

How to Respect to the Delicate Organs of Digestion – the Stomach

The stomach is an often-neglected organ. Yet upon it our temperament and our mental powers largely depend. A happy stomach produced a happy disposition. A sour stomach produces a sour disposition. The delicate organs of digestion must be respected.

As with every part of the living machinery there are laws that govern the stomach. Adhering to these laws ensures that the stomach works well and this in turn affects the whole of this living organism.

The five areas we have control over with the stomach concerns the gateway of the stomach: the mouth.

1. We choose what goes into the mouth
2. When it goes into the mouth
3. How long it stays there
4. How much goes in and
5. The environment surrounding the entry

1. What goes in

Raw food is live food and thus it is full of enzymes. Because of this it is digested easily and quickly in the stomach. Cooked food is also an important part of the diet as the cooking process breaks down the starches and phytic acid in many foods such as grains and legumes, making them more digestible. Sprouting and culturing also can do this. Cooked food takes longer to digest than does raw food and so it is advisable to always begin your meal with raw food. This stimulates the digestive enzymes well and prepares them for the cooked. It also allows the raw food to digest and pass through the stomach without being delayed by the cooked food, which has a slower passage. Food as unrefined as possible, or in as natural a state as possible, is good guideline. The original diet prescribed by God for man was fruits, vegetables, nuts and grains. The food requiring the least preparing is the food to eat largely of and the food requiring the most preparation is the food to eat less of. Here is a food pyramid illustrating the suggested proportions.

Adhering to the suggestions in this pyramid will give all the necessary vitamins, minerals, proteins, and essential fatty acids required for optimum function of the human organism. Keep fruit and vegetables separate. Have fruit at one meal and vegetables at the next. Fruits and vegetables require different enzymes to break them down. If eaten together they can create a 'war' in the stomach.

Water should be drunk between meals and not with meals. If liquid is taken with meals the digestive enzymes are diluted and thus are unable to break down the food effectively. Digestion is a chemical process and water slows down all chemical processes. In fact, the liquid has to be absorbed before digestion can begin. It is best to stop drinking water half an hour before a meal, and to resume water drinking one and a half to two hours after the meal. It is vital to drink early in the morning, as the body is dehydrated from the loss of water during the night. Water

before breakfast cleanses every cell of the body and thickens the stomach lining, preparing it for digestion.

Avoid taking articles into the stomach that would irritate or weaken it. Here is a list of such foods that weaken and irritate the stomach lining: alcohol, sugar, black pepper, msg, caffeine, chilies, cloves, cinnamon, fried foods, tobacco and marijuana smoke. Food that has been cooked and kept more than twenty-four hours, such as old, devitalized food is detrimental. Grains and legumes that have not been thoroughly cooked are also inhibitors to digestion.

2. When it goes in

Be consistent. We are creatures that run according to cycles and the stomach is no exception. It loves to eat at the same time every day. The stomach is better prepared for a large meal at breakfast than at any other time of the day. We should eat breakfast like a king, lunch like a queen, tea like a pauper. When we lie down to sleep, the stomach should have its work all done, that it, as well as the other organs of the body, may enjoy rest. At least five or six hours should intervene between meals and most people will find two meals are better than three. Some people, because of the demands of work or home situations, require a third meal. If this is the case, it should be taken early and be the lightest meal of the day. Digestion slows down after 7pm at night.

Digestion can be likened to an explosion on the human body as it takes an enormous amount of blood and energy to digest food. Food averages three to four hours to digest. If this process is interrupted, the stomach once again has problems breaking the food down properly.

A common but detrimental practice is to eat every two or three hours; when this happens the stomach is required to cease from digesting and go to the new comer. Thus digestion is delayed and the food that is neglected begins to ferment.

All the digestive enzymes are depleted after digestion and so a period of rest is needed between meals for the stomach to replace supplies.

3. How long in the mouth

You may have heard the wise old saying ‘We should chew our drink and drink our food.’ This means that we should keep our fluids in our mouths, or ‘chew’ them a few seconds before swallowing so that the fluid is warmed before entering the stomach. Also, if you are juicing, this allows the salivary enzymes to mix with the juice so that the very small amount of digestion that is required for juices happens thoroughly and quickly.

The meaning of this saying when applied to food is that we should chew our food until it is almost a liquid. This not only makes digestion easier for the stomach because the food is broken up into tinier pieces causing a larger surface area for digestive enzymes to work on, but it allows for the starch enzyme, ptylin, to begin breaking down the starch in the mouth. Starch digesting is often impeded because the food is in the mouth for only two or three chews and then swallowed. So chew, chew, chew, as you can see it is a good habit to get into.

4. How much goes in

Even organic, properly prepared food can turn to poison if too much is taken into the stomach at one time. As several small meals a day weakens the stomach by retarding proper digestion, so overeating twice a day also retards digestion by overloading the stomach. One and half to two litres is the maximum amount that the average human stomach can safely hold. Any more places a burden on the stomach and it is just not physically able to perform digestion in the way

it is designed to. The whole of the human organism suffers. Digestion can be slowed down by several hours.

5. Environment

Meal times should be happy times. The stomach is closely related to the brain. Discuss no controversial issues at the meal table. If little children are removed from the table every time they make a fuss, they quickly learn to behave at meal times. It is a good idea to only eat lightly or have a juice instead of a meal if you are anxious. Digestion is retarded when the human machinery is stressed. At mealtime cast off care and anxious thought; do not feel hurried, but eat slowly with cheerfulness.

Gentle Exercise like walking, or light domestic duties after meal aids digestion. Strenuous physical exercise retards digestion by pulling away blood from the stomach to the muscles that are being used. This is what happens if you swim, bathe, or shower after a meal. Blood is drawn away from the stomach towards the surface of the skin. An enormous amount of blood floods the tissues surrounding the stomach as soon as the salivary glands are activated prior to food entering. This happens because that blood is vital to digestion. Depletion of that blood supply retards digestion.

Posture. The back should be straight and the shoulders back which enables the stomach to perform its work digestion without being cramped.