

Digestion, Enzymes, and Your Health

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As seen in Total Health



Did you know...

... that over \$7 billion per year is spent on over-the-counter and prescription digestive aids for symptoms such as: acid indigestion, digestive upsets, gas, bloat, poor elimination, and more?

Digestion and absorption are the keys to vibrant health.

Every cell, tissue and organ in your body depends on the healthy digestion, absorption and assimilation of food. This process is, in fact, essential to life. What makes this process possible are digestive enzymes... Digestive enzymes function to facilitate the release of life-giving nutrients from the proteins, carbohydrates and fats we consume in our daily diets. Without digestive enzymes, our bodies would be unable to assimilate and draw sustenance from the foods we eat.

Where do enzymes come from?

While our bodies do have a limited capacity to manufacture enzymes, it's best to obtain enzymes directly from our food. However, all enzymes are very sensitive to temperature and break down quickly when exposed to low levels of heat. Cooking foods over 118 degrees for 3 minutes or longer completely destroys enzymes. Thus, in order to obtain enzymes from diet, the food must be eaten raw. This creates a vicious dietary cycle. As we eat increasing amounts of "cooked foods" our need for digestive enzymes to break down these foods increases accordingly. Without the benefit of raw foods (dietary sources of enzymes), the body must manufacture its own enzymes to break down the increased amount of "enzyme-deficient" cooked foods consumed. As a result, our bodies attempt to compensate by withdrawing enzymes needed for digestion from its own "bank". Over time, with such heavy withdrawals of enzymes needed to digest an almost all-cooked diet, it's not hard to see how our "enzyme bank" may become out of balance... heavy withdrawals coupled with skimpy deposits lead to eventual bankruptcy. Unfortunately, our digestive system, as well as our overall health suffers, creating bothersome and uncomfortable effects such as gas, bloat, and poor elimination due to poor digestion.

How do enzymes work?

Digestive enzymes function by breaking down food to release and make available to our bodies the essential nutrients contained within. Enzymes are very specific in their action. For example, the enzyme amylase (found in the saliva) specifically functions in breaking down starch to maltose (sugar). No other type of enzyme performs this specific function. As an experiment, take a piece of starchy food (like a cracker) and hold it in your mouth without swallowing it. As the

amylase works on the starch, you will taste it getting sweeter as the starch is converted to maltose. Digestive enzymes fall into three general categories - carbohydrases (which help to break down carbohydrates), proteases (which help break down proteins) and lipases (which help to break down fat).

What is the enzyme/digestion process?

As already mentioned, carbohydrates begin to be broken down in the mouth as a result of the actions of the amylase secreted with the saliva. Once swallowed, the action of this enzyme ceases as it is exposed to the stomach acid. The major digestive event in the stomach is the breakdown of proteins. Both the enzyme pepsin and the stomach acid itself act as initiators for this reaction. Minor events in the stomach are the breakdown of some fat by a gastric lipase and the breakdown of sucrose (to a very small extent) by the stomach acid. By the time food has left the stomach, digestion of all three energy nutrients (carbohydrates, proteins and fats) has begun. The action accelerates in the small intestine where intestinal juices containing carbohydrases, lipases, and proteases begin to work on the partially broken down food. Additionally, both the pancreas and the liver make contributions by way of ducts leading into the duodenum. The pancreatic juice contains enzymes of all three types. The liver contributes bile, which suspends fats so that the lipases may work on them. As a result of all these secretions, all the energy nutrients are digested in the small intestines.

Clinical Experience...

It has been my experience at the Home Nutrition Clinic that in today's fast-paced climate - with more and more people eating diets prepared, cooked (enzyme-deficient), high fat foods - everyone can benefit from enzyme supplementation. Supplementation with digestive enzymes greatly reduces the need for the body to manufacture them (at the expense of other enzymes) and thus enhances the entire digestive process. More complete digestion of the food we eat means better utilization of the energy from that food. It will actually help our body maximize the energy derived from the food. The result? Less gas and bloating from incomplete digestion, and maximum energy.

Thousands of people have come to my clinic with digestive problems and issues ranging from gas, bloating, stomach discomfort, acid indigestion, and sleepiness after meals. Before consulting with me, many of my clients regularly used over the counter products such as Tums, Rolaids, and Pepcid AC to relieve their symptoms. But why wait for the pain of discomfort to start? A high quality vegetarian enzyme blend can support and enhance the entire digestive process, often circumventing these symptoms at the core before they even start. I believe in going to the root of the problem, rather than focusing on symptoms. If the digestive system is overburdened and inefficient, support it with enzymes. Enzymes are to our digestive system, what calcium is to our bones.

For a long-term clinical approach, I have found that supplementation with dietary enzymes is only half the answer. In addition to replenishing enzymes destroyed by eating a daily diet of

cooked foods, it is also necessary to rebuild and support the body's own ability to secrete digestive enzymes as efficiently as possible. Unfortunately, a lifetime of diets lacking in enzymes has possibly compromised the body's natural ability to do so. This can be accomplished with a good digestive rebuilder designed to stimulate the body's own natural ability to secrete digestive enzymes and function efficiently. Bitters, herbs and other nutritional components can strengthen the digestive process and help produce long-term digestive efficiency.

About Nature's Secret New Digestive Program:

Although there are several good digestive enzyme formulas currently available in health food stores, there are no digestive "programs". I formulated Nature's Secret Rezyme™ to fill this void. This two-part, two-bottle program consists of a Vegetarian Enzyme Blend, and an Enzyme Rebuilder. The Vegetarian Enzyme Blend is comprised of high quality plant sources, and offers concentrated enzyme activity (over double the activity of general food supplement enzymes). The Enzyme Rebuilder combines digestive bitters (which stimulate gastric secretions) with herbs and other nutritional components that support and enhance digestive function. This formula "rekindles" digestive fire so that the body can function efficiently on its own. Nature's Secret Rezyme™ is the only digestive program on the market that combines a powerful enzyme blend with a digestive tonic and rebuilder. It supports and enhances ALL areas of the digestive process. Like all other Nature's Secret products, I formulated Rezyme™ to address the underlying issue of the body's particular weakness, not just the symptom.