedic perspective, SIBO starts in the stomach with the decrease of natural digestive acids and enzyme production. These acids are necessary not only to break down proteins, they also kill bad bacteria that may be in our food. Commonly used antacids turn off the production of the necessary hydrochloric acid, and opens the door for bad bugs to proliferate in the digestive system. Current studies show that acid reducing medication like PPI's (proton pump inhibitors) can have serious side effects. If you use a PPI like Prilosec chronically, you may want to talk to your doctor about switching to an H2 Blocker- Tagamet, Zantec or pepsin until you are able to primarily use dietary and herbal strategies.

The stomach and liver/gall bladder work as a team and have a sophisticated signaling system. When the stomach produces digestive acid, like HCl, the liver will produce bile to buffer the acids, and to digest fats. However, If the bile is thick and congested and doesn't flow into the small intestine, the stomach acids can linger causing inflammation in the delicate stomach lining. This eventually

leads to the body intelligence making the executive decision to turn acid production down, so as not to burn a hole in the stomach. This short term measure decreases digestive power which begins a host of digestive issues. i.e. *Helicobacter pylori* proliferates in a low stomach acid environment.

80% of your immune system happens in the 1/2 inch between the villi on the inside of your intestinal tract and the lymph on the outside of your intestinal tract. This is called the GALT (Gut- Associated Lymphoid Tissue). Undigested casein, gluten and hard to digest proteins enter the small intestine but are too big to pass into the bloodstream for proper absorption. These proteins get absorbed into the lymph collecting ducts (lacteals) and congest the lymphatic tissue. This lymph is meant to remove and neutralize pathogens and keep the internal environment, known as the microbiome, made up of millions of bacteria, healthy and balanced.

**STRESS** often accumulates in the upper region of the gut, the stomach and solar plexus area, which interferes with the movement of gut associated lymph, by way of the movement of the diaphragm. Optimally, the ribcage and diaphragm function as 12 levers and a pump each time we breathe, pumping and moving the lymph tissue through the gut and stimulating the vagus nerve that runs through the navel area, keeping the diaphragm flexible and elastic. A full breath into the lower lobes of the lungs is what keeps this lever moving. Movement and exercise in general is necessary to keep the lymph and digestive system functioning well.

Deep diaphragmatic breathing with a long, slow exhale – is key to stimulating the vagus nerve. This creates a state of inner calm, while taming the inflammation reflex. The vagus nerve is the prime component of the parasympathetic nervous system, which regulates the “rest and digest”, or “tend and befriend” responses. The flip side which maintains homeostasis, is the “fight or flight” reflex. This factors into why we want to eat when we are relaxed, seated and not multi-tasking or emotionally upset for best digestion.

**Recommended Yoga pose** - Surya Namaskar/Sun Salutation is ideal for opening and flexing the diaphragm area thereby gently squeezing the organs, encouraging them to excrete and release the digestive juices in the pancreas, liver, stomach and intestines.

## HEALING APPROACHES

The simplest technique to turn on digestion is to **drink a large glass of pure room temperature water ½ hour – 15 minutes before a meal**. This buffers the stomach and signals it to release the acids and enzymes necessary for good digestion. There is a buffering layer in the stomach that is 95 % water. If this part of the stomach lining is moist and well conditioned before eating, it signals the stomach to produce the acids and enzymes that turn on good digestion. These acids are important to kill bacteria that may be in the food before it proceeds to the intestines. If the stomach is dry and dehydrated, the bodies natural intelligence will judiciously dial down digestive fire, to attempt to avoid an ulcer. This does not create balance, however, and weakened digestion is the result.

**SELF MASSAGE AND THE TENDER TUMMY TEST** Press under the rib cage on the left and right sides. Is it tight or sore? Is it soft and supple? The areas that are sore are the places to release with massage and the stomach pulling maneuver.

**STOMACH PULLING** for upper gut issues, acid reflux, and upward moving Vata or Udvarta, when the stomach adheres to the diaphragm. This mechanical Chiropractic maneuver breaks up the scar tissue and adhesions which compromise digestive strength. The stomach is supposed to hang freely off the underside of the diaphragm, but when it's stuck it can't contract to release the stomach acids into the small intestine, causing acid build up in the stomach.

**THE STOMACH PULLING MANUEVER** - Sitting in a chair, a rocker is great where you can lean back slightly. Lean back and relax the stomach. Along the under side of the ribcage on the left side, press in with the L. thumb supported by the right hand. Find the sore spots. The tips of the fingers with a firm palm can also be used.

Lean back into the chair on the inhalation, (extension) press in and pull in a downward motion. Exhale (flexion) as you fold forward pulling down, with the thumb remaining in contact as the stomach softens. Do this maneuver for just a couple minutes, 2 times a day. Continue to work into the sore spots, gently but firmly you can release the upward pressure which can cause acid reflux. You can

release under the inner side of the right ribcage also. A hand held vibrator can open up these adhesions - use up under the ribcage a couple minutes at a time. Lying over a foam core roller to stretch the diaphragm will open and release this area.

**ADJUSTING THE ILEO-CECAL VALVE** The IC Valve occurs where the small intestine meets the large intestine. Find it's location midway between the navel and the hipbone on the right side. It may be a tender area, and you may palpate a small bump there. Assess the condition of the valve. Is it stuck open or closed? When it is stuck open bacteria that is meant to stay in the large intestine can migrate into the small intestine. This contributes to the bacterial overgrowth of SIBO.

