

## Things that can help reduce wind and bloating

### 6. Avoid constipation

Although radiotherapy to the pelvis can cause diarrhoea, it is worth noting that **constipation** will also cause wind and bloating.

Increasing fluids will help but you may need to take medication.

Some of these medications (laxatives) such as Lactulose or Laxido also cause wind initially. Please speak to a member of staff if you have any concerns about your medication.

#### Other helpful things to try

- **Peppermint Oil** (available to buy or on prescription)
- **Digestive Enzymes** (available at Health Food Stores)
- **Live Yoghurts** like Probiotics
- **Ginger** in foods

Once radiotherapy has finished remember to introduce foods back in to your diet gradually.

If this advice has not helped then please speak to a member of staff.

#### Useful Contact Numbers:

**Jane Hall**  
**Macmillan Specialist Radiographer**  
**Telephone: 0734 1739 476**  
**Monday to Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm**



## Radiotherapy to the Pelvis: ideas to help reduce wind and bloating

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## What is Wind (or flatulence)?

Wind (or flatulence) is a natural part of the digestion process.

Everyone has wind and this is passed through burping or from the back passage.

Radiotherapy to the pelvis can increase wind. This is because it can cause inflammation and irritation of the bowel (gut) wall. An increase in wind can be noticed from weeks 2 and 3 of treatment and can continue for a couple of weeks after treatment.

A build-up of wind in the bowel can be uncomfortable or even painful and it can also affect the radiotherapy, potentially moving the treatment area.

This information leaflet aims to offer advice to help relieve symptoms of increased wind.



## Things that can help reduce wind and bloating

### 1. Eat regularly

We advise eating small meals. Eating more frequently will keep your bowels moving and smaller meals are more easily digested. Avoid skipping meals, an irregular eating pattern can lead to more wind.

### 2. Drink plenty

You should aim to drink 2 litres of water (or squash) plus hot drinks each day. Sip drinks slowly and try not to use straws.

Avoid drinking caffeinated drinks i.e. coffee, tea and green tea.

Avoid fizzy drinks including alcohol.

Peppermint Tea and Fennel Tea can be helpful to improve digestion and ease symptoms of wind.



## Things that can help reduce wind and bloating

### 3. Gentle exercise

A daily walk and gentle stretching can help move wind and regulate your bowels.

### 4. Limit wind producing food

Avoid foods you know produce wind such as:

- onions
- broccoli
- cauliflower
- cabbage
- beans/lentils
- spicy foods
- dried fruit
- artificial sweeteners in sugar free sweets

### 5. Avoid swallowing air

Chew food slowly and thoroughly and keep your mouth closed while eating.

Avoid chewing gum or talking too much when eating.

