

Borborygmus

WHAT IS BORBORYGMUS?

Borborygmus is the name for the noise emitted by the intestines or stomach during digestion. It is more commonly known as **rumbling**. The sounds come from gas passing through the digestive tract. These gases can be squeezed by spasms and blocked in the gaps of the intestines. This sometimes causes noises.

WHAT ARE THE CAUSES?

Rumbling can be caused by **air swallowed** during a meal, or by gas produced during the breakdown of **gas-generating food**. Gas-generating food is likely to produce more gas than other kinds of food. Cabbage, lentils and fizzy drinks are examples of this kind of food.

Some diseases can also be the source of rumbling. One example is **colonopathy**, which affects the colon and may cause rumbling and digestive problems such as abdominal pain, diarrhoea or constipation. Another potential cause is a **viral infection** such as gastroenteritis.

DOES HUNGER TRIGGER RUMBLING?

You have probably heard your stomach rumble when you were hungry. Which leads to the question, does hunger trigger rumbling? In some ways it does, because we think about food when we are hungry and just by thinking about food, the digestive tract prepares itself for digestion. The digestive glands are stimulated and we start salivating. The intestines empty out to make room for the incoming food. They empty through peristalsis, which are contractions of the digestive tract. These contractions are rarely heard when the intestines are full, but can be heard more often when they are empty. This explains why your stomach rumbles when you are hungry.