

Tips for Good Digestion



Around the age of 40, people begin to notice that they can't tolerate certain foods as well as they used to. As you get older, your stomach produces a smaller volume of digestive enzymes and other secretions, and your body may not digest or absorb foods as easily as it did when you were younger.

If you are prone to digestive problems, follow these tips.

- See a dentist if you are having trouble with your teeth or dentures. Poorly fitting dentures, sensitive teeth, and diseased gums can make chewing difficult.
- Eat smaller, lighter meals, spaced throughout the day, instead of heavy meals. As a person ages, the blood supply to the small intestine declines, hindering the absorption of nutrients from a sudden, large delivery of food.
- To prevent gas and bloating, don't gulp liquids or talk while chewing food.
- Limit the amount of gas-producing foods you eat. Cabbage, onions, and cooked dried beans are common offenders.
- Eliminate milk products from your diet if they cause bloating, intestinal gas, or diarrhea, but be sure to supplement your diet with calcium. (You may be able to tolerate small amounts of milk products if you treat them with Lactaid, a digestive aid sold in many health food stores.)
- Avoid wearing tight clothing around your waist at mealtime.
- Don't lie down for at least 2 hours after you've finished a meal, and don't eat right before bedtime.