

# What is "SIBO?"

SIBO stands for **S**mall **I**ntestinal **B**acterial **O**vergrowth. This is when bacteria grow where they shouldn't grow and this changes how food is processed, where it's processed, and your body's ability to absorb it. The bacteria in the gut actually "train" our immune system by facilitating immune responses accordingly to foreign and non-foreign substances. The immune system identifies antigenic material from the bacteria and when the gut immunity is altered, inflammation is created. When inflammation develops, we begin to break down the membrane that is responsible for opening and closing to let good nutrients in and keeping toxins out. When this is broken down, this leads to a "leaky gut" and now the immune system starts seeing proteins that haven't been processed down to the peptide level that the body is accustomed to and the body creates antibodies against commonly eaten foods.

## Symptoms of SIBO:

- Bloating
- Abdominal distention
- Gas
- Fatigue
- Depression
- Unable to fully evacuate the bowels
- Brain fog

## Common Causes:

- Poor diet
- Poor lifestyle choices
- Stress
- PPI's i.e., Omeprazole, Prilosec, Prevacid

## What Can Be Done About It?

We recommend trying an elimination diet such as a Low FODMAP diet. Elimination diets are used to help identify food triggers that may be contributing to a person's symptoms. The acronym, "FODMAP," stands for foods that are: **F**ermentable, **O**ligosaccharides, **D**isaccharides, **M**onosaccharides **A**nd **P**olyols.

These foods are long chain sugars that get fermented very quickly by bacteria and for someone with SIBO, this produces very uncomfortable abdominal distention upon consuming these foods.

## Clinical Presentation

In our experience, it is rare to see SIBO present by itself. Why? Because we're dealing with the microbiome and bacteria is growing where they shouldn't grow. Food is meant to be fermented in the large intestine, but with SIBO, bacteria is overgrown within the small intestine and when food enters into the small intestine, it starts to ferment and produces a feeling of gas where it doesn't belong geographically and makes you feel very uncomfortable.

If you've ever heard someone use the phrase, "Food baby," after a meal, that's exactly what SIBO feels like - an uncomfortable outward ballooning of the abdomen. Along with SIBO, anxiety and depression often ensue as the gut-brain connection becomes impacted and there is a palpable correlation between the anxiety and depression and how the gut feels.

