



THIS WEEK'S TOPIC

Help Solve Your Digestive Problems

"It's been estimated that over 1 in 4 people suffer from digestive problems but answering a few simple questions could help pinpoint the source."

As life goes along, we put food in our mouth every day and assume our digestive system will take it from there, that is, until we experience a problem. It happens more than most people admit. It's been estimated that over 1 in 4 people suffer from digestive problems.

Think about that for a second. That means if you experience bloating or belching after a meal, constipation, diarrhea, stomach or intestinal pain, your digestive system is out of balance. You might say, it's not that bad, or if I take an antacid I'm better, but the truth is "You can never experience true wellness unless you have a healthy digestive system."

Poor digestion means poor vitamin and mineral absorption and that proteins and fatty acids can't be properly utilized to repair and regenerate your cells.

If you have problems with acid indigestion, chances



are you've heard about or taken acid blocking drugs. We've all seen the commercials, "fast relief." It sounds great but do you ever hear about the long term effects these drugs have on your digestive system? The "DIRTY LITTLE SECRET" about these acid suppressing drugs is that "the manufacturers of acid blockers originally only suggested 16 weeks of therapy while allowing the tissues to cool down and repair." The drugs were never intended to be used on a regular basis.

Here's the point. Your body doesn't have a deficiency of acid suppressing drugs. Then what is deficient? What's wrong? Most acid reflux, ulcers and other digestive problems are due to either bad bacteria in the stomach or not enough hydrochloric acid in the stomach.

You may be thinking, "Not enough acid. It feels like I have too much acid." The truth is, 'Low levels of hydrochloric acid in the stomach results in protein putrefaction and carbohydrate fermentation which "then" result in

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the formation of byproduct acids that burn the stomach.'

The stomach is naturally designed for high concentrations of hydrochloric acid which promotes healthy digestion and does not burn the stomach. The use of acid blockers reduces the production of hydrochloric acid, the "good" acid you need in your stomach to digest food. It can be a vicious cycle and can only be overcome by "fixing" the hydrochloric acid problem instead of just putting a band-aid on it.

Digestive problems can be caused by other factors too. Your liver, gallbladder, small intestine and colon can also be a source of digestive problems. You will have different symptoms depending on which source is causing the problem.

Answering a few simple questions about your digestion can help pinpoint the source. Is your stomach upset right away after meals or does it take 30 minutes to an hour to get upset? The timing of an upset stomach tells your clinician if it's a stomach problem or small intestine problem.

Do you get sleepy or mentally foggy in the afternoon after eating lunch? This can be a sign of an enzyme deficiency or possibly food allergies.

Have you lost your taste for meat? This is usually a need for hydrochloric acid.

Do greasy or high fat foods cause distress? This generally reflects a liver or gallbladder problem.

Questions like these will seem easy for you to answer but are vitally important. Your wellness clinician may evaluate your gallbladder by having you lay on your back and gently palpating your gallbladder area. Tenderness here can indicate inflammation or a sluggish gallbladder. Your gallbladder is critical in digesting fats and oils.



Your clinician can also evaluate your small intestine. Tenderness in certain areas can indicate inflammation or dysfunction. While lying on your back with your knees slightly bent, they may test

for tenderness around your umbilicus, which is a medical term for belly button. Tenderness in any quadrant within a circle 3-4 inches in diameter around the umbilicus can give your clinician clues to evaluate your digestive health.

But the first place to start is with a questionnaire specifically focusing on your digestion. The unique digestive symptoms you may be having can indicate whether to address stomach acid, your gallbladder, liver, small intestine or colon. Help solve your digestive puzzle. Answer the questions about your symptoms, and talk to your wellness clinician. Good digestion is critical to your health.

Digestive Dysfunction Self-Test

Please check symptoms you are experiencing and return self-test to your wellness clinician.

Section 1:

- Bad breath (halitosis)
- Loss of taste for high protein (meat, etc.)
- Burning (“acid”) or nervous stomach
- Gas shortly after eating
- Indigestion ½ to 1 hour after eating, may last up to 3-4 hours
- Acidic or spicy foods upset stomach
- Chronic asthma, airborne and food allergies
- H-Pylori infection and /or intestinal parasites
- Gluten/Casein Sensitivity

Section 2:

- Lower bowel gas and / or bloating several hours after eating
- Eye burn
- “Whites” of the eyes (sclera) yellow
- Dry skin, itchy feet and / or skin peels on feet
- Brown spots or bronzing of the skin
- Bitter metallic taste
- Blurred vision
- Headache over eyes
- Feel nauseous, queasy or gag easily
- Color of stools light brown or yellow
- Greasy or high fat foods cause distress
- Pain between shoulder blades
- Dark circles under eyes
- “Acid” breath
- History of gall bladder attacks or gall bladder removed
- Gallstones

Section 3:

- Crave sweets or coffee in afternoon or mid morning
- Hungry between meals or excessive appetite
- Overeating sweets upsets
- Eat when nervous
- Irritable between meals
- Inability to tolerate fruits and vegetables, especially lettuce
- Particles of undigested fruits and vegetables seen in stool
- Get “shaky” or light headed if meals missed
- Fatigue, eating relieves
- Heart palpitates if meals missed or delayed
- Awake after a few hours of sleep, hard to get back to sleep
- Inability to handle carbohydrates

Section 4:

- Coated tongue or “fuzzy” debris on tongue
- Pass large amounts of foul smelling gas
- Irritable bowel or mucous colitis
- Constipation, diarrhea, or stools alternate from soft to watery
- Bowel movements painful or difficult, and / or laxatives used
- Burning or itching anus