

# Indigestion



# Contents



- Indigestion: A tough problem to handle
- Digestive tract
- Causes of indigestion
- Symptoms of indigestion
- How is indigestion diagnosed?
- Prevention
- Home remedies



# Indigestion: A tough problem to handle

Indigestion is often a sign of an underlying problem, such as gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), ulcers, or gallbladder disease, rather than a condition of its own. It is a sort of discomfort felt after having meals. It can be accompanied by burning or pain in the upper stomach.

An individual experiencing a sort of acidic taste in mouth, growling stomach, abdominal pain, feel to vomit etc must be suffering from indigestion which might be caused due to intake of rich, oily foods, junk foods, stomach ulcers, gastritis problems, stomach infection, pancreatitis, too much intake of alcohol, cigarette smoking, taking antibiotics, aspirins etc.

Indigestion may be avoided by timely intake of foods, stoppage of smoking & drinking, drinking fluids after meals rather than in between them, having good sleep, medications etc.

But if it becomes a chronic problem, it is always better to consult a physician and opt for appropriate medical treatments



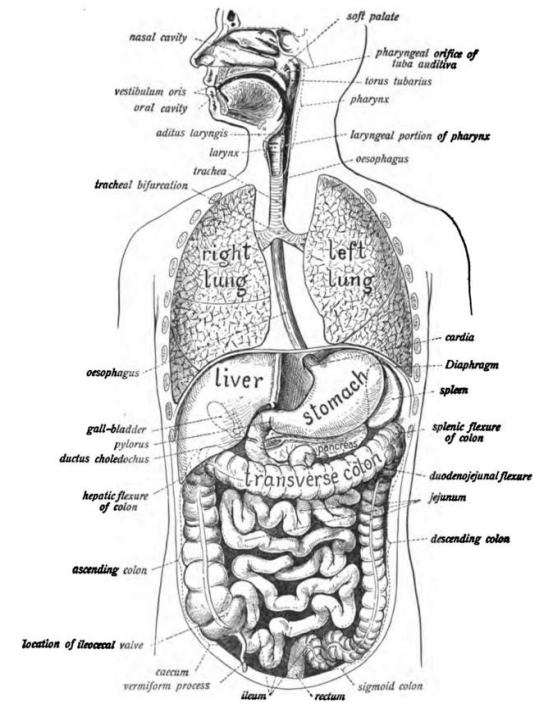
# Digestive tract



Digestive system is a group of organs which work collectively to convert food to energy which helps us to work and maintain ourselves.

Components of digestive system are as follows:

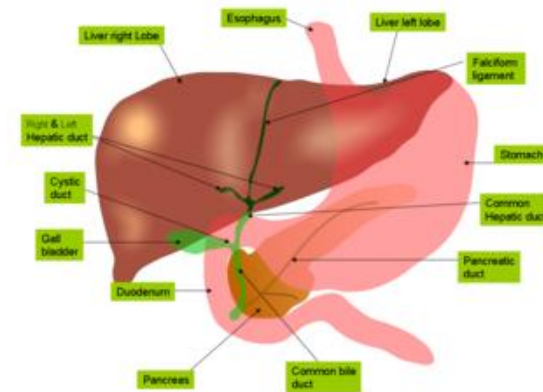
- **Mouth:** First part of the start of alimentary canal where the food is broken down to smaller pieces by teeth and mixed with saliva & certain digestive enzymes to form food bolus which is easily swallowable. The tongue pushes it down into the oesophagus (food pipe)
- **Pharynx:** Part of throat situated just behind the nasal cavity and consist of two parts: Oropharynx & laryngopharynx. The later one gives way to passage of both air & food.
- **Oesophagus:** Commonly called gullet, is a muscular tube though which food passes and enters the stomach through the hole in the diaphragm. This remains constricted at all times, except when food passes through it.
- **Diaphragm:** It separates the thoracic and abdominal cavities. The diaphragm also attaches to the bare area of the liver, which it anchors.



