

Enzymes have been called “the spark of life” and “the missing link in nutrition.” These are not exaggerations because, without enzymes, life would not be possible. Enzymes are proteins found in all plant and animal cells. They are defined as catalysts that initiate chemical reactions or speed processes. Millions of enzymes are involved in all of the anabolic (building) and catabolic (breaking down) processes that we call metabolism.

Digestive & Systemic Enzymes

FOR HEALTH AND LONGEVITY

by Ken Babal, C.N.



The body's ability to digest, combat disease or repair itself after injury is related to its enzyme activity potential. The body makes most of the enzymes it needs, but its production capacity is greatly reduced with age.

DIGESTIVE ENZYMES

The digestive tract has first priority on enzyme production. Food must be digested by enzymes to extract the nutrients that fuel the body. Poor digestion can ultimately weaken your ability to fight disease and result in an overtaxed system. Symptoms such as bloating, indigestion, flatulence and general discomfort after meals are signs that the process is not going smoothly, indicating a need for enzymes. For example, people who are lactose intolerant have difficulty digesting dairy products because they do not produce sufficient amounts of the enzyme lactase. In fact, any food that is not completely broken down tends to create allergy-like symptoms, including excess mucus. Fortunately, enzyme supplements taken with or just before meals can minimize these reactions and help to ensure proper nutrient assimilation.

Examples of digestive enzymes are Digest Gold™, Kid's Digest™ and Lacto™ from Enzymedica, the enzyme experts. Enzyme supplements are also available from vitamin companies, but I personally favor products from a company that specializes in enzyme preparations. Enzymedica offers an extensive line and is a recognized leader for enzyme supplements. They're a prestigious Vity Award winner and consistently rank number one in sales, according to SPINS, a leading provider of natural products industry information. What's more, their consumer education program is the best among all enzyme specialty companies.

SYSTEMIC ENZYMES

While many people are familiar with the use of enzyme supplements to aid digestion, there are

other important applications. Enzymes can be used “systemically” throughout the body to help aid or protect against various conditions. Unlike digestive enzyme therapy, which does not require absorption, the goal of systemic enzyme therapy is to get the enzymes into the bloodstream and to various tissues to assist cellular functions. For systemic purposes, enzymes are best taken on an empty stomach to facilitate entry into the circulatory system.

The key systemic enzymes are proteolytic (protein-digesting). Proteolytic enzymes cleave protein compounds by hydrolysis—they split the material by incorporating water. In the bloodstream, the enzymes travel to specific sites where they break down and “digest” proteinaceous or fibrous waste material, including cell debris, bacteria, cysts, tumors, dead tissue, immune complexes and various toxins. They also stimulate phagocytosis, the swallowing of pathogens by immune cells in the bloodstream. Examples of systemic/proteolytic enzyme supplements are Repair™, ViraStop™ and Natto-K™, which all utilize the expertise of Enzymedica.

A feature of many diseases of aging, such as arthritis, cardiovascular disease and cancer, is inflammation. Proteolytic enzyme supplements are used to support the body's healing process without letting inflammation get out of control. Enzymes offer a viable alternative for those who do not wish to take painkillers on a long-term basis. Enzymes are also used by athletes for sports injuries.

Enzymes are also natural blood thinners. Nattokinase is a natural anticoagulant that keeps blood more fluid and promotes healthy circulation by breaking down fibrin, the basic component of blood clots.

For more information on the many uses of enzymes, visit your local natural food and supplement store or read Tom Bohager's definitive book, *Everything You Need to Know about Enzymes*. It's a must-read for people interested in optimal health and longevity. You can preview the book at Enzymedica's website (see Resources). ■

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Resources

To find Enzymedica products near you, visit www.enzymedica.com or call them toll-free at 888-918-1118.

Technical Inquiries:
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General Inquiries:
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