

Having Digestive Problems? “Enzymes Help” Says Pharmacist RoseMarie Pierce



In my work as a Holistic Pharmacist I am often asked questions such as this one:
”How is it possible that I am sick – again? I eat well. I exercise. I drink plenty of water. I seem to be getting adequate sleep. But, I still get sick and feel so tired! What’s happening?”

My short answer to this question is most often: “Good health requires good digestion.”
Our digestive tract was not designed to handle the modern North American diet of cooked and processed food even if the food is organic and wholesome. Raw foods come with their own supply of enzymes, which are essential for digestion and for life itself. But most people eat over-cooked, pasteurized, irradiated, over-processed foods. Also, as we age, the enzymes produced by our bodies decrease in number and in activity level. This all leads to a lack of vital enzymes in our daily diet.

What are the effects of an enzyme-poor diet?

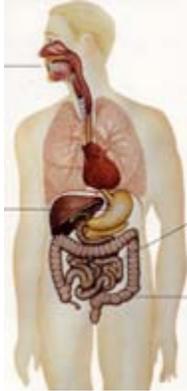
Because the body must work extra hard to create the enzymes we need, our energy levels can be noticeably depleted. Feeling sleepy after a meal occurs because the body is working more intensely than it should to complete the digestive process. Consequently, our body doesn't have adequate energy or nutrients to produce the enzymes required for other essential functions such as removing toxic cellular waste, protecting itself against foreign invaders (immune function), producing hormones and neurotransmitters, and making new cells and tissues. The ultimate result? Our health suffers, digestion is poor, we become fatigued and we age faster. Taking digestive enzyme supplements can make a noticeable difference in our health when taken with every meal.

What are the signs of enzyme deficiency?

One of the first and most obvious signs is indigestion. This includes gas, bloating, tummy ache, heartburn, constipation and/or diarrhea. A lack of enzymes can contribute to an increase in pain, inflammation, and a lack of stamina as well as hindering the body's ability to resist infection or to heal a wound. Many people do not realize that feeling sleepy after a meal or not being able to eat dairy products; spicy foods or heavy foods in general, may all be signs of enzyme deficiency.

What are enzymes?

Enzymes are large protein-based molecules that catalyze (increase the rates of) chemical reactions. Every action and reaction in the body is dependent on enzymes; all cells require enzymes to survive and function. With respect to digestion, enzymes are required for the complete absorption of valuable nutrients. They help to break down proteins into amino acids, fats into fatty acids, complex carbohydrates into simple sugars and complex fibre into smaller fibre units. Digestive enzymes also remove toxins from the bowel, relieve constipation and recondition the lining of the digestive tract.



How can I increase enzyme intake?

We get enzymes externally from some of the foods we eat (especially high in food enzymes are fresh pineapple, kiwi, papaya) and internally from our digestive organs (digestive enzymes). But when food is cooked or processed at temperatures greater than 118°F, the enzymes in the food are destroyed. Aging, injuries, illnesses and stress also deplete enzymes. We need to eat more enzyme-rich foods and take full-spectrum enzyme supplements designed to support optimal digestion. Taking a full-spectrum digestive enzyme blend helps break down proteins, fats, carbohydrates and fibre making it possible to fully benefit from the nutrients in our food.

What are the best digestive enzymes?

Plant-based enzymes are the most popular enzymes found in natural supplements because their activity, potency, safety and efficacy have been well-documented over many decades of use worldwide. The top three plant enzyme categories are amylases (for starch breakdown), proteases (for protein breakdown), and lipases (for fat digestion). It is also important to include cellulase, hemicellulase and phytase enzymes (for fibre breakdown). Select enzymes contain high activity levels (called units) which enables them to break down more fat, protein and carbohydrates in the broadest pH range. Also be sure to choose a patented, broad-spectrum, non-GMO enzyme that contains fibrazyme. Fibrazyme is a blend of fibre-digesting enzymes that maximizes fibre and grain digestion while enhancing the absorption of essential minerals. This blend is shown to be a necessary addition for proper nutrient absorption from high-fibre foods or for those taking mineral supplements with meals.

What results can I expect?

Plant-based enzymes help support and maintain a healthy digestive system by breaking down all the food groups more thoroughly. Noticeable results include less indigestion, gas, bloating,

constipation and acid reflux. Along with better digestion, increased energy and alertness are also reported.

How do I take enzymes?

Take your full-spectrum digestive enzymes with meals to aid in the digestion of all foods.

Choose a vegan formulation in a vegetable capsule. The relatively low cost per capsule of these enzyme formulas makes it a valuable investment in the health of your digestive system.