

## Do This To Look 10 Pounds Slimmer By The Weekend

Totalbeauty.com

tip

1

These Veggies Are Your Enemies **The tip:** Avoid cruciferous vegetables at all costs.



AVOID  
CRUCIFEROUS  
VEGETABLES

**Why it works:** Broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts and other cruciferous vegetables can make you balloon, thanks to raffinose -- a sugar that is hard for the body to break down. In trying to do so, your body produces gas as a byproduct, which will make you bloat, says Raj.

It may be time to have a funeral for your kale (surprise: it's cruciferous!), which can be making you bloated, says **Franci Cohen, NYC certified fitness trainer, nutritionist and exercise physiologist.** Probably not what you had in mind when you chose that kale salad for lunch.

tip

2

Ease Digestion With These Microorganisms **The tip:** Go gaga for probiotics.



GO GAGA FOR  
PROBIOTICS

**Why it works:** Foods with probiotics, like yogurt, can help with bloating, says Raj. Why? According to Raj, probiotics restore the healthy balance of bacteria in your gut and help your body digest food more efficiently. One word of caution, though: If you're sensitive to dairy, yogurt could set off even more bloating. Instead, get your probiotics in pill or Kombucha form.

Get Rid of Bloating With Exercise **The tip:** Work it out.

tip

3

**Why it works:** When you're bloated, going to spin class or CrossFit is probably the last thing you want to do. Well, throw on a float-y, sweat-wicking top to cover your bloated belly and get your butt to the gym anyway. Exercise stimulates the digestive system and the bowels, explains Raj. This is a good thing, trust us.



WORK  
IT OUT

Working out makes food and drink move through your system faster, getting rid of any bloat-causing gas in the process. A vigorous workout that activates the sweat glands also helps release any fluid you might be retaining. In fact, some doctors believe our sedentary lifestyle is a major culprit in chronic belly bloat. So put on your walking shoes and hit the pavement -- daily.

tip 4



CALM YOUR NERVES

De-Stress to De-Bloat **The tip:** Calm your nerves.

**Why it works:** In a cruel twist of fate, stress can actually increase bloating. (So, stay calm if you're bloated and only have three days to fit into your bridesmaid dress).

Stress and anxiety release adrenaline into your system, which alters the way your body processes food. The result: stomach pain, indigestion and bloating. Raj recommends deep breathing, meditation or yoga to calm your mind -- and deflate your stomach.

Repeat After Me: Sodium Is No Good **The tip:** Eat less sodium.

tip 5



SODIUM IS NO GOOD

**Why it works:** Okay, so sodium isn't all bad -- if consumed in moderation. In fact, it's essential for your body to function properly. However, according to the CDC, the average American consumes 3,300 milligrams of sodium a day -- that's at least 1,200 milligrams over the recommended 2,300 milligrams or less a day. And it isn't coming from over-salting your steak: Most of the sodium Americans consume comes from processed foods. Though convenient, those ready-to-eat meals, lunch meat and, yes, even cereals are swelling up your belly like a water-logged sponge.

The simple solution: Slash sodium to reduce water retention, says Raj. This means carefully checking labels and, if possible, avoiding canned or processed foods. Read more about the sneaky ways sodium is sabotaging your

looks here.

If the damage is already done, try this trick to de-bloat fast: Munch on veggies like cucumber, asparagus (Maria Menounos swears by this veggie to look her best before a photo shoot) and zucchini. These are all diuretics, which help flush the salt out of your system.

Another way to deflate fast? Potassium. "Foods rich in potassium, such as bananas, may help regulate sodium levels in your body and can thus reduce salt-induced bloating," says Raj.

tip

6



AVOID  
SWALLOWING  
EXTRA AIR

Air Is Meant for Breathing **The tip:** Avoid swallowing extra air.

**Why it works:** Quick biology reminder: When you breathe air, it goes through your lungs and supplies your blood cells with essential oxygen. When you swallow air, however, it can cause your intestines to fill up like a bicycle tire.

But who exactly is gulping down air? According to Raj, gum-chewers and straw-sippers. To prevent bloating, give up the gum and drink straight from the cup. Also, don't scarf down your lunch like it's the last meal you're ever going to eat. "When you eat in a hurry, you swallow a lot of gas-producing air," explains Raj.

Step Away From the Soda **The tip:** Skip your mid-afternoon Diet Coke.

tip

7



SKIP YOUR  
MID-AFTERNOON  
DIET COKE

**Why it works:** Carbonated beverages contain gas. Extra gas in your intestines causes bloating. Seems simple to understand -- but at the rate our office runs through Diet Cokes and sparkling water, it clearly isn't.

Swap your fizzy drinks for flat water -- not only will you prevent bubble-induced bloating, you'll also help reduce bloating from other sources, because drinking a lot of water is one of the best things you can do to get rid of bloating quickly, says Cohen. Raj adds that when you're dehydrated, things don't move properly through your intestines and then your body holds on to every last drop of water it can get.

Sugar-Free Is *Not* the Answer **The tip:** Avoid artificial sweeteners.

tip

9



AVOID  
ARTIFICIAL  
SWEETENERS

**Why it works:** Your gum and diet soda are bad for another reason: artificial sweeteners. They mess with your digestive tract because they can't be absorbed and broken down properly. "Namely, they aren't absorbed in the upper part of the small intestine -- that's why they don't add calories -- and they end up traveling to the colon, where they are fermented by bacteria, leading to gas and then bloating," explains Raj. If the phrase "colon fermentation" isn't enough to help you kick your Diet Coke habit, I don't know what is.

tip

8



AVOID CARBS  
& DAIRY

**The tip:** Avoid carbs and dairy before a big event.

**Why it works:** "It doesn't matter how low-cal it is, the dairy and multi-grains will expand in your intestines, causing your gut to stick out," she explains.

Raj adds that carb-heavy foods actually cause your body to store more water than proteins, and can be hard to digest.

If you simply *cannot* survive without carbs, choose a natural carb like a sweet potato or banana over processed carbs, since processed carbs contain more sodium.

Try Cohen's recipe for a bloat-free breakfast: "Take 1/2 cup raw oats, 3 egg whites, 1/2 apple, and a dash of cinnamon and throw in a blender." This creates an easy, healthy pancake mix. "This high-fiber non-fat breakfast choice offers whole-grain fiber plus additional fiber from the apple, and protein from the egg whites," she adds. Raj says that oatmeal is unlikely to cause bloating, as it is high in soluble fiber and promotes healthy digestion.