

Natural Approaches to Digestive Health

The Digestive system is critically important to the body. It is the gateway for all nutrients to reach the blood stream and eventually the cells to provide energy, immunity and life. Digestive disorders are becoming increasingly common among our population.

- **Upper digestive** distress, such as acid reflux, GERD, indigestion, heart burn, now affect 116 million Americans.
- **Lower digestive** difficulties of Irritable Bowel Syndrome (colitis, diverticulitis, irregularity, etc) affects 45 million. Inflammatory Bowel Syndrome (Crohn's Disease, Ulcerative Colitis) affects another 1.5 million.

Medications for these conditions typically treat symptoms but rarely address the cause, which, as you might expect, lie primarily with our standard American diets, which are now laden with sugar, wheat, baked goods, refined carbohydrates, fat, salty-snacks, pasta and soft drinks. Furthermore, all medications have side effects. As a result, we have overwhelmed our digestive systems with gluten and genetically modified grains which stress our immune systems and vital organs with constant insulin surges.

The following are supplements that have been found to be helpful for reducing symptoms and healing the digestive system as we begin to make healthier choices in our diet.

For Upper Digestive Conditions... Acid Reflux, bloating, gas, indigestion

EZGest— comprehensive digestive enzymes essential to break down our food. The pancreas is supposed to produce enzymes, but often gets over-worked from our high carbohydrate diets or from Candida yeast overgrowth.

Stomach Soothing Complex—Peppermint and ginger have a calming effect on the stomach. The tablets can be swallowed or dropped into a mug of warm water and made into a soothing tea.

Premium Alfalfa Complex—chlorophyll, trace minerals and natural enzymes may be the reason people find alfalfa helpful to take with meals. It also is a natural deodorizer eliminating bad breath and body odor.

Chewable Calcium Complex—can neutralize stomach acids. However, in many, if not most, cases of heart burn the problem is too LITTLE acid. Acid production can decline with age, in which case, taking a teaspoon of apple cider vinegar may be helpful until acid production is restored. (B-Complex and Vita Lea may help).

Optiflora Probiotic System – The single most important product for a healthy digestive system. Probiotics are essential friendly bacteria that live in our digestive tract. Optiflora is the first product in the market that guarantees 98%-100% LIVE delivery of the good bacteria to the gut by providing 3 **seamless** layers that encapsulate the fragile probiotics.

- **Seamless** outer shell protects micro flora against stomach acid
- Middle layer protects against oxygen and moisture
- Inner core holds and protects micro flora until they are released in the intestine.

Optiflora helps to:

- Limit the growth of Candida & other harmful microbes
- Prevent food poisoning by producing natural antibiotics to control salmonella and other pathogens
- Increase immune function in the intestines
- Synthesize B vitamins, Vitamin A(eyes and skin) and K (blood clotting and bone formation)
- Generate acids to help absorb minerals
- Generates acids to help break protein down into amino acids
- Probiotics are used to manufacture & repair hormones and enzymes and to maintain bone structure
- Facilitates digestion by breaking down lactose in dairy products, creating lactic acid. (Lactic acid prevents overgrowth of harmful bacteria.)
- Regulate bowel movements and help prevent travelers diarrhea
- Help prevent cancer by limiting the growth of bacteria that produce cancer-causing nitrates, and by metabolizing and eliminating carcinogens, such as pesticides

For Lower Intestinal Conditions – Irritable Bowel Syndrome, Inflammatory Bowel Syndrome

Optiflora (above) PLUS...

OmegaGuard – Omega 3 fatty acid, a natural anti-inflammatory to reduce inflammation in the intestines

Stress Relief Complex –blunts cortisol (the stress hormone) production. Prolonged elevated levels of cortisol in the bloodstream (like those associated with chronic stress) have been shown to have negative effects, such as:

- Impaired cognitive performance
- Suppressed thyroid function
- Blood sugar imbalances such as hyperglycemia
- Decreased bone density
- Decrease in muscle tissue
- Higher blood pressure
- Lowered immunity and inflammatory responses in the body, slowed wound healing, and other health consequences
- Increased abdominal fat, which is associated with a greater amount of health problems than fat deposited in other areas of the body. Some of the health problems associated with increased stomach fat are heart attacks, strokes, the development of metabolic syndrome, higher levels of “bad” cholesterol (LDL) and lower levels of “good” cholesterol (HDL), which can lead to other health problems!

Recommended Diet – The worst foods for the digestive system and the body are sugar and refined carbohydrates (baked goods, salty chips and crackers, etc). The best are vegetables, fresh or lightly steamed... recommended at 6 to 9 /day.

Side Effects of Medications

Acid blocking meds – (Nexium, Prilosec, Prevacid, etc.)

Side effects (minor)

- Constipation
- Diarrhea
- Headache
- Nausea
- Stomach pain
- Heart burn

Side effects (major)

- Allergic reactions (rash; hives; itching; difficulty breathing; tightness in the chest; swelling of the mouth, face, lips, or tongue; unusual hoarseness);
- Bone pain
- Chest pain
- Fast or irregular heartbeat
- Fever, chills, or sore throat
- Red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin
- Seizures
- Unusual bruising or bleeding
- Unusual tiredness
- Vision changes

Steroid Medications—(prednisone, cortisone, asthma inhalers, etc.) Given to reduce inflammation, but they also suppress immune system.

Side effects

- Elevated pressure in the eyes (glaucoma)
- Fluid retention, causing swelling in your lower legs
- Increased blood pressure
- Mood swings
- Weight gain, with fat deposits in your abdomen, face and the back of your neck

When taking oral corticosteroids longer term, you may experience:

- Cataracts
- High blood sugar, which can trigger or worsen diabetes
- Increased risk of infections
- Loss of calcium from bones, which can lead to osteoporosis and fractures
- Menstrual irregularities
- Suppressed adrenal gland hormone production
- Thin skin, easy bruising and slower wound healing

Shaklee Difference For 55 years, Shaklee products have been based on solid science and clinical research. They test for 350 contaminants (US Pharmacopeia only requires 80), and perform 100,000 quality tests a year, the highest of any company in the industry. They are experts at absorption, purity and potency, AND offer an unconditional guarantee on all products.