

Keep the conversation going!

Join the Oprah Insider Community to dive deeper, share your thoughts, and connect with other members.

Join us now.

Saatva Cyber Monday Sale

Cyber Monday Travel Deals

2025 Oprah's Favorite Things

Rag & Bone Cyber Monday Sale

Welcome To Our Workshop

Click to Discover & Save

SCULPT & LIFT

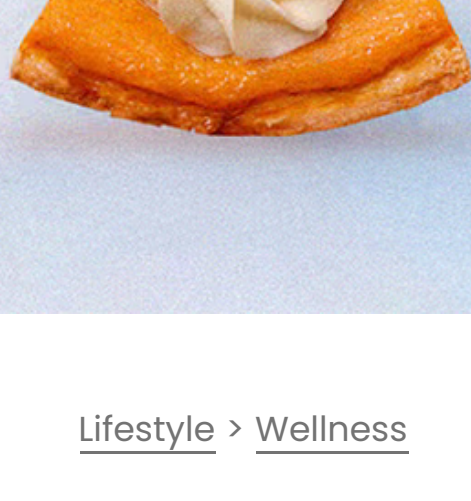
POWERED BY RESTYLANE® AND SCULPTURA®

Actual patient, individual results may vary.

Restylane® Contour and Restylane® Lyft

Important Safety Information

SCULPTURA® (injectable poly-L-lactic acid [PLLA-SCA]) is indicated for correction of shallow to deep nasolabial fold contour deficiencies, fine lines and wrinkles in the cheek region, and other



GETTY IMAGES • IMAGEGAP; EVRYMMNT. OPRAH DAILY ILLUSTRATION

Lifestyle > Wellness

Bloated and Gassy After Every Meal? Thanks a Lot, Menopause

If you feel betrayed by even the smallest sliver of Thanksgiving pie, here's what's going on—and how to handle it.

By Lisa ArbetterPublished: Nov 28, 2025 8:00 AM EST

SAVE ARTICLE

A long time ago, in a body far, far less bloated, dinner was a joy. You could eat at 8 p.m., have a glass (okay, two) of wine, maybe dessert, and still rally for a night out. Now? You eat at 6 p.m., skip the drinks, and still end the evening bloated, burping, and ready for bed. Perimenopause, it seems, has lured your digestion to the dark side.

Most midlife women report some form of gastrointestinal distress: In a [recent U.K. study](#) (presented at this year's annual meeting of The Menopause Society) of nearly 600 women ages 44 to 73, 94 percent reported new or worsening digestive issues during perimenopause or menopause. Bloating topped the list, followed by constipation, stomach pain, and acid reflux.

"The hormonal changes that happen during menopause can affect metabolism, digestion, and energy balance," says [JoAnn Pinkerton, MD](#), professor of obstetrics and gynecology and director of the Midlife Health Center at the University of Virginia. It's no wonder that your favorite treat (or Thanksgiving dinner) doesn't quite sit right anymore.

Restylane

SCULPTURA

Actual patient, individual results may vary.

