



THIS WEEK'S TOPIC

# Try This "Low Tech" Digestive Fix

*"Food combining" is a basic principle of optimal nutrition because it allows the body to digest and utilize the nutrients in our foods to their full extent."*

Do you ever feel wiped out after a meal? I'm talking about that bloated, gassy feeling; or for some people, they feel tired or even mentally foggy. All of these signs are telling you there's a problem. But instead of covering up the problem with drugs, there are natural ways to fix the problem. Here's a wellness approach that can help people with digestive issues.

To start with, let's define protein. In food language that translates into beef, chicken, fish, eggs and cheese. These are all concentrated proteins. Our body needs protein for every facet of life: for building and repairing our body and to feed muscle tissue. (You know that toned look that keeps you looking young.) Okay you're saying, "I'm eating protein." You may be eating enough protein, but what if I told you, you are proba-



bly not "digesting" or getting the health benefits of all the protein you eat. It has to do the way we COMBINE FOODS. I'm talking about the OTHER foods you eat with protein.

Now pause it right there so I can reveal a hidden factor in this digestive formula. The hidden factor is HCL or hydrochloric acid! HCL is a natural acid made in your stomach. It releases pepsin which breaks down food, goes to work on that protein, dissolves it, and amazingly

the body absorbs and transports the little building blocks called amino acids where they are needed. So you need the right amount of HCL to do the job. That's where the red flag goes up because there's another factor... starches. Combining starches with protein during meals actually reduces the secretion of HCL levels in your stomach. Starches reduce or soak up HCL. If that happens, there's not enough left to fully digest protein. As a result, you don't get

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all the benefits from the protein. The undigested food can ferment or putrefy and make you feel bloated and sluggish.

What's happening? A couple of things. The first one is that sugars inhibit the secretion of HCL in the stomach. Of course starchy foods are classified as sugars. This means that if we eat a big steak and our stomachs begin the secretion of HCL to digest the food, a good thing; but then we add simple sugars like bread, potatoes, pie, brownies, soft drinks, and most fruit juices; the stomach slows down its release of HCL. You guessed it, a bad thing.



Think of the traditional fast food meal, hamburger patty, on a sugar laden bun, tempered with hot french fried potatoes, washed down with a biggy sized sugary pop. The sugars found in the bun, the fries, and the drink all slow down the release of HCL. And secondly, not only do sugars inhibit the secretion of HCL, the sugars combine with the hydrochloric acid already in the stomach. That prevents the HCL from breaking down the protein and prevents the activation of other enzymes which are needed for complete protein digestion.

Dr. George Goodheart, a strong advocate of food combining, describes it with this word picture. Just as bread will soak up water when we put it in a dish, in our stom-

achs the SAME bread will soak up the free HCL in the stomach. There's not enough HCL left to completely digest the protein it was intended to digest.

When we are young we have sufficient levels of enzymes, but with stress and age our enzymes are depleted. So here's the strategy for combining foods. When you eat concentrated protein (beef, poultry or fish), reduce the heavy starches like bread, potatoes, pasta, even soft drinks. Instead increase vegetables.

Remember, it's how you "combine" foods. If you eat cereal at breakfast,

which is a starch, don't have an egg or meat. If you have eggs, leave out the toast or cut back. You get the idea. Try it. You'll have more energy, less digestion problems, and you'll be more mentally alert after meals.

"Food combining" is a basic principle of optimal nutrition because it allows the body to digest and utilize the nutrients in our foods to their full extent. Ask your wellness clinician for more information about food combining and talk to them about any digestion problems you are experiencing. Don't ignore the symptoms when you feel tired and bloated after meals. Do something to feel better... and fixing your digestion is the best place to start.