

## - Stomach

Health

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What's up with a...

**NOISY**  
**stomach?**Here's why your belly  
sometimes growls  
like an angry dog.

BY KAYLA BLANTON

**Y**ou're taking a stroll through your favourite art gallery or public garden when suddenly your stomach pipes up with a loud, echoing grumble, ruining the peaceful vibe. You may be mortified by this bodily betrayal, but, hey, it's totally normal.

**WHY DOES MY BELLY GROWL?**

"The noises that happen when you're hungry are known as borborygmi [pronounced 'bor-buh-rig-my']." explains gastroenterologist Dr Donna Powell. "They're primarily caused by contractions of the muscles in the stomach and intestines, which help move food along the digestive tract." When there's no food to push through the GI tract, these contractions move air,

fluid and small amounts of waste, which creates all those lovely sounds. The good news is that stomach gurgling is a sign that your digestive system is working, Dr Powell says. In fact, your stomach may gurgle after a meal, too, as the digestive system gets things moving.

**HOW TO STOP MAKING NOISE**

Want to minimise the gurgling noises? Gastroenterologist Dr Renée M. Marchioni Beery offers these tips:

**EAT REGULAR MEALS** Keeping your stomach satisfied can help reduce hunger-related growling.

**STAY HYDRATED** Drinking enough water can help prevent excessive gas and aid in digestion.

**CHEW THOROUGHLY** This makes digestion go more smoothly.

**AVOID GASSY FOODS** The bubbles in soft drink, artificial sweeteners in sugarless chewing gum, and fibre in cabbage, beans and broccoli, can lead to increased gas and stomach sounds.

**IS IT EVER A SIGN OF SOMETHING MORE SERIOUS?**

In most cases, an outspoken tummy is no cause for concern, but it may indicate other GI issues. People with irritable bowel syndrome sometimes experience increased bowel sounds because of abnormal contractions in the intestines, Dr Powell adds. If you encounter grumbling along with abdominal pain, frequent diarrhoea, unintentional weight loss or bloody stools, see your doctor for a full evaluation, recommends Dr Beery. 