

Digestive System



Project Number: 2022-2-SK01-KA220-ADU-000102228



**Co-funded by
the European Union**

Contents



What is digestive system, why it is important and how it works



Illustration and description of common digestive diseases



Risk factors and Prevention of digestive diseases



The digestive specialists



Useful resources



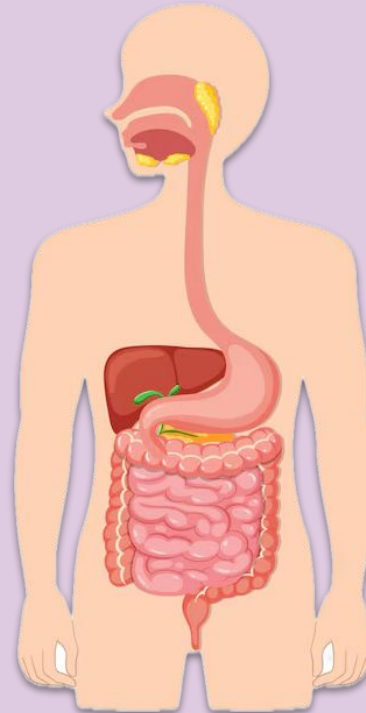
Digestive System



The **digestive system** helps the body break down **food**.

The digestive system includes:

- **Mouth** (starting point)
- **Esophagus** (food tube)
- **Stomach**
- **Large intestine**
- **Small intestine**
- **Liver**
- **Pancreas**
- **Gallbladder**
- **Anus**



Why is it important?



Digestion is important because your body **needs nutrients** from food and drink **to work properly and stay healthy**



Your digestive system breaks nutrients into parts small enough for your body to absorb and use for **energy, growth, and cell repair.**



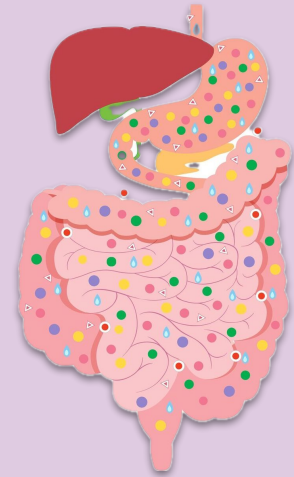
How does the digestive system works?

Each part of your digestive system has a job:

1 Some parts help move food and drink through the GI tract (esophagus, stomach, intestines)

2 Other parts break food and drink into smaller pieces.

- The digestive process starts when you put food in your mouth.
- When food is small enough, your body can take in the **nutrients**. Your **circulatory system** passes them on the **other parts of your body** to store or use.
- The large intestine takes **water** from food, and the rest becomes waste, called stool.
- **Nerves** and **hormones** help control digestion.



Digestive diseases

A **digestive disease** is any health problem that **occurs in the digestive tract**.

The digestive can be:

- acute
- lasting only a short time
- chronic
- long-lasting.

The **first sign of problems** in the digestive tract often includes one or more of the following **symptoms**:

bleeding

bloating

constipation

diarrhea

heartburn

Nausea and
vomiting

Pain in
the belly

Swallowing
problems

Weight gain
or loss



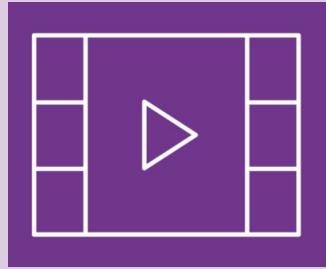
Digestive diseases

The common digestive diseases:

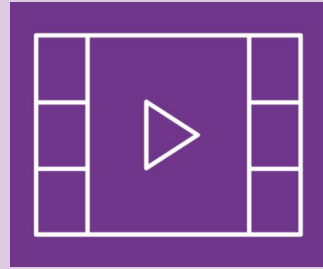
- Gallstones and cholecystitis
- Rectal problems: anal fissure, hemorrhoid
- Esophagus problems: **stricture (narrowing)** and esophagitis
- Stomach problems: gastritis, **gastric ulcers** (usually caused by Helicobacter pylori infection) and **cancer**
- Liver problems: hepatitis B or hepatitis C, cirrhosis, liver failure, pancreatitis
- Intestinal problems: **polyps and cancer**, **infections**, celiac disease, Crohn disease, ulcerative colitis, diverticulitis, short bowel syndrome
- Gastroesophageal reflux disease and hiatal hernia



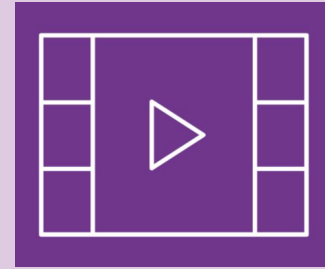
Useful videos



[Parts of the digestive system](#)



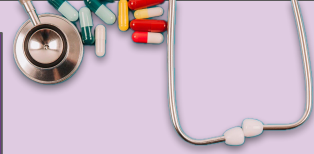
[The digestive process](#)



[How your digestive system works](#)



Digestive System



Risks Factors

- **Lifestyle**
Smoking, obesity, eating habits, alcohol consumption, stress, frenetic pace
- **Family history**, Age, Gender
- **Infections** – chronic diseases (e.g. diabetes)
- **Taking certain medications** (e.g. antidepressants, strong painkillers such as narcotics)

Prevention

- **Eat the right foods:** A balanced diet rich in fruits and vegetables provides the fiber that builds good bacteria and gut health. Include also probiotics and other fermented foods.
- **Get more sleep:** Not sleeping enough is connected to a higher chance of obesity, which can lead to problems with your digestive system
- **Move more:** Exercise is the best way to lose weight and keep a healthy body to avoid digestive system problems
- **Manage stress:** Reducing stress is essential to reducing heartburn. Try relaxation therapies and other distraction techniques.
- **Get help for issues like anxiety and depression:** Mood and digestive system health are closely linked via the [brain-gut connection](#).



The digestive specialists

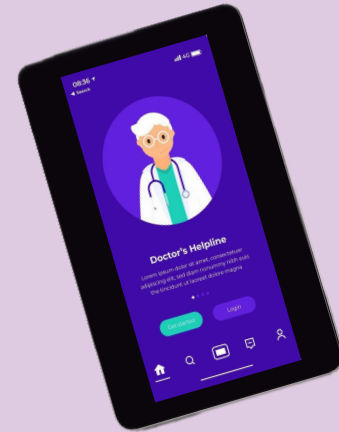
To help you manage your digestive health, you may need more than one healthcare provider:

- **Primary care provider:** family physicians, internists, and pediatricians can help you identify early symptoms of digestive distress.
- **Gastroenterologist:** they specialize in digestive problems.
- **Hepatologists:** they specialize in liver diseases. They may work closely with gastroenterologists to manage digestive issues that affect your liver, pancreas, and gallbladder.
- **Dietitian nutritionist:** they are experts in food and nutrition. They can recommend and manage an eating plan for your digestive problem.
- **Colorectal surgeons:** they are surgeons who specialize in gastrointestinal diseases



Useful Resources

- Use the section « [Digestive Diseases](#) » of **National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases** website to find more information about your digestive system, how it works and why it is important for your health
- Learn more about [digestive diseases](#) at MedLine Plus website, an online health information resource for patients and their families and friends. It is a service of the National Library of Medicine, the world's largest medical library part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).
- Use the section « [Health topics](#) » at World Health Organisation (WHO) where you can search specific topic about digestive system and diseases by use the search bar.
- The Cleveland Clinic offer a wide range of information about digestive system, diseases, health providers and prevention. Use the search bar here: <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health>



TO FIND OUT MORE

