



## **DIGESTIVE HEALTH**

### ∞ **Eating**

- Where are you eating?
  - At your desk? In the car? On the run?
- What are you eating?
  - Fast food? Healthy choices?
- Who are you eating with?
  - Your computer? Your friends? With a magazine?

∞ Digestion requires a parasympathetic state, **“Rest and Digest”** for optimal function and absorption

### ∞ **Digestive process**

- Chewing, salivary enzymes, hydrochloric acid, pancreatic enzymes all help to break food down for absorption

∞ Stress → decrease in HCl/pancreatic enzyme production → maldigestion and malabsorption → imbalance in gut flora → gas/bloating/leaky gut/candida overgrowth

### ∞ **Bitters**

- Herbs that promote the stimulation of digestive enzymes that will stimulate appetite, stimulate liver function and bile secretion from the gallbladder, stimulate repair of stomach lining, and regulate secretion of insulin and glycogen.
- Take ¼ - ½ tsp. 15 minutes prior to a meal.
  - Gentian
  - Chamomile
  - Dandelion
  - Yarrow

### ∞ **Enzymes**

- Papain-from papaya
  - Natural Factors Papaya enzymes
  - Zand Quick Digest (papain, amylase, cellulase, bromelain, lipase)
- Bromelain-from pineapple
- Amylase-breaks down sugars
- Cellulase-breaks down cellulose (plant fibers)
- Lipase-breaks down fats

- Lactase-breaks down lactose
- Phytase-breaks down phytate found in grains and oil seeds
- Sucrase-breaks down sucrose into fructose and galactose
- Maltase-breaks down maltose
- Examples: ITI Similase, Enzymedica Digest

### ∞ **Hydrochloric acid (HCl) and Betaine HCL**

- Produced by the parietal cells of the stomach
- Helps break down proteins and kills bacteria
- Caution: peptic ulcer, GERD, gastritis – consult a doctor prior to trying HCL
- Thorne Biogest/Betaine HCL and Pepsin, Natural factors Betaine HCL

### ∞ **Prebiotics**

- Food for the bacteria come from carbohydrate fibers (oligosaccharides)
- Includes: fruits, legumes, whole grains, FOS, inulin

### ∞ **Probiotics**

- Live organisms that are similar to the microorganisms in the gut
- Aka healthy bacteria or friendly bacteria
- Decreased by
  - Antibiotics, stress, intestinal dysbiosis (overgrowth of unhealthy bacteria)
- Are killed off after use of antibiotics → gas/bloating/discomfort/diarrhea
- Are usually low in individuals with digestive issues (gas, bloating, diarrhea, IBS, UC, Crohn's, H. pylori infection, infectious diarrhea)
- Also low in individuals with UTI's, yeast infections, skin infection
- Helps support immune function via GALT (Gut associated Lymphoid Tissue)
- Food sources:
  - yogurt, kefir, miso, tempeh, kombucha, some soy juices, fermented products, sauerkraut
- 2 Widely known strains:
  - Lactobacillus – primarily in the small intestine
  - Bifidobacterium – primarily in the large intestine
- Saccharomyces boulardii-probiotic that is a yeast, not a bacteria
- Brands:
  - Natural Factors – traces of dairy
    - Ultimate probiotic 12/12 – 12 billion, 12 strains
    - Women's formula – 12 billion, female specific
    - Children's formula – 3 billion/capsule
  - Jarrow –traces of dairy
    - Femdophilus – L. rhamnosus GR-1 and L. reuteri RC-14, 5 billion/capsule
  - Bio K + - 50 billion/3.5oz, L. acidophilus and L. casei; dairy

- Kombucha drink
  - 1 billion *L. acidophilus* and 1 billion *S. boulardii*
- Udos – traces of dairy
  - Super 8 – 30 billion/capsule
- Metagenics – practitioner line
  - Ultra Flora Plus DF – 15 billion/capsule
  - Ultra Flora Dophilus/Bifidus Powder 15 billion/0.5 tsp.
- Pharmax HLC – practitioner line
  - HLC maintenance 2 billion/capsule
  - HLC hi potency 8 billion/capsule
  - HLC intensive 15 billion/capsule
  - HLC sachets 30 billion/sachet

### ∞ Acid Reflux

- Irritation of the esophagus caused by stomach acid
- Symptoms: chest pain, coughing, hoarseness of voice, asthma, burning sensation in chest; diagnosis is usually clinical
- Usually due to loosening of the LES (lower esophageal sphincter) or too frequent opening of the LES
- Suggestions
  - Avoid eating 3 hours before laying down
  - Elevate bed 6 inches to decrease the acid contact with the esophagus
  - Smoking, chocolate, alcohol, tomato products, citrus juices, coffee, carminatives (peppermint, spearmint)
    - These decrease the LES causing more episodes of reflux
  - Identification and elimination of food intolerances
  - Do not use antacids! These provide short term relief but contribute to the problem.
  - ID and treat hiatal hernia if present
  - Bitters/cholagogues/carminatives
  - Aloe vera juice: ½ - ¼ cup 3x/day before meals
  - DGL: Glycyrrhiza glabra (licorice) demulcent, anti-inflammatory, increases mucus secretory cells and quality of mucus produced
  - Ulmus fulva (slippery elm) – anti-inflammatory, demulcent
    - ½ - 1tsp. in paste or sprinkled over food
- Products:
  - Pure Encapsulations: Heartburn essentials (vitamin C, gamma oryzanol, DGL, marshmallow, slippery elm, artichoke, tumeric, enzymes)
  - Jarrow Formulas: Pepzine (zinc and L-carnosine)
  - Natural Factors: DGL
  - Enzymatic Therapy: Heartburn Free (orange peel extract)