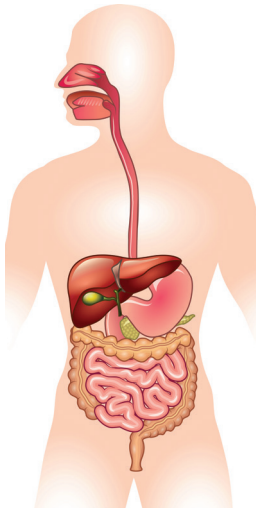


How Digestion is Supposed to Work

The goal of digestion is to reduce food to molecules so small that the nutrients can be absorbed and used by the cells of the body.

Use these words to fill in the blanks

Parasympathetic <i>(relaxed and calm)</i>	Sympathetic <i>(stressed, "fight or flight")</i>	Fats	Proteins
Carbohydrates	Liver	Stomach	Anus
Small Intestines	Brain	Gallbladder	Mouth
Colon			



Digestion only works when the body is in a _____ state.

This is why it is important to sit, relax and enjoy your meal. If you are eating on the go, standing up, looking at a screen (big or small), reading, or are upset, it is hard to properly digest your food.

***Practice:** Take three slow, deep breaths before taking your first bite of food. This sets up the whole digestive process for success. Saying grace is another way to switch to a parasympathetic state.*

Digestion is a north to south process. It starts in the _____ where it is triggered by the sight, sound, and smell of food. This begins the production of saliva in the _____ which is the first place that food begins to be broken down, or digested. This is particularly true for the macronutrient _____.

This is why it is essential to “chew, chew, chew your food.” Chewing your food thoroughly ensures better digestion of that food. The enzymes in saliva break down the nutrients and help pre-digest them so that the stomach and small intestine don’t have to work so hard.

Once you swallow your food, it passes through the esophagus into the _____ where the digestion of the macronutrient _____ begins.

The stomach is designed to be the only highly acidic environment in the body. This allows proteins to be properly broken down. It also kills any pathogens that we may ingest. The stomach also continues the breakdown of carbohydrates and fats.

When the contents of the stomach have reached the proper acidity level, they are ready to move into the _____ where they are bathed in enzymes and bicarbonates.

Bile, produced in the _____ and stored in the _____ helps the breakdown of the macronutrient _____. The breakdown of all nutrients continues until they are ready to be absorbed through the walls of the small intestines and travel through the blood stream as needed throughout the body.

Once the foods we eat are digested to the extent that they can be, they enter the large intestine, or _____ for one last chance to be recycled before the remaining waste is eliminated through the _____ as stool.