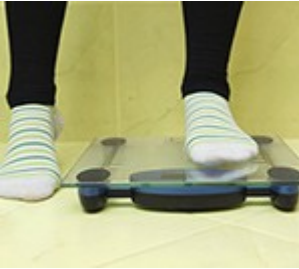


Ask Leyla: How can I regain weight after illness?



Q: Last year, I suffered a bad bout of food poisoning and lost lost ten pounds.

I was treated for SIBO, and have included more animal protein and slowly added more carbs back into my diet, but 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 (rifaximin) and the FODMAPS and/or Specific Carbohydrate Diet. However, if your bowel function isn't quite back to normal, it could indicate residual malabsorption issues. If you're not properly absorbing your nutrition, it would certainly be an obstacle to weight gain. It may be worth your while to get rechecked for SIBO at this point, in case it's still lingering.

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

Finally, your calorie intake may be lower now than before the food poisoning incident as you are likely proceeding with caution. Keep a food diary and reflect on your portions and intake before the incident and increase your intake as your appetite dictates.

Adding a whey protein shake daily to increase your caloric intake will help. Mix the protein powder with unsweetened almond milk and add a tablespoon or two of coconut oil. Blend and enjoy!

You should eventually be able to regain the weight you lost.

To your health!