



▶ Tips for Easing Digestive Distress.....1



▶ Tips for Chewing and Swallowing Problems....2



▶ Changing Nutrient Needs.....2

Healthy Nutrition

Tips from the Wright & Filippis
Registered Dietitian

Tips for Easing Digestive Distress

Reminder: report any symptoms and changes in bowel habits to your doctor right away for correct diagnosis and treatment.

Lactose Intolerance

Lactase enzyme production can decline, causing gas and diarrhea when you drink milk. You may not have to omit all dairy products. Cheese and yogurt have very little lactose. You can buy lactose-free milk. Lactase enzyme is available to add to milk or take before eating dairy foods.

If you don't eat dairy products, try calcium-fortified foods such as juice or soy foods to meet calcium needs.

Gastroesophageal Reflux

1. Take medicine as prescribed.
2. Sit up for 2-3 hours after eating, especially before bed.
3. Elevate head of the bed 30 degrees.
4. Eat small amounts more often instead of three large meals.
5. Avoid foods and beverages that cause symptoms, like soda, caffeine, alcohol, chocolate, high fat/acid foods.

Constipation

Medical conditions, medications, iron supplements, lack of exercise and inadequate fluid and fiber intake can contribute to constipation.

1. **Include adequate fiber daily** (unless your doctor has prescribed a low fiber diet). The Institute of Medicine suggests at least 21 grams daily for women over age 50 and at least 30 grams for men.

Naturally Occurring Sources of Fiber:

fruit and vegetables
peas and beans (legumes)
unrefined grains
nuts and seeds

Nutrition Tip: Try adding wheat bran or ground flaxseed to foods to boost the type of fiber that helps most with constipation.

2. **Drink about 8 cups of fluid daily**

(unless you are on a fluid restriction). All beverages count toward your total fluid intake, but it's ideal to have plenty of water also!

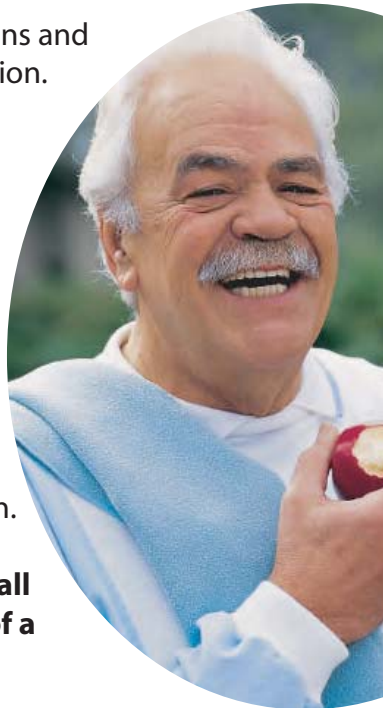
3. **Exercise regularly.** The American Heart Association recommends 30 minutes of moderate exercise most days of the week, if you are physically able. **Check with your doctor for advice on safe exercise.**



Tips for Chewing and Swallowing Problems

Many people avoid foods that are harder to eat, assuming the problem can't be fixed. This can especially lead to inadequate fiber and protein intake.

- See your dentist if you have loose or missing teeth or poorly fitting dentures. If cost is a factor, check local social service agencies for availability of free or reduced cost dental services.
- Talk to your doctor if you have dry mouth. Medications and some medical treatments can reduce saliva production.
- Try not to reduce food variety.
- Cook vegetables longer.
- Choose softer fruits.
- Select tender meats and use in recipes with high liquid content.
- Use meat alternatives for protein: milk, cheese, yogurt, eggs, peas and beans (legumes), peanut butter or soy.
- If you can't eat enough solid foods, discuss liquid supplements with your doctor or registered dietitian.



If food is sticking in your throat or esophagus, call your doctor immediately. This may be a sign of a serious medical problem.

Changing Nutrient Needs

The National Academy of Sciences recommends that people over age 50 consume greater amounts daily of the following:

Vitamin B12: 2.4 mcg

Calcium: 1200 mg (don't exceed 2500 mg)

Vitamin D: 400 IU if age 51-70 and 600 IU if over 70 (don't exceed 2000 IU)

Vitamin B6: 1.7 mg for men and 1.5 mg for women

If you have a poor appetite or limited food choices, you may need supplements. Always check with your doctor before using vitamin and mineral supplements, as well as herbal products. They can interfere with prescription medicines or cause harmful side effects from consuming too much.



Recommended Resources

American Dental Association

(312) 440-2500
www.ada.org

American Heart Association

(800) 242-8721
www.americanheart.org

National Digestive Diseases Information Clearinghouse

(800) 891-5389
www.digestive.niddk.nih.gov

National Institute on Aging

(800) 222-2225
www.nia.nih.gov

U.S. Dietary Guidelines

www.nutrition.gov



WRIGHT & FILIPPIS®

(800) 482-0222

www.FirstToServe.com