

Digestion/Gut

November 2017

MENU

Banana Parfaits with Chocolate Granola
Miso Slaw with Tofu/Tempeh
Sunchoke Soup
Holiday Kombucha Cocktail

It is estimated that more than 400 species of bacteria live in the human gut weighing up to 3.5 pounds!

BACTERIA, ew!

Actually, not so scary — benefits of bacteria include:

- Helps prevent infection from pathogenic bacteria
- Helps maintain integrity of digestive tract lining
- Aids in digestion of food
- Supports the immune system
- “Good” bacteria break down fibers in the colon to form butyric acid, the preferred food for colonic cells
- *Bifidobacteria* are effective inhibitors of many disease-causing organisms; exhibit antitumor activity; help to reduce serum cholesterol levels; and may provide some B vitamins.

Terms to Know

PROBIOTICS aka “Good Bacteria”
the living microbes in your body

PREBIOTICS
the food for those microbes

**Both prebiotics and probiotics
are needed for optimal digestion
and gut health!**

Did you know...

*There are **10x** more microbiota in your gut than cells in your entire body!*

We are more bacteria than we are human!

Probiotics	Prebiotics	Tummy Soothers & Digestives
Yogurt, Sour Cream	Onions, Leeks, Garlic	Fennel
Kefir	Bananas, Apples, Pears	Parsley
Sauerkraut	Kimchee	Blueberries
Kimchee	Asparagus, Dandelion	Ginger, turmeric, cumin, cayenne, coriander
Kombucha	Sunchoke, Celery Root	Peppermint
Pickles (raw, non-pasteurized)	Oats, Barley, Rye	Kudzu
Raw Apple Cider Vinegar	Cacao, Maple Syrup, Honey	Bitter Greens (dark green veggies)
Tempeh, Miso	Soybeans, Mushrooms	Lemon Juice

10 Steps to Improved Digestion

Eat Mindfully

The sight, smell, and thought of food increases the production of stomach acid, which improves digestion. When we eat on-the-go, while watching TV, or while distracted, we do not give our body time to prepare for the food we will eat. Try to calm and relax yourself before eating. Sit at a table, eliminate distractions, and focus on food.

Eat Slowly & Chew Thoroughly

Eating quickly does not allow time for chewing and can lead to overeating. Slow down and appreciate the flavor and texture of your food. Try setting a minimum time limit for meals, eating with your opposite hand, using chopsticks instead of silverware, or meditating while eating. Chewing food thoroughly is also important, as it helps to generate saliva, which moistens food and provides enzymes that begin digestion.

Sip on warm fluids

To help reduce gas and bloating, sip your fluids slowly and have something warm, such as an herbal tea. Lemon juice and apple cider vinegar can help to improve digestion by increasing the acidity of the stomach. Add 1 tablespoon of apple cider vinegar or squeeze half a lemon into 8 oz. of room temperature water and drink about 15-20 minutes prior to eating.

Exercise

Light physical activity can enhance the movement of food through the digestive tract. However, intense physical activity like running or aerobics can slow down digestion and may cause discomfort.

Eat More Fiber

Fiber is the indigestible part of plant foods that helps move food through the digestive tract. Soluble fiber can slow digestion to aid in nutrient absorption. Chia seeds, fruits, oats, beans, and sweet potatoes are high in soluble fiber. Insoluble fiber adds bulk and speeds up transit time. Whole grains, seeds, nuts, and leafy greens are high in insoluble fiber.

Support Your Gut Flora

Eating fermented or cultured foods (with live probiotic cultures) can help keep the digestive system healthy.

Have Something Bitter

Bitter flavors can enhance digestion by stimulating the release of stomach acid, digestive enzymes, and bile. Try adding chicory, dandelion, mustard greens, arugula, radicchio, or endive to your salad. Bitter roots such as dandelion or burdock can be added to stir-fries and soups, or even made into a tea. Bitter tinctures, such as Swedish Bitters, or citrus fruits can also be added to water before meals.

Spice it up!

Spices/herbs (e.g., turmeric, ginger, fennel, cayenne, cinnamon, chamomile) stimulate digestion and promote health.

Eat Your Enzymes

Enzymes are necessary for digestion. The body produces enzymes, but eating enzymes from food sources can also be helpful for digestion. Enzyme rich foods include raw honey, raw or cultured vegetables, raw or cultured milk and cheese, and tropical fruits such as pineapple and papaya.

Soak Your Food

Soaking beans and grains before cooking increases digestibility by softening the fiber and unlocking nutrients and minerals. Soaking grains and beans for just 30-40 minutes or overnight in water with a splash of vinegar can greatly help.

References:

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