Most common is for the IC valve to be stuck open. This is often accompanied by loose stools and too quick of a transit time, with the presence of undigested food particles in the stool. The IC valve operates like a zipper; zip it up to close it by massaging in a clockwise direction and pulling up on the valve.

In the case of the valve being stuck closed, you need to open the IC valve. Massage the specific location in a counter clockwise direction and pull down. There may be excess symptoms of gas, pain and bloating in the abdominal area as the digesting food, known as chyme, is not able to move into the colon for elimination in a timely manner, with a back up of constipation and poor elimination.

Repeat this mechanical adjustment of the IC valve several times to reestablish normal functioning. Can perform as needed 2 minutes 2 x a day and before meals.

### **Increase digestive fire**

Utilize your kitchen pharmacy and **five digestion enhancing herbs: ginger, coriander, cumin, cardamom & fennel**

Each of these herb individually does great things for digestion, blended together this delicious formula reboots digestion by increasing enzyme and acid production, bile production, pancreatic enzymes, duodenal enzymes, and moves and drains the lymphatics located in the intestinal villi. Use this as a spice blend/condiment on your food, or drink as a tea before and during a meal.

**Repair the intestinal skin** with a pre-biotic herbal tea of Slippery elm, marshmallow and licorice root tea. Heals and lubricates the intestinal skin. use

coarse cut, chopped herbs, not powders. Soak 2 Tbls. Of this mixture over night in 2 quarts pure water.

Boil down the 2 quarts to ½ cup to make a decoction. This slimy soothing tea coats intestinal tract and heals the stomach lining, the esophageal lining and the intestinal lining. Sample this tea in class. Liquid chlorophyll or capsules help heal the GI lining.

**BILE FLOW SUPPORTIVE FOODS** Vaso-dilate bile ducts – Beets, apples, radish, artichoke, celery, all the greens, foods that dye your skin red such as berries, cherries, pomegranates, and cranberries. Lymph movers are leafy greens, the red foods, beets, and red and purple berries.

Eat a diet of cooked vegetables, bone broth, quinoa, soupy stews, and if tolerated, kitchari. Raw salad greens and raw vegetables can be too rough for intestinal skin that is compromised by SIBO. Better to steam or cook your vegetables and greens. A customized dietary approach is best, based on what the person can tolerate. Liver and cold water fatty fish, sardines, mackerel and salmon can address nutrient deficiencies. These are high in Omega 3 fatty acids as is coconut oil. Restrict gluten, lactase, sugars and starches to avoid bloating and allow the lining of the intestines to heal and restore normal digestive enzymes production in the small and large Intestines. Avoid snacking between meals if possible. Eat every 3-5 hours.

Knock out the bad bugs and candida with **probiotics**. Use colonizing probiotics, and small amounts of fermented foods. Pre-biotic foods like turmeric, dandelion, celery, burdock root, jicama, artichoke, jerusalem artichoke or sunchokes feed and repopulate the healthy bacteria in the large intestine. Probiotics and these pre-biotic foods may need to be introduced slowly as the die off of bad bugs may cause an increase in symptoms initially. If someone has an auto-immune condition, may need to avoid fermented foods during the healing phase due to the histamine response it causes.

**To find out if you are producing the correct amount of stomach acid**

1. Before a meal, take a ½ of teaspoon of baking soda in 8 ounces of water. If you feel relief, you have too much acid.
2. Before a meal, take 1 tablespoon of apple cider vinegar with 8 ounces of water. If you feel relief, you have too little acid.

**For Low HCL - Apple cider vinegar** boosts stomach acid production of hydrochloric acid. This also may work to neutralize high stomach acid. Take 1 TBLS ACV in water before meal or with the meal to alleviate acid relax.

For too little stomach acid eat: chia seeds, bananas, cooked greens and root vegetables. These foods increase the hydration in the stomach which supports healthy acid production. **TEA** - cardamon and peppermint for too little acid.

**For excess stomach acid** eat los of these foods: cooked celery, cooked beets, artichokes, cooked leafy greens, lemon, olive oil. This will increase bile flow.

TEA: fenugreek, fennel, cumin, coriander HERBS: Brahmi, Amalaki

For either or both: Slippery elm, licorice and marshmallow root tea (sample)

Take 1 tsp – 2 tsp lemon juice with 1 Tbls olive oil before bed to enhance bile flow and morning elimination.

Organic grass fed ghee has 500 times the CLA of grain-fed ghee. This helps the body stay in fat burning metabolism, and helps the body detox congested bile ducts. Spring Cleanse...

**Eat in season** to get the right beneficial bacteria at the right time.

**Eat fruit alone** - fuctose breaks down slowly causing food combining issues. Apples and low sugar fruits can more easily be mixed into green juices than the super sweet fruits.

## ADDITIONAL HERBAL SUPPORT

Health of intestinal skin requires good bacteria. **Neem leaf** is Ayurveda's traditional probiotic, as is yogurt. Neem leaf is gentle, antiseptic support for the production of good bacteria necessary to fight the bad bacteria of SIBO. An herb called **Amalaki** heals and repairs intestinal skin, as does **Brahmi**, a healing agent for the stomach, intestinal lining and well-know for its marvelous support of the brain. These herbs also help drain brain lymph, clearing up brain fog and energy issues. **Boswellia** is good for healing and repairing intestinal skin. It breaks up scar tissue and adhesions in the digestive tract and is widely used for it's powerful anti-inflammatory properties with joint issues. These herbs, along with protective chlorophyll can be taken as food based caps to heal the intestinal skin or lining.

References:

Dr. John Douillard, D. C.

[lifespa.com](http://lifespa.com)

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