



## 10 WEEK DAY 5 DIGESTION TIPS

### CHOOSE FOODS TO PROMOTE HEALTHY DIGESTION

Buy local, fresh, seasonal organic food if possible. If your produce is not organic, it can still have pesticide residues and other contaminants on the food that can be irritating to the gut. The Dirty Dozen list, highlights fruits and vegetables that are more likely to have contamination and may be best avoided or bought organically grown. The clean 15 are foods that may have less contamination and usually have a skin or an outer leaf for protection.

The Dirty Dozen (Australia & US)	The Clean 15
Apples	Avocados
Strawberries	Sweet corn
Lettuce and kale	Pineapple
Pears	Onions
Grapes	Papaya
Spinach	Sweet peas (frozen)
Nectarines	Eggplant
Peaches	Asparagus
Capsicum and chillies	Broccoli
Celery	Cabbage
Cherries	Kiwi fruit
Tomatoes	Cauliflower

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	Honeydew melon
	Mushrooms
	Rock melon

## REDUCE PESTICIDES ON YOUR FOODS

If you do not wish to buy organically grown produce or it is not an option, you can decrease the risk of pesticides and contaminants by washing the produce thoroughly in a sink full of cold water, with 50mg of baking soda per 1 litre of water, to remove pesticides residue and bacteria<sup>3</sup>. Soak for 12 to 15 minutes, rinse, dry and store as usual. Berries may get soggy so you could just give a quick rinse in the baking soda solution<sup>3</sup>.

If vegetables have outer leaves (e.g. lettuce / cabbage) just remove the outer leaves – there is no need to rinse. Peeling vegetables can also help but remember some nutrition may be lost by doing this<sup>3</sup>.

## FOODS TO REDUCE OR AVOID

Try to reduce or avoid anything that contains added sugar, trans fats (usually in commercially baked and fried foods - avoid the words hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated), refined (white) flour, and anything artificial - sweeteners, dyes, flavourings or preservatives.

Look for 'hidden' sugars by checking labels. Some of the more common sugars and sweeteners added to foods include - corn syrup, dextrin, dextrose, fructose, fruit juice concentrates, glucose, high-fructose corn syrup, inverted sugar, lactose, maltose, malt syrup, sucrose, sugar syrup, cane crystals, cane sugar, evaporated cane juice, maltodextrin.

## CONTROVERSIAL ADDITIVES

To avoid anything artificial - sweeteners, dyes, flavourings or preservatives, look to see if there are numbers in the ingredients lists on food packaging. For more information on these numbers (and which ones are the most worrying), see the following Choice article:

<https://www.choice.com.au/food-and-drink/food-warnings-and-safety/food-additives/articles/food-additives-you-should-avoid>

The controversial additives in question are from the following key categories:

- ✚ Colours (code numbers in the 100 range), which add or restore colour to foods.
- ✚ Preservatives (200 range), which help protect against food deterioration caused by micro-organisms.

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- ✚ Antioxidants (300 range), which slow or prevent the oxidative deterioration of foods, such as when fats and oils go rancid.
- ✚ Artificial sweeteners (including intense sweeteners in the 900 range and bulk sweeteners such as sorbitol, 420), which create a sweet taste for fewer kilojoules than sugar.
- ✚ Flavour enhancers (mainly in the 600 range), which improve the flavour and/or aroma of food.

## OTHER KEY ADDITIVES TO AVOID

- ✚ Emulsifiers (mostly in the 400 range), which help stop oil and water mixtures from separating (in mayonnaise, for example).
- ✚ Stabilisers (mostly in the 400 range), which maintain the even dispersal of substances in foods such as ice cream.

## STAY HYDRATED & STIMULATE YOUR DIGESTION

A hydrated body means it will work more efficiently. Body water regulates temperature, lubricates our bowel and joints, and transports nutrients around, so keeping well-hydrated is crucial<sup>10,11</sup>. Drinking two to three litres per day or around 33ml of water per kilo of body weight is ideal – add one extra litre for every hour of exercise<sup>10</sup>.

Enhance your digestion with herbal teas like dandelion root tea can be a great support to digestion and chamomile tea can be very soothing and calming to an irritated and nervous gut.

- ✚ Try sipping slices of fresh ginger in hot water before meals to warm things up.
- ✚ Give fennel tea a try, again another great digestive herb to settle an upset stomach. Add 1 tablespoon of fennel seeds per three cups of boiling water.
- ✚ Try adding refreshing sticks of lemongrass, or a squeeze of lemon juice in warm water<sup>12</sup>.
- ✚ You could combine lemon and ginger, or try adding chai spices (cardamon, cinnamon, cloves) to your ginger or dandelion root tea.
- ✚ To improve digestion, it has often been suggested to sip lemon or apple cider vinegar in warm water, like a tea, before a meal to improve digestion. These drinks may have adverse effects on tooth enamel and worse, cause throat injuries if taken in larger doses<sup>16,17</sup>. So, check with your dentist next time you visit if this is a concern for you.
- ✚ To digest food well it must be chewed properly. Taking time with each meal and remembering to chew thoroughly will break the food down well, aiding our

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absorption of nutrients in our food. Thorough chewing (20 x each mouthful) means the nutrients released from the food is vastly increased as well<sup>15</sup>.

## FERMENTED FOODS TO PROMOTE HEALTHY DIGESTION

Fermented foods have been used in many cultures for centuries, to preserve foods and improve flavour, and more recently we are learning of the many health benefits they confer<sup>27,28</sup>. Research shows us that not only do fermented products reduce the risk of diabetes, high blood pressure, cholesterol and bowel diseases, but they also help with weight maintenance and stabilising moods via our gut-brain axis<sup>27</sup>.