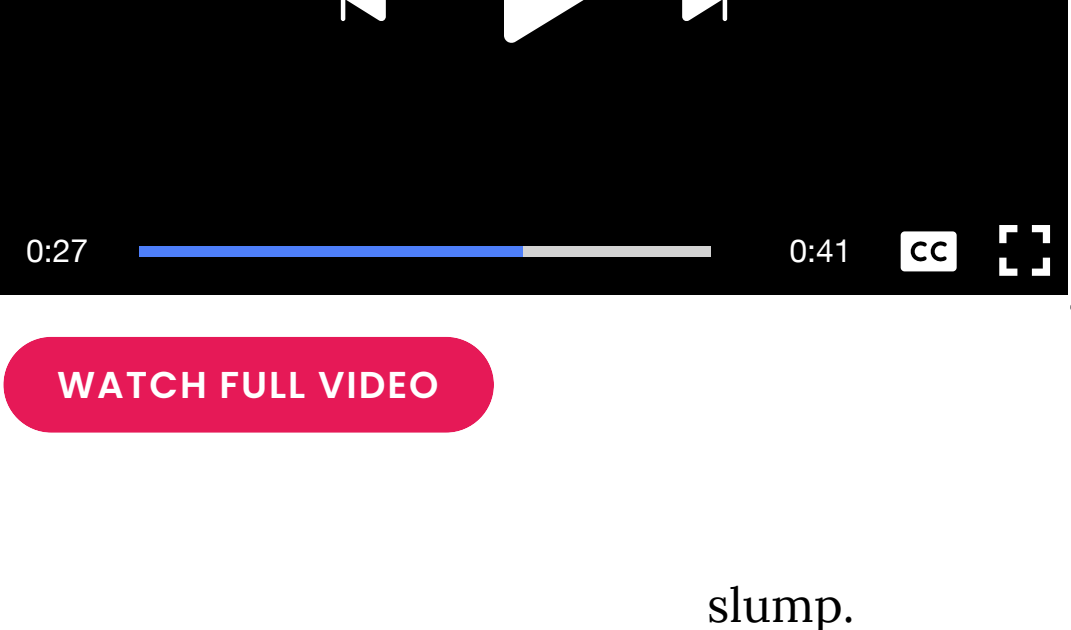
Restylane® Contour and Restylane® Lyft

Important Safety Information

Restylane® Contour is indicated for cheek augmentation and for the correction of midface contour deficiencies in patients

MORE FROM OPRAH DAILY

Trailer: Turning Aging into a Super Power



WATCH FULL VIDEO

What's Busting Your Gut?

When hormone levels fluctuate or fall, your digestion takes a hit in several ways.

- **Everything slows down.** Gut motility—how quickly food moves through your digestive tract—slows, meaning food hangs around longer. The result: bloating, gas, and constipation.
- **You fall into a food coma.** When estrogen dips, the body becomes less sensitive to insulin—the hormone that moves glucose into cells for energy. That can trigger fatigue and result in a post-meal slump.
- **Microbiome mayhem.** Your gut bacteria help metabolize and recycle hormones. When estrogen and progesterone dip, the bacteria that perform that job get disrupted, creating a feedback loop that further lowers hormone levels. Low estrogen can also weaken the gut lining and increase inflammation—two big reasons why GI symptoms flare.
- **BMs become a crapsheet.** During perimenopause, estrogen spikes and dips unpredictably. High estrogen relative to progesterone can speed things up (hello, diarrhea), while low levels of both hormones (later in perimenopause) tend to slow digestion, leading to constipation.
- **Rich foods betray you.** Foods [high in fat](#) or [sugar](#) are already notorious for [causing inflammation and digestive woes](#). Combine that with the above-mentioned metabolic and microbial changes to your gut, and rich foods are that much more likely to make you feel awful.

The Hormone Therapy Wild Card

For some women, hormone therapy (HT) gets things moving again. But progesterone—often prescribed alongside estrogen—can do the opposite, slowing digestion. The result: Some women feel better on HT, others worse.

Some women on HT may develop [gastroparesis](#) (delayed stomach emptying) or other gut symptoms, although the overall risk is small. On the other hand, for women with inflammatory bowel diseases (like Crohn's or ulcerative colitis), there is some evidence that HT might ease symptoms—possibly because estrogen helps dampen gut inflammation. But for the everyday bloating, constipation, and reflux that plague many menopausal women? The evidence is mixed at best.

Restylane

SCULPTURA

Actual patient, individual results may vary.

Restylane® Contour and Restylane® Lyft

Important Safety Information

Restylane® Contour is indicated for cheek augmentation and for the correction of midface contour deficiencies in patients

And even when it helps, HT "isn't magic," says Dr. Pinkerton. "You still have to do the [lifestyle pieces](#)—eating better, exercising, sleeping. That's what actually makes you feel better."

