

## Dietary Habits That Promote Digestive Wellness

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### DESCRIPTION

Maintaining a healthy digestive system is essential for overall well-being. The digestive process not only allows the body to absorb nutrients but also plays a key role in the immune system, energy levels and even mental health. One of the most effective ways to support digestive wellness is by adopting the right dietary habits. There are several dietary practices that can help promote optimal digestion. Fiber is an important nutrient for digestive health, as it aids in regular bowel movements and helps prevent constipation. It also supports a healthy gut micro biome by feeding beneficial bacteria.

Soluble fiber, found in oats, beans and fruits, absorbs water and forms a gel-like substance that slows down digestion, which can help regulate blood sugar. Insoluble fiber, found in whole grains, vegetables and seeds, adds bulk to stool and helps food pass more easily through the digestive tract. It's important to drink water throughout the day rather than waiting until you feel thirsty, as thirst can be an indication of dehydration. Herbal teas like ginger or peppermint can also aid digestion and provide additional benefits for the gut. The digestive process begins in the mouth, where food is broken down into smaller pieces by chewing and mixed with saliva. Chewing thoroughly can make digestion easier, as it reduces the workload on the stomach and intestines.

Large meals can put a strain on the digestive system, especially for individuals with conditions like acid reflux or Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS). Eating smaller, more frequent meals throughout the day gives the digestive system time to process food properly without becoming

overwhelmed. This also helps to regulate blood sugar levels, which can further support overall digestive health. Prebiotics, on the other hand, are foods that nourish probiotics. These include fiber-rich foods like garlic, onions, asparagus and bananas. Including both probiotics and prebiotics in your diet can enhance gut health and improve digestion by promoting the growth of beneficial bacteria.

A diet high in processed foods, refined sugars and unhealthy fats can disrupt digestion and lead to gastrointestinal discomfort. These foods can irritate the digestive tract, promote inflammation and encourage the growth of harmful bacteria in the gut. To promote digestive wellness, it's important to limit the intake of fatty, fried and overly processed foods. Instead, focus on whole, nutrient-dense foods such as fruits, vegetables, lean proteins and healthy fats like those found in avocados, nuts and olive oil. These foods are not only easier to digest but also help support the gut's natural functions. This simple habit also aids in the production of digestive enzymes, which further break down food and help the body absorb nutrients efficiently.

Although not directly related to diet, managing stress is essential for digestive wellness. Chronic stress can negatively impact digestion by affecting gut motility and contributing to conditions like heartburn, bloating and IBS. Practicing stress-reducing techniques such as mindfulness, yoga, deep breathing, or regular physical activity can enhance digestive health and improve nutrient absorption. Eating a fiber-rich diet, staying hydrated; consuming probiotics and prebiotics and avoiding overly processed foods are essential steps in promoting digestive wellness. Taking care of your gut is not only about what you eat but also about maintaining a balanced lifestyle for long-term digestive health.

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