

THE ULTIMATE CHEAT SHEET



DIGESTION CHEAT SHEET

A QUICK REFERENCE CHART THAT SUMMARIZES DIGESTION ISSUES

Digestion Cheat Sheet

	Trigger for Digestive Dysfunction	Possible Cause of Trigger	Resulting Digestive Dysfunction	Signs or Symptoms of Dysfunction (not complete list)	Interventions to Consider in Consultation with your Practitioners
1	Brain – not relaxed (in parasympathetic state)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chronic Stress, Physical or Emotional Rushed or upset at mealtimes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salivary Amylase not released Carbohydrates not properly digested 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Starchy carb cravings Food intolerances Gas Constipation or diarrhea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digestive enzymes Essential oils to switch to “rest and digest” state (e.g. Vibrant Blue Oils Parasympathetic Blend) Identify and address causes of chronic stress (the list of sources for this can be long areas to consider: infections (including gut infections), viral load, chronic inflammatory state, HPT Axis dysregulation, anxiety/emotional stress).
2	Mouth – improper chewing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dislike of taste or texture of food Dental issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as #1 Larger-than-normal undigested food particles entering stomach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as #1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digestive enzymes Functional neurology or other therapy for sensory integration issues Visit dentist to ensure not structural Chew 30 times per bite
3	Stomach – insufficient HCl	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chronic stressed state Insufficient levels of zinc Improper Chewing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proteins left undigested which ultimately will impact the gut microbiota and intestinal lining Minerals aren’t cleaved from foods and therefore are not absorbed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dislike of meat/protein Reflux Food poisoning Neurotransmitter imbalances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supplement with betaine HCl with pepsin Digestive bitters to trigger HCl production Sauerkraut juice or apple cider vinegar to trigger HCl production Supplement with zinc Chew 30 times per bite
4	Pancreas – inhibited release of pancreatic juices (enzymes to further breakdown the food and sodium bicarbonate to lower pH in intestines)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chyme (partially digested food from stomach) doesn’t have low enough pH due to low HCl (#3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partially digested foods left in the intestines negatively impact the villi and microvilli (that line the intestinal tract and are necessary to properly absorb nutrients) and the microbial balance in the gut Duodenal ulcers may occur from lack of sodium bicarbonate being released 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feeling bloated Belly pain Same as #1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use recommendations in #3 to trigger pancreatic function Supplement with digestive enzymes if not getting desired result from interventions in #3

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5	Gallbladder – not squeezing bile into the duodenum when food/chyme is released from the stomach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low acidity of chyme due to insufficient HCl levels so CCK is not released to signal the gallbladder • History of eating very low-fat diet or poor digestion of fats resulting in bile that is too thick and insufficient squeezed from the gallbladder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fats are not emulsified (broken down) and are left to rancidify in the gut • Poor gut motility due to lack of bile, which normally triggers peristalsis • Fatty acid imbalance in the body, which impairs appropriate inflammatory response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constipation • Dry skin • Nausea after eating foods higher in fats • Pale-colored bowel movements • Bowel movements that float 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase stomach acidity through interventions in #3 if that is the root cause of dysfunction • - Increase diet to include a sufficient amount of good fats from high-quality food sources • - If bile viscosity (thickness) is a concern then give your child warm lemon water in the morning (if they will take it). You can always add some honey as a sweetener. • - Make your child a GAPS "Milkshake". The idea for this drink comes from the book <i>Gut And Psychology Syndrome</i> by Natasha Campbell-McBride, MD. • - Look into ways to stimulate the vagus nerve to improve gut motility (examples: gargling, singing)
6	Small Intestine – incomplete absorption of the nutrients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally speaking, this is the result of all the dysfunctions listed above in #1 - #5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of the above can lead to malabsorption of nutrients and small intestinal bacterial overgrowth (SIBO) • Gut lining becomes leaky which allows inappropriate molecules to enter into the bloodstream and overwhelm the immune system • Signs and symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diagnosed nutrient deficiency • Gas and bloating • Stomach pain • Alternating constipation and diarrhea • Low energy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If SIBO is a concern, consult a practitioner for the best course of treatment (SIBO is a tough nut to crack and having a skilled practitioner on your side is very helpful) • In addition to directly addressing any bacterial overgrowth head on, you must fix the dysfunctions above (#1–5) in order to prevent recurrence • Probiotic foods and supplements will help rebalance the gut microbiome • Look into ways to stimulate the vagus nerve to improve gut motility (examples: gargling, singing loudly and triggering the gag reflex)
7	Large Intestine – dysbiosis and leaky gut	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally speaking, this is the result of the dysfunctions listed above in #1 - #6, which resulted in mal-digested food fermenting in the gut and disrupting the gut microbiome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weakened colon wall due to lack of butyric acid, a nutrient that feeds colon cells and is made by healthy gut microbiota • Weakened cell walls are subject to inflammation, diverticula and loss of tone required to move the waste through the large intestine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constipation • Diarrhea • Gas • Weakened immune function • Diagnosis of IBS, Crohn's disease, colitis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider doing a Comprehensive Stool Analysis to determine the state of the gut microbiome (types of imbalances/gut infections that may be present) • In addition to directly addressing any bacterial overgrowth head on, you must fix the dysfunctions above (#1–6) in order to prevent recurrence • Probiotic foods and supplements will help rebalance the gut microbiome