



Digestive Enzymes AND YOUR HEALTH

The foundation supplements for almost all health and healing programs should include not only a multiple vitamin and mineral formula but also a digestive enzyme formula.

One of the major theories behind the inclusion of digestive enzymes as a foundation supplement stems from the work of physician Edward Howell who in the 1930s and 1940s did extensive research on enzymes and declared them essential, noting that cooking and processing of foods destroys them. According to Dr. Howell, our overly cooked and processed diet led to dramatic changes in the ability of modern men and women to digest foods and remain healthy.

Howell put forth this classic axiom: "The length of life is inversely proportional to the rate of exhaustion of the enzyme potential of an organism. The increased use of food enzymes promotes a decreased rate of exhaustion of the enzyme potential."

Although the nature of enzymes means each performs a specific task and it is thought enzymes do not readily substitute for each other, Howell's ground-breaking work makes a lot of sense, says Tom Bohager, author of the newly released book *Enzymes: What the Experts Know*. Bohager is the founder of Enzymedica, one of the nation's top enzyme companies, and his book reflects his real-life experience as a leader in the field of enzyme therapy. "What we do know is that from puberty on, with each passing decade, our bodies make approximately 10 to 13 percent fewer enzymes than the previous decades," says Bohager. "If we consider that life requires energy and there is only so much energy to go around, the more energy you expended digestively, the less energy you will have systemically."

Modern men and women certainly do spend a lot of time digesting their food. We derive enzymes from either specific organs or beneficial bacteria within the body or from the foods that we eat. But when our foods are processed and overly cooked they lose their enzymes. The body can produce only so much enzyme activity and if it must go towards digestion then the body is robbed of potential for other metabolic activities. Call it the economics of health, but the body has only a limited amount of enzymatic activity. Food is our life source. But digestion can consume us and our health, causing nutrient mal-absorption, gas and bloating, and robbing the body of natural vital enzyme potential. Hence, optimal digestion is clearly a foundation of health and enzymes are now included as a foundational supplement in so many thoughtful health programs.

If you eat a meal consisting of a salad, steak, stuffing and perhaps a baked potato and other cooked foods, there are enough enzymes from food to digest the salad, but nothing extra to digest the cooked food. That's where the problem begins.

In fact, many poor health conditions start with digestive problems. These include poor nutrient absorption, fatigue, indigestion, cancer, heart disease, and immune weakness. Enzyme deficiencies have physical symptoms (see "Identify Your Enzyme Needs").

To make up for this enzyme shortfall, people may take digestive enzymes such as papain (from papaya) or bromelain (from pineapple) or eat raw or fermented foods, which provide the body with vital food enzymes. People who take enzymes find their indigestion, gas, and bloating often are eliminated. They eat less, lose weight, and they are more active. Their overall improved digestion allows more metabolic enzyme activity for such optimal health.

This is actually borne out consistently in naturopathic medicine in that when health programs include enzymes—both digestive and systemic (which are used in the bloodstream as opposed for digestion)—it often acts like a catalyst to promote improved health and wellness.

When enzyme activity is suboptimal, vitamins, minerals and other phytochemicals are poorly absorbed and used. The gastrointestinal tract is the seat of immunity and produces white blood cells; thus, the immune system is weakened. With poor digestion, the body is less able to fight off bacteria, viruses, carcinogens and other threats to human health.

ENZYMEDICA DIGESTIVE FORMULAS—WHAT GREAT DIGESTION FEELS LIKE

Bohager's detailed research and reporting on enzymes, plus his real-life experience in the manufacturing of enzymes, has led to a confluence of mutual interests. Enzymedica is thought to be the natural products industry leader in the field of plant-based enzyme therapy not only in terms of sales but also for quality (see our earlier report in issue 10.12). Based on his extensive research, Enzymedica produces Digest Gold™ which is the number-one digestive enzyme formula in the natural products industry, according to September 2005 SPINS data (that tracks sales among health food stores nationwide).

The company's exclusive Thera-blend process for its protease, lipase, amylase and cellulase means that each of these enzymes actually represents multiple blends. There are three proteases in Thera-blend protease. This means they have a greater ability to break down more different types of food proteins (fats, starches and plant cell walls), and that they will be active at varying pH levels.

For those who have a combination deficiency, and for all four body/gland types, Digest Gold™ has been formulated to assist in digesting proteins, fats, carbohydrates and fiber. Digest Gold is also ideal for anyone suffering from health issues not necessarily associated with digestion. When stress is reduced to the system responsible for breaking down and assimilating the foods consumed, more energy



and thus more metabolic enzymes are made available to other systems of the body that are responsible for overall health.



