

## Ask Leyla: How can I regain weight after illness?



**Q:** I lost 10 pounds last year after a bout of food poisoning. I was treated for SIBO, included more animal protein, and slowly added more carbs back into my diet, but I still have not gained the weight back.

Any suggestions?

**A:** Food poisoning can wreak havoc on the GI tract and attending immune system—70 percent of which is in the gut via GALT (gut-associated lymphoid tissue). Fortunately, you came through it.

A few things come to mind regarding your inability to regain the weight you lost:

First, how is your bowel function? Do you still have occasional diarrhea, especially after being treated for SIBO (small intestinal bacterial overgrowth)? Treatment for SIBO includes the use of antibiotics such as Xifaxan and/or other botanicals, and a diet low in FODMAPS (Fermentable Oligosaccharides, Disaccharides, Monosaccharides and Polyols). However, if your bowel function isn't quite back to normal, it could indicate some residual issues. If you're not properly absorbing your nutrition, it could certainly be an obstacle to regaining the weight you lost. It may be worth

your while to get rechecked for SIBO at this point, in case it's still lingering—as well as a full GI workup to rule out any other issues.

Second, after your treatment for SIBO did you replenish your gut with **probiotics**? Antibiotics wipe out bad bacteria but also beneficial bacteria too. Your microbiome needs to be replenished in order to maintain good bowel function and health.

Finally, your caloric intake may be lower now than before the food poisoning incident as you are likely proceeding with caution—even unconsciously. Keep a food diary while remembering your food portions *before* the incident and increase your intake paying attention to your hunger and satiety cues. Follow your appetite.

To your health!