# Digestive tract



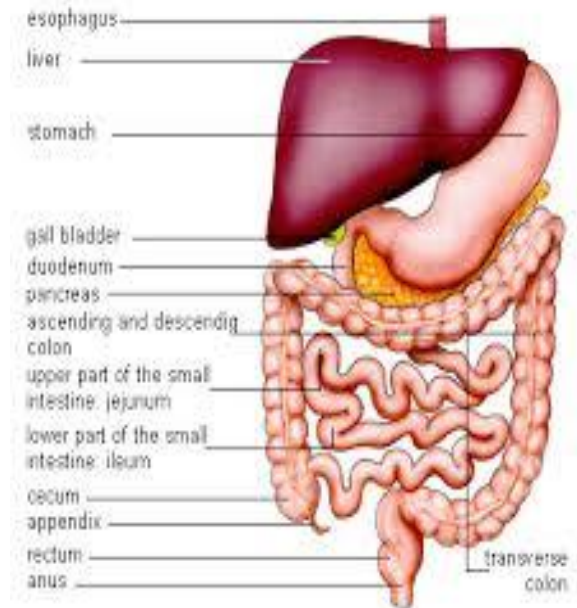
- **Stomach:** The muscular sac in which food is mixed with several Gastric acid , digestive juices & enzymes as well as bile, secreted from the liver which helps in its digestion, especially proteins through the mechanical process of ‘churning’ and convert it to a thick semi solid substance called ‘chyme’. An adult stomach can hold food upto 1 litre.
- **Spleen:** Breaks down the red & white blood cells that are spent. A product of this digestion is the pigment bilirubin which is sent to the liver and secreted in the bile .
- **Liver:** Largest organ playing a vital role in the digestive system. The liver can detoxify various metabolites, synthesise proteins and produce biochemicals needed for digestion. It regulates the storage of glycogen which it can form from glucose (glycogenesis). The liver can also synthesise glucose from certain amino acids. Its digestive functions are largely involved with the breaking down of carbohydrates.
  - **Bile:** Bile produced by the liver is made up of water (85%), bile salts, mucus and pigments, 1% fats and inorganic salts. Bile acts partly as a surfactant which lowers the surface tension between either two liquids or a solid and a liquid and helps to emulsify the fats in the chyme
  - **Gall Bladder:** The gallbladder is a hollow part of the biliary system that sits just beneath the liver. It is a small organ where the bile produced by the liver is stored, before it is released into the small intestine



# Digestive tract



- **Pancreas:** The pancreas is a major organ functioning as an accessory digestive gland in the digestive system. It is both an endocrine gland and an exocrine gland. The endocrine part secretes insulin when the blood sugar becomes high; insulin moves glucose from the blood into the muscles and other tissues for use as energy. The exocrine part releases glucagon when the blood sugar is low; glucagon allows stored sugar to be broken down into glucose by the liver in order to re-balance the sugar levels
- **Lower gastrointestinal tract:** Consists of small intestine, caecum & large intestine.
  - **Small intestine :** The **small intestine** is the part of the **intestines** where 90% of the digestion and absorption of food occurs, the other 10% taking place in the stomach and large **intestine**. The main **function** of the **small intestine** is absorption of nutrients and minerals from food.
  - **Caecum:** The main **functions** of the **caecum** are to absorb fluids and salts that remain after completion of intestinal digestion and absorption and to mix its contents with a lubricating substance, mucus.
  - **Large intestine:** . The major **function** of the **large intestine** is to absorb water from the remaining indigestible food matter and transmit the useless waste material from the body.





