



PART 1

The Basics of The Digestive System

- The digestive system is similar to your household plumbing pipes, carrying water into and out of your house. If something is “plugged up” everything will shut down or not work optimally.
- The digestive system is one long tube extending from the mouth all the way down through the large intestine (mouth, esophagus, stomach, small intestine, large intestine, liver, gallbladder and pancreas).
- The digestive tubes actively absorb, secrete, send signals and metabolize.
- A well-nourished digestive system keeps us smarter, stronger and disease free.
- We are eating a variety and quantity of foods that we assume our plumbing system can handle... and it does to a certain degree.
- The digestive system doesn't appreciate the fast food (or other crazy things we may eat when dared) and we will experience digestive problems.



Note to teacher

Briefly go over the section below spending more time on the small intestine where absorption occurs.



Interesting side note

The tongue is a strong muscle and according to traditional Chinese medicine, provides great insight into how your body is functioning. For example, poor dental hygiene may lead to bumps on your tongue, called papilla, or if the tip of your tongue is very red and swollen, this may indicate heart problems.

- It's optimal to chew food between 25 to 50 times (or sing Happy Birthday before swallowing). The team combination of saliva and chewing allows a perfect start in the digestion process.
- The uvula, the dangling piece of tissue at the back of your mouth, does some food directing. It makes sure food does not go up nasal passage and into your nose. Discuss how the nose smells food and sends a message to the brain to prepare the salivary glands.
- The salivary glands, located in the mouth, will begin to secrete saliva. Saliva contains water and chemical enzymes which help break down the food and make it soft and wet so it can be swallowed.
- This liquidy food is called chyme. A ball of chyme is called a bolus.
- After food leaves the mouth it goes down the esophagus.
- The stomach is about the size of a pear and can be called the body's blender. It chops, dices and makes swallowed food a more liquidy chyme.