V-gest™ is formulated with high-quality amylase digestive enzymes and is ideal for vegetarians. V-gest contains four different types of enzymes that break down carbohydrates found in grains, seeds, legumes, vegetables and other plants. These enzymes stop gas, flatulence, bloating and discomfort from beans, broccoli, cabbage, onion, peppers, soy products, whole grain cereals, seeds and more.

For many people, digesting fats is most difficult. Lypo™, with Thera-blend lipase, digests fat and fat-soluble vitamins and balances fatty acids. Lipase-deficient people can be expected to have a tendency towards high cholesterol, high triglycerides and difficulty losing weight.

Obviously, there is more to health than digestive enzymes. But don't ignore these vital health aids. ■

REFERENCES

Fallon, S. & Enig, M. "Edward Howell, M.D." Viewed at: <http://www.westonaprice.org/nutritiongreats/howell.html>.

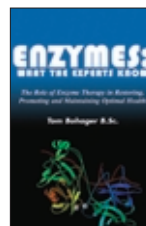
Resources

Purchase your copy of *Enzymes: What the Experts Know* from your natural health retailer or from online booksellers (www.amazon.com). You can also view the book at the Enzymedica website at <http://www.enzymedica.com/products/>.

To find a local source, use their store locator service at www.enzymedica.com or call them toll free at (888) 918-1118.

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Identify Your Enzyme Needs

Body typing has been around for millennia. In recent years, body-typing author Elliot Abravanel, M.D., describes the four body types as dominant gland types (see below). The approach is fundamentally to restrict foods that are stimulating to the dominant glands of your body type (these are your body type's danger foods), and to encourage foods that strengthen and support your less active glands. Enzyme expert DicQie Fuller, Ph.D., N.D., expands on this by tying in the four basic types and dominant glands to specific enzyme deficiencies. As you determine your body type/dominant gland/enzyme deficiencies, this knowledge will certainly open up a whole new understanding of why you feel the way you feel, the best types of food for your type, and the digestive supplement that will create the foundation for your ideal lifestyle plan.

Which Body Type Are You?

Identify Your Enzyme Needs by Body Type

<p>1-Body Type "A" Thyroid (Amylase deficient)</p> <p>Under-arms and hips are the same width. Weight is equally distributed.</p> <p>CRAVES: carbohydrates, cakes, pasta, sweets, chocolate, coffee, bread, veggies</p> <p>MAY SUFFER FROM OR IS LIKELY TO HAVE: allergies, colds hands and feet, depression, fatigue, headaches, hemorrhoids, low blood pressure, neck and should aches, PMS, pancreatitis, skin eruptions, sprue (wheat intolerance), upset stomach, ulcer</p>	<p>2-Body Type "P" Adrenal (Protease deficient)</p> <p>Underarms are wider than hips. Develops muscularly. Tends to carry weight above the waist.</p> <p>CRAVES: proteins, beef, bacon, chicken, fish</p> <p>MAY SUFFER FROM OR IS LIKELY TO HAVE: arteriosclerosis, back problems, candidiasis, constipation, ear infections, heart disease, herniated discs, high blood pressure, insomnia, kidney disease, lower back ache, loss of hearing, osteoporosis, sciatica</p>	<p>3-Body Type "L" Gonadal (Lipase deficient—only women)</p> <p>Hips are wider than underarms. The lower half of the body carries more weight.</p> <p>CRAVES: fats, creamy, rich-tasting, smoky, Chinese, Mexican, chocolate, rich desserts</p> <p>MAY SUFFER FROM OR IS LIKELY TO HAVE: aching feet, arthritis, bladder infections, breast lumps, breast tumors, bypass surgery, cataracts, cirrhosis, cystitis, eczema, gallbladder problems, gallstones, hay fever, hepatitis, hives, prostate problems, psoriasis, urinary problems</p>	<p>4-Body Type "C" Pituitary (Amylase, Lipase, Protease combination deficiency)</p> <p>This body type looks younger than actual age. Shape is similar to teens. Difficult to develop muscularity.</p> <p>CRAVES: dairy, sweets, and carbohydrates</p> <p>MAY SUFFER FROM OR IS LIKELY TO HAVE: aching knees, chronic allergies, colds, colitis, Crohn's disease, diarrhea to constipation, diverticulosis, irritable bowel, milk intolerance, frequent colds</p>
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