

Red Clover

Essentials for Healthy Living

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To Digest or Not to Digest; That is the Question

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Most of us don't give our digestion a second thought, we chew and then swallow, figuring our work is done. Also, far too many of us have just come to accept gastric upset as the status quo as we swallow more and more antacids. There is a reason the leading over-the-counter medicines in the US are designed to relieve digestive disturbances. Further complicating the situation, digestive and absorptive dysfunctions are involved in the majority of chronic disorders, even when there is no apparent connection to the digestive tract. These mal-digestive and mal-absorptive disorders over time contribute to a deficiency of the refueling and resupplying of the body and its cells.

Probably the biggest causes of indigestion are simple; we eat too much, too fast and the wrong "foods" (the quotations around foods is because, for far too many of us, what we consume cannot really be called food). For many of us, if we would just be attentive to these three issues, we would resolve, or at least significantly improve, our digestive woes.

Digestive health is so much more important than just breaking down food. It is the basis for good health and if confronted with a disease or an imbalance, healing becomes much more difficult with an under functioning digestive tract. Digestive disorders can be associated with virtually every disease, especially the chronic, long developing ones, either directly (causally) or indirectly (contributing). Studies have drawn correlations for increased risks between digestive imbalances such as GERD, H. pylori and gastritis with some various serious imbalances, including cancer. If our digestive system is not functioning

effectively there is a greater likelihood of developing problems like fatigue, allergies, skin health, arthritis, and most chronic imbalances.

Where Does It All Begin

Most of us, I imagine, would say that the digestive process begins in our mouth, but I propose that it begins in our head. Digestion starts with our decision to eat along with the selection of the foods we have chosen to eat and includes how we eat as well. Some simple digestive guidelines include:

- 1 – Chew, ideally into a liquid mush.
- 2 – Enjoy, don't hurry through your meal, take your time.
- 3 – Eat mindfully, this means when you are eating, you are eating, not watching TV or reading the newspaper.
- 4 – Gratitude, being thankful for your food, energizes your food and empowers the diner; whatever your belief system you can be thankful for the forces that brought you the food, be it divine, the Earth, a farmer or even the chef.
- 5 – Listen, we are all unique, learn to listen to how your body responds to the foods you consume; regardless of what a book or article may tell you, your body is the best judge of the right diet for you.

While it is fundamentally important to eat a good diet, it does our health and our body little good if the foods are not properly broken down into particles that the body can utilize. This is why most traditional healing approaches place digestive health at the center of our health and healing. Improving our digestion is a great starting point for attaining radiant health.

"The digestive process begins... in our head."

