

Can we talk about digestion?

Digestion is the body's process of taking food and converting it into substances used for fuel.

"So how does this all happen?"

The digestion process begins in the mouth with ptyalin, an alkaline substance found in human saliva that mixes with food and starts the breakdown process. When what you are chewing gets to the stomach, the acid begins to further break it down. You **SHOULD** have a lot of acid in your stomach for digestion to go well.

The next step is in the small intestines, where it is squirted with bile to dissolve fats and the pancreas adds digestive enzymes to break down carbohydrates.

Then on to the large bowel, where water is absorbed, and the food fibers are compacted for the elimination of non-usable substances.

Your food must go through alkaline to acid to alkaline enzymes to remove all the necessary nutrients you need for your body.

Pretty amazing, don't you agree?

Here are seven simple steps you can take to help the process along and ensure better digestive health:

- **Chew well.** Chewing your food well allows your saliva to start breaking down the food for smoother digestion.
- **Don't drink liquids when you eat.** Liquids dilute the digestive enzymes and make the breakdown of food difficult.
- **Handle your stress.** When you're stressed, the fight-or-flight reaction begins, and digestion slows. Your body shuts down blood flow, which affects digestive muscles. Take time to relax, breathe deeply, and let go of the stresses in your life.
- **Get regular exercise.** When you exercise, you support the muscles of your intestines, which maintain regularity. Exercise helps to reduce stress, supporting healthy digestion.
- **Take supplements.** I can recommend supplements targeted to your personal needs. From enzymes to probiotics, we have a full range of food-based nutritional products to support your digestive health.
- **Stay hydrated.** Drinking pure, fresh water supports regularity and the health of the digestive system (but not with meals).
- **Eat more fiber.** Eat a well-balanced diet, and avoid processed foods, sugars, and highly refined carbohydrates. Fiber-rich foods are excellent for digestion.