

## Fourteen Ways Your Body May Be Trying To Tell You To Eat Better

For all that we hear and read the phrase *listening to our body*, most of us don't do it until it's too late and we can't ignore it. But there's a wide berth – and countless opportunities to improve your health – between now and that future trip to the doctor's office. Of course, any persistent symptom should be checked out by your doctor. Here's a list of common health problems, their nutritional roots, and some possible solutions.

SYMPTOM	CAN BE CAUSED BY	CAN BE ALLEVIATED BY
Bad Breath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• garlic</li> <li>• onions</li> <li>• fish</li> <li>• cream and other high-fat dairy products</li> <li>• coffee</li> <li>• alcohol</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cutting down on offending foods and drinks</li> <li>• using low-fat and nonfat dairy products</li> <li>• eating parsley</li> </ul>
Breast tenderness, periodic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• caffeine and methylxanthines in chocolate, coffee, tea, and cola, including decaffeinated versions</li> <li>• water retention</li> <li>• dairy products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• avoiding caffeine and methylxanthine and/or dairy products</li> <li>• increasing your intake of vitamins B6 and E through supplements or foods</li> <li>• drinking sufficient quantities of water to break the retention cycle</li> </ul>
Constipation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• dairy products</li> <li>• too little fiber</li> <li>• not enough water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eating fewer dairy products</li> <li>• eating more fiber: bran, fruits (especially prunes, figs, and dates), vegetables and whole-grain breads</li> <li>• drinking at least 8 glasses of water a day</li> </ul>
Cramps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• insufficient calcium</li> <li>• low consumption of omega- 3 fatty acids</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• getting 1,200 mg. calcium daily</li> <li>• adding an additional 300 mg. calcium during the first days of your menstrual period</li> <li>• helping your body use the calcium more efficiently by eating high-magnesium foods (whole grains, nuts, leafy green vegetables, and beans)</li> <li>• increasing your omega-3 intake with salmon, tuna, whitefish, sturgeon, mackerel, mullet, herring, bluefish, and anchovies</li> </ul>
Diarrhea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• too much sorbitol, an ingredient in sugarless gums, candies, and diet sodas</li> <li>• excessive consumption of fruits, vegetables, and bran</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eating a bland diet: bananas, rice, applesauce, and toast (b.r.a.t.)</li> </ul>
Gas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eating sorbitol</li> <li>• eating broccoli, Brussels, sprouts, beans, cabbage, cauliflower,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eating garlic, ginger, or peppermint, which relax a valve in your stomach so that has passes in burps</li> <li>• avoiding dairy products or eating</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>and onions</li> <li>carbonated drinks</li> <li>dairy products (if you are lactose-intolerant)</li> </ul>	reduced-lactose or lactose-free foods
Hair Loss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>crash dieting</li> <li>excessive amounts of vitamin A, from supplements, liver, and fish oil</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>eating a sufficient number of calories</li> <li>switching to a nontoxic form of vitamin A, found in foods high in beta-carotene (carrots, sweet potatoes, cantaloupe, spinach, broccoli, yellow vegetables, and dried apricots)</li> </ul>
Headache	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>feta cheese, aged cheeses, cured or smoked meats, chicken liver, red wine, chocolate, milk, legumes, coffee, and tea</li> <li>food additives such as aspartame, monosodium glutamate, and nitrates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>eliminating the offending foods</li> </ul>
Heartburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>spicy foods, highly acidic foods, and fatty foods</li> <li>chocolate</li> <li>alcohol</li> <li>overeating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>eating a small amount of something else, if you're not too full</li> <li>trying to eat smaller meals</li> <li>not sitting or lying down right after eating</li> </ul>
Hives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>milk, eggs, shellfish, fish, peanuts, berries, or any products made with them</li> <li>avocados, potatoes, bananas, kiwis, chestnuts, tomatoes, or any products made with them</li> <li>food additives, such as monosodium glutamate and aspartame</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>avoiding these foods (Note: If you experience difficulty breathing, rapid or irregular heartbeat, nausea, diarrhea, fainting, or swelling of the lips or tongue, seek medical attention immediately!)</li> </ul>
Insomnia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>caffeine</li> <li>overeating</li> <li>spicy, fatty, or acidic foods that cause indigestion</li> <li>going to bed hungry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a small, bland snack, such as toast, cereal, warm milk, or yogurt, before going to bed</li> </ul>
Tooth Stains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>coffee, tea, grape juice, blueberries, red wine, and other deeply colored foods and drinks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>drinking staining foods through a straw</li> <li>regular brushing with a mildly abrasive or whitening toothpaste</li> </ul>
Urinary Tract Infection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>no food causes urinary tract infection, but the discomfort can be exacerbated by tea, coffee, citrus juices, acidic foods, and spicy foods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cranberry juice, at least 8 oz. a day</li> <li>blueberries</li> <li>water, more than your usual 8 to 10 glasses a day</li> </ul>
Yeast Infection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>excessive consumption of sugar</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>yogurt, 1 cup a day with active <i>Lactobacillus acidophilus</i> bacterium cultures (read the label)</li> </ul>

