

## 4 Ways To Avoid Belly Bloat

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Belly bloat. It's nobody's friend. And when you want to go for a night out in a slinky dress or plan to spend the day on the beach, it's the last thing you want. According to **certified nutritionist Franci Cohen**, what you eat the day of an event or activity can make a big difference in how comfortable and trim you feel. Here are her best meal recommendations to cut down on belly bloat:

### For a Ladies' Night Out

If it's going to be a late night filled with dancing and friendly revelry, you want to make sure you have a good dinner. Don't think that eating a

nutrition bar beforehand will suffice or keep you satisfied and bloat-free throughout the night.

*Franci suggests eating:*

- 1 grilled chicken breast (approx. 4 oz)
- 1/2 cup cooked brown rice and lentils
- 1 cup steamed string beans

"This combo will fill you up without weighing you down and will give you the energy you need to dance the night away," she says.

### For a Dinner Date or Event

A lot of women typically order a salad when dining out, trying to "be good," but Cohen says you should actually choose a protein dish. "All the veggies in the salad will actually cause your stomach to bloat more," she adds. Instead, choose a fish dish with a side of grilled veggies. "Wild salmon is jam-packed with heart healthy vitamins and omega-3 fatty acids."

If salmon is not an option, mackerel, sea bass and lemon sole are all good alternatives. As for the veggies, try to steer clear of cruciferous veggies (such as cauliflower and broccoli) that can cause bloating. "Instead, opt for grilled zucchini, asparagus or carrots, which will keep your tummy tamed," says Cohen.

### For a Day at the Beach

If you are going to the beach and want a healthy, energizing meal, but don't want it to show in your tummy, you should choose a fiber-rich, protein-filled breakfast. "Say no to cereal and skim milk," advises Cohen. "Dairy and multigrains will expand in your intestines, causing your stomach to stick out. Instead of cereal, I suggest oatmeal pancakes."

*How to make them:*

Blend together half a cup raw oats, three egg whites, half an apple and a dash of cinnamon for the pancake mix. Cook them on a nonstick griddle and enjoy.

"It's a great filling way to start the day and it will not create any abdominal gas or bloating, so you can go bikini-bare with ease," she says.

**While Traveling**

When you are traveling, the last thing you want is to feel bloated and uncomfortable, and trying to eat well in an airport can sometimes feel like a struggle. "It's tempting to give in to the convenience of fast travel food, but the combination of a high-sodium and air travel equals a very bloated body," Cohen says. Try to eat before you leave for the airport.

Coehn also suggests packing your carry-on with fruits, veggies and granola bars to avoid the beverage service on board. "Stick to water," she says. "You will have a happier flight and feel revived upon arriving at your destination."