

HEALTHBREAK

MARCH 2020

Maintaining Good Digestive Health

The digestive system is more than just the stomach. It also includes other organs, like the small intestine and the colon. Your digestive system breaks down food into the nutrients your body needs and absorbs them for energy.

If you've ever had a stomachache or dealt with heartburn or reflux, then you've experienced digestive problems. Other common issues include gas and bloating, constipation, peptic ulcers, diverticulitis, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), gallstones, and celiac disease. Problems such as these reflect what's going on in your body.

Your lifestyle habits can directly affect your digestive health. Here are some ways you can keep this system healthy:

- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Eat a high-fiber diet. Fiber helps to keep food moving through your digestive tract, making constipation less likely. It can also help prevent or treat various digestive conditions, such as diverticulosis and IBS. Fiber also keeps you fuller longer, which can aid in weight management.
- Limit foods high in fat. Fatty foods tend to slow down the digestive process, increasing the likelihood of constipation.
- Eat on a regular schedule. Stay regular by eating regularly.
- Move more. Regular exercise keeps foods moving through your digestive system.
- Stay hydrated. Drinking plenty of water helps to flush waste out of your system.
- Manage your stress. Too much stress can wreak havoc on your digestive system. Practice stress-management techniques regularly.

The digestive tract doesn't always run smoothly, but you can take steps to improve your digestive health and help your system run more efficiently.

Sources:

<https://www.everydayhealth.com/digestive-health/tips-for-better-digestive-health/>

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/topics/digestive-health>



An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.