There are many fermented foods that we can now either buy ready-made or get ingredients for to start making our own, so you can feed your microbiome and improve your overall health. Why not try making your own fermented foods?

### Fermented food recipes

#### Sauerkraut recipe - Ingredients - makes 1 jar

1 medium cabbage, cored, shredded / 1 tbsp caraway seeds / 1 tbsp sea salt  
4 tbsp whey (if not available, use an additional 1 tbsp sea salt)

#### Preparation

In a bowl, combine the cabbage, caraway seeds, sea salt and whey. Pound with a wooden pounder or a meat hammer for about 10 minutes to release the liquid. Transfer to a sterilised, wide-mouth glass jar and press down firmly with a pounder until the liquid comes to the top of the cabbage. The cabbage should reach 2.5cm below the mouth of the jar.

Cover tightly and keep at room temperature for about 3 days before transferring to the fridge. Sauerkraut may be eaten immediately, but it improves with age.

Found at <http://www.sbs.com.au/food/recipe/13625/Sauerkraut/search/true>

#### Korean pickled vegetables recipe (Kim chi) - Ingredients

1 Chinese cabbage / 2 cup salt / 1 cup white Asian radish, grated / 1 cup shallots, fine chopped / 1 bunch leek, fine chopped / 1 bunch mustard greens, chopped / 2 onion, fine chopped / 1 tbsp. garlic, finely diced / 1 heaped tbsp. chilli (red pepper) powder / 2 tbsp. fish sauce / 1 tbsp. sugar / 2 cup sticky rice porridge (boil glutinous rice to a semi-mush) / 1 ladleful pickled shrimp / 2 tbsp. finely chopped ginger

#### Preparation

Slice the cabbage in half and salt liberally, inside the leaves and on the cut surface. Leave for eight to ten hours, then rinse. Mix the other ingredients together to make the seasoning.

Place inside the cabbage leaves and rub it generously over the cut surface. Leave somewhere cool for 24 hours to ferment (you can try it sooner of course if you wish).

After maturing, kimchi will last for up to ten days in the fridge. When well-fermented it can be added to soup stock to make a nourishing broth served with noodles.

Found at

[http://www.sbs.com.au/food/recipe/176/Korean\\_pickled\\_vegetables\\_\(kim\\_chi\)/search/true](http://www.sbs.com.au/food/recipe/176/Korean_pickled_vegetables_(kim_chi)/search/true)



## INCREASE YOUR FIBRE INTAKE

There are two kinds of fibre - soluble and insoluble - which can be found in foods such as whole grains, fruits and vegetables and legumes.

We need 25 to 30 grams of fibre per day. Below are the amounts of fibre found in 100 grams of different foods. Eating a whole food diet with fresh, seasonal fruit and vegetables will supply your fibre requirements.

Food	Dietary fibre per 100 gm	Food	Dietary fibre per 100 gm
Barley	17.3 gm	Beetroot	7.8 gm
Edamame beans	15 gm	Eggplant	6.6 gm
Corn	13.4 gm	Avocado	3.4 gm
Lentils	11.4 gm	Brussel sprouts	3.1 gm
Oats	10.3 gm	Spinach	2.6 gm
Chickpeas	4.3 gm	Carrots unpeeled	2.5 gm
Baked beans	3.8 gm	Broccoli	2.3 gm
Figs	6.9 gm	Zucchini	2.3 gm
Pears with skin	2.2 gm	Cauliflower	1.8 gm
Apples with skin	1.8 gm	Celery	1.5 gm

**Caution:** if you are not used to eating lots of fibre and you suddenly increase it, your body can react to it, especially if you are not drinking enough fluid. It can lead to hard stools and constipation.

It is therefore important to start increasing fibre-foods gradually, especially legumes. Some people have difficulty digesting these, and if that is you, that is okay.



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However, if you would like to incorporate them do it slowly. It is like going to the gym for a weight session after a long break, you do not start back using the heaviest weight, you build up over time. It can be the same with legumes.

## RECAP TIPS FROM ORIENTATION WEEK

We covered some preliminary information in O week

- ✚ Buy local, fresh, seasonal, organic options if possible. If it is not organic, try eating from the clean 15 or wash produce thoroughly in a sink full of cold water, with 50mg of baking soda per 1 litre of water, to remove pesticides residue and bacteria. Soak for 12 to 15 minutes, rinse, dry and store as usual.
- ✚ Drink two to three litres of water per day or around 33ml of water per kilo of body weight is ideal – with one extra litre for every hour of exercise. Try and avoid drinking large quantities with meals as this can reduce the effectiveness of digestive enzymes by diluting them.
- ✚ Before eating have a dose of tea of bitter herbs before each meal - chamomile, ginger and rosemary leaf, lemon or apple cider vinegar which can all be made into a tea, as well as the very bitter herbs, gentian and wormwood, which would need to be dispensed by a herbalist or naturopath.
- ✚ Eat mindfully - chew each mouthful as well as you can – up to 20 times. (More on Mindfulness in Week 2)
- ✚ Dietary fibre, both soluble and insoluble, from foods such as the whole grains, fruits and vegetables and legumes provides wonderful health benefits. Start slowly increasing the fibre-rich foods as we need 25 to 30 grams of fibre per day.
- ✚ Add prebiotics into your diet daily by including foods like garlic, chicory root, artichokes, onions, oats, green vegetables, legumes, linseed, barley, wheat and apples.
- ✚ As well, include fermented foods which reduce the risk of diabetes, high blood pressure, cholesterol and bowel diseases, and help with weight maintenance and mood stability.

“When I prayed for success, I forgot to ask for sound sleep and good digestion.”

Mason Cooley

Healthy Regards,

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References available on request.