# Causes of indigestion



- Indigestion has many possible causes. Often, indigestion is related to lifestyle and may be triggered by food, drink or medication. Common causes of indigestion include:

- Overeating or eating too quickly
- Fatty, greasy or spicy foods
- Too much caffeine, alcohol, chocolate or carbonated beverages
- Smoking
- Anxiety
- Certain antibiotics, pain relievers and iron supplements

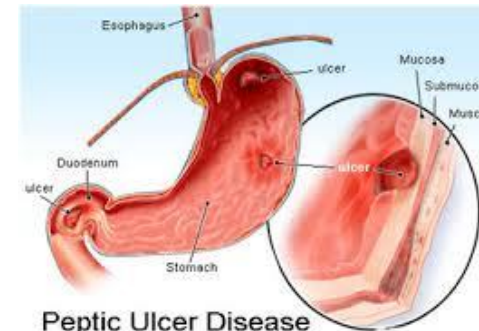
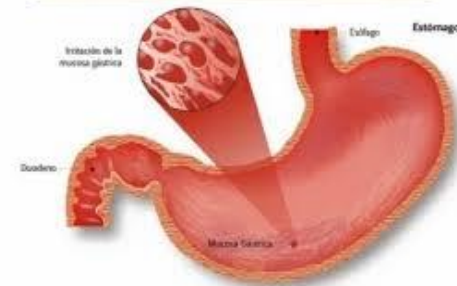


# Causes of indigestion

- Sometimes indigestion is caused by other digestive conditions, including:
  - Gastritis
  - Peptic ulcers
  - Celiac disease
  - Gallstones
  - Constipation
  - Pancreas inflammation (pancreatitis)
  - Stomach cancer
  - Intestinal blockage
  - Reduced blood flow in the intestine (intestinal ischemia)



## Gastritis



## Peptic Ulcer Disease





# Symptoms



- Common indigestion symptoms include:
  - abdominal pain
  - Belching and gas
  - Burning in the stomach or upper abdomen
  - heartburn or acid indigestion (acid reflux)
  - bloating (full feeling)
  - excessive gas (belching, burping or flatulence)
  - nausea with or without vomiting
  - acidic taste in the mouth
  - gurgling, rumbling, or growling stomach discomfort
  - constipation or diarrhoea
  - decreased appetite



# How is indigestion diagnosed?



- To diagnose indigestion, the doctor asks about the person's current symptoms and medical history and performs a physical examination. The doctor may order x rays of the stomach and small intestine.
- The doctor may perform blood, breath, or stool tests if the type of bacteria that causes peptic ulcer disease is suspected as the cause of indigestion.
- The doctor may perform an upper endoscopy
- The doctor may perform biopsies—removing small pieces of tissue for examination with a microscope—to look for possible damage from GERD or an infection.
- Because indigestion can be a sign of a more serious condition, people should see a doctor right away if they experience
  - frequent vomiting
  - blood in vomit
  - weight loss or loss of appetite
  - black tarry stools
  - difficult or painful swallowing
  - abdominal pain in a nonepigastic area
  - indigestion accompanied by shortness of breath, sweating, or pain that radiates to the jaw, neck, or arm
  - symptoms that persist for more than 2 weeks



# Prevention

Because indigestion is a symptom rather than a disease, treatment usually depends upon the underlying condition causing the indigestion.

Often, episodes of indigestion go away within hours without medical attention. However, if your indigestion symptoms become worse, you should consult a doctor

Here are some helpful tips to alleviate indigestion:

- Try not to chew with your mouth open, talk while chewing, or eat too fast. This causes you to swallow too much air, which can aggravate indigestion
- Drink fluids after rather than during meals
- Avoid late-night eating
- Try to relax after meals
- Avoid spicy foods.
- Stop smoking
- Avoid alcoholic beverages





# Home remedies

- Some of the well known home remedies for indigestion are as follows:
  - **Ginger** is justifiably famous for setting stomach upset and improving digestion
  - **Camomile** is an age-old treatment for indigestion. It calms the stomach and soothes the intestinal tract
  - **Peppermint oil** soothes intestinal muscle spasms and helps prevent nausea
  - Chewing and swallowing a spoonful of **fennel or caraway seeds** is a great way to stop indigestion
  - **Fennel or anise tea** made with two to three teaspoons of the crushed seeds is another tasty solution
  - Try drinking one teaspoon of **apple cider vinegar** mixed with half-cup of water. This is particularly effective if you've overindulged at the dinner table.
  - Stir a teaspoon of **baking soda** into a glass of water and drink it. This solution neutralizes stomach acid and helps relieve gas and bloating





*Live Healthy...!!!*