



How to Overcome the Unpleasant Effects of Poor Digestion

Are You Ruled by Your Intestines?

- * Do you suffer from frequent bouts of diarrhoea or constipation?
- * Do you get painful indigestion after eating a meal?
- * Are you continually bloated and have excess wind?
- * Do you find these symptoms are worse after eating certain types of foods?

If you answer yes to any of these questions then you are probably one of the many people who suffer from continued digestive problems, often due to a lack of digestive enzymes.

Digestion

Improper digestion can be a major contributor to many health problems and nutritional intervention could well be the answer to your problems, enabling you to feel healthier and to get on with your life. In order for foods and nutrients to be properly utilised by the body they first have to be broken down by enzymes in the digestive tract. Some people have a lack of, or a reduction of these enzymes and therefore the food they eat is not properly broken down, which can lead to problems such as bloating, diarrhoea, gas and indigestion. By taking plant enzyme formulas the enzymes in the digestive tract can be aided in carrying out their function more efficiently. Examples of plant enzymes that may help in the digestive process are:

Amylase - helps digest carbohydrate

Protease - helps digest protein

Sucrase - helps digest sugar

Lactase - helps digest milk sugar

Lipase - helps digest fat

Maltase - helps digest malt sugar

Cellulase - helps digest fibre

Plant enzyme supplements are able to help digest food along the whole length of the gastrointestinal tract, from the acidity of the stomach, right through to the alkalinity of the small intestine. This ensures optimal digestion of all foods takes place. People who suffer from ulcers or gastritis would be advised to avoid digestive enzyme supplements, which contain protease, as this may cause further irritation. However, as you will read later, there are supplements suitable for people with even the most sensitive of digestive tracts.

Stomach Acids

Some people may benefit from taking hydrochloric acid supplements as not only does it help in the digestion of nutrients, but can stimulate the body to produce more of its own hydrochloric acid. Low hydrochloric acid is known as Hypochlorhydria. As we age the amount of acid produced by our stomachs diminishes. Stomach acid is necessary for several important functions. It helps with the absorption of some essential nutrients such as iron and calcium, prevents bacterial infection and is essential for ensuring the environment is the right acidity for protein absorption. Hydrochloric acid stimulates pancreatic enzymes which are required for complete breakdown of fats and proteins.



Sensitive Gastrointestinal Tracts

Often people with very sensitive gastrointestinal tracts find digestive enzymes a little too harsh. However, they can be helped by taking supplements which have a soothing action on the intestines. Gamma Oryzanol, Marsh Mallow and Slippery Elm, can be helpful in such conditions as gastritis, ulcers and non-specific gastrointestinal complaints. Sometimes an imbalance of bacteria can cause problems in the gastrointestinal tract. This is known as dysbiosis. Dysbiosis occurs when levels of beneficial bacteria become too low, allowing for the proliferation of harmful bacteria and yeasts. This can cause bloating, diarrhoea, constipation and gas.

Probiotics

By taking supplements containing high levels of beneficial bacteria, known as probiotics, the levels can be re-adjusted resulting in a reduction of symptoms. People are finding that these probiotic bacteria are so beneficial to health that they are taking them on a daily basis, just like they would a multivitamin or mineral supplement. Research has shown that good levels of beneficial bacteria can also guard against certain types of colon cancer.

Antibiotics

People who have been on antibiotic therapy would be well advised to take some probiotics to re-balance the levels of beneficial bacteria.