How to Stomach Your New Normal

Your gut needs predictability. Regular meals, movement, and sleep all help digestion stay on track.

A [Mediterranean-style diet](#) with plenty of protein and fiber supports metabolism and gut health, while strength training helps maintain muscle mass to keep metabolism humming. Other pointers: Drink water before and during meals, try a [probiotic](#), eat slowly, and pay attention to what sets you off. Fried foods and sugary desserts are usual suspects for most women, but even healthy options like onions, broccoli, or beans can bring on the bloat and other gastro upsets.

Dr. Pinkerton also recommends a post-meal stroll. "A 15-minute walk not only helps with digestion and bloating but also boosts your metabolism," she says. (So lace up and go for a [fart walk](#).)

The bottom line? "Metabolism isn't fixed," says Dr. Pinkerton. "It's something you can influence." With some tweaks, there's still a world where you can enjoy some of your favorite holiday treats (in moderation!) without busting a gut.

Member Exclusive: Discover Oprah's Insider Community Villages

O Menopause

LEARN MORE

O Weight

LEARN MORE

O Relax

LEARN MORE

VISIT NOW

VISIT NOW

VISIT NOW

Live Your Best Life with Oprah Daily

Get the Life You Want

Unlock your potential, cultivate joy, and so much more, with Oprah's masterclass series on living your happiest, healthiest life.

READ MORE

Set Intention with Oprah

Oprah reflects on her deep friendships, overcoming adversity, and tapping into your highest self by living with intention.

READ MORE

Prioritize Your Health

Get expert advice on everything from DBT and menopause to mental health and psychedelics.

READ MORE

Learn to live your best life with an Oprah Daily subscription. Enjoy exclusive articles, videos, classes, a print edition, a digital archive, Oprah's weekly intention videos, and more.

VISIT MEMBER PERKS

Let's Talk!

Be the first to comment...

No one seems to have shared their thoughts on this topic yet
Leave a comment so your voice will be heard first.

Powered by OpenWeb's Terms | Privacy | Feedback

Advertisement - Continue Reading Below

CREATED BY OPRAH DAILY FOR

Explore Charleston

The Best Charleston-Made Holiday Gifts

Celebrate the season with special Southern favorites.

By: Judy Brumley

Creativity meets charm in Charleston, South Carolina, where a thriving arts district and award-winning cuisine pay homage to the area's storied history. Artists, chefs, and designers lean on the Lowcountry for inspiration to weave beautiful and serviceable baskets from local sweetgrass, craft meals with fresh seafood and just-picked ingredients, and to create gorgeous jewelry and accessories with coastal flair. During the holiday season, all of these artistic endeavors make for special gifts. We've rounded up a handful that capture the vibrant spirit of the Charleston area below.

CLICK FOR MORE...

READERS ALSO READ

Dive into the Last Week of Our Boundaries Workshop

Oprah's Favorite Things 2025 List Is Here!

Achieve Perfect Thighs

Fanka Body Sculpt Leggings

Shop Now

The Laura Geller Products On Sale for Black Friday

Oprah's Favorite Things Black Friday Deals

Divorce-Curious? Here's What No One Tells You

What Your Aging Skin Needs (and Doesn't Need)

The Best Honeylove Black Friday Deals

Oprah on Staying Connected to Those We've Lost

Why a 15-Min. Walk Is More Powerful Than 10K Steps

The Best Black Friday Deals on LED Face Masks

Advertisement - Continue Reading Below

This is your power play.

THE HEART OF YOUR PC

Snapdragon

Learn more

About Us

Newsletter

Contact Us

Press Room

Subscribe

Give a Gift

Customer Service

Being Green

We may earn commission from links on this page, but we only recommend products we back.

©2025 Oprah Daily LLC. All rights reserved.

Privacy Notice Your CA Privacy Rights/Shine the Light DAA Industry Opt Out CA Notice at Collection Terms of Use Site Map

YOUR PRIVACY CHOICES: OPT OUT OF SALE/TARGETED ADS