

Digestive Disorders

The following is a list with brief explanations of digestive disorders. You can choose 5 of the following to research more fully.

- *Obesity*: defined as a body weight of more than 20% above the ideal weight for sex and age of the person.
- *Eating Disorders* - characterized by abnormal eating habits that may involve either insufficient or excessive food intake to the detriment of an individual's physical and emotional health.
- *Malnutrition*: More than 800 million people are chronically malnourished worldwide, lacking various