

# Rumination Syndrome: What Nobody Tells You (But Really Should)

Real talk. Real science. Real solutions.

Brought to you by **Simply Gut Health**

## What Is Rumination Syndrome?

Rumination Syndrome is a functional gut disorder where food is regurgitated shortly after eating – not due to nausea or retching, but because of a learned, reflex-like muscle pattern involving the diaphragm and abdominal wall. It's often mistaken for reflux or vomiting, but it's different – and commonly misunderstood.

It can affect anyone, at any age.

It's not voluntary.

It's not a behaviour problem.

And it can be incredibly distressing.

## Why Does It Happen?

Rumination often develops after stress, illness, reflux, or changes in eating patterns. The body learns a new “response” to meals – one that's automatic and hard to break without help. Triggers can be emotional, sensory, or environmental, like eating too quickly or being anxious around food.

## What You Might Notice

- Regurgitation of food within 1–30 minutes of eating
- No nausea or warning signs
- Relief when distracted or calm
- Avoidance of meals or eating socially
- Misdiagnoses (reflux, ARFID, vomiting disorders)

## Thinking About Speaking to Your GP? Bring These Questions:

Could this be rumination syndrome instead of reflux or vomiting?

What support is available for behaviour and breathing-based therapy?

Is there a local or online specialist you can refer us to?

How can we monitor progress over time?

## What Actually Helps — and Why It's Not Just About Breathing

The best evidence supports diaphragmatic breathing, a way of using your breath to reduce abdominal pressure and interrupt the reflex. But if you've tried it and felt like it didn't work – you're not alone.

It's not just about knowing the steps. It's about knowing how to practise them, and when.

## How to Try Diaphragmatic Breathing

1. Sit upright or lie back with one hand on your chest and one on your belly
2. Breathe in slowly through your nose for 4 seconds, letting your belly rise
3. Keep your chest as still as possible – the movement should be low and slow
4. Breathe out gently through your mouth for 6 seconds, letting your belly fall
5. Repeat for 5–10 minutes, especially before and after meals

It takes time to build the muscle memory – but it's a skill that can retrain the reflex.

## Other Tools That Can Help

**Because no two people are the same, recovery often needs more than just one tool. You might benefit from:**

- Meal timing and pacing strategies (smaller portions, slower eating)
- Managing pressure to finish meals or eat under stress
- Shifting posture during and after meals to reduce abdominal compression
- Mild movement (like a calm walk) after meals to reset the body
- Support with anxiety or sensory overload that may be making symptoms worse
- Pre-meal routines to ground the body and mind before eating

Tracking triggers – such as location, emotions, or types of food

## We're Here When You're Ready

Whether you're looking for clarity, tools, or just someone to talk to who understands – our services include:

- 15-minute email consultations
- Full 60-minute consultations
- Support groups and resources
- Free guides just like this to help you feel more informed

We're not here to pressure you. We're here when you're ready.



This guide is intended for information and support purposes only and is not a substitute for medical advice. For personalised guidance, speak with a healthcare professional or reach out to Simply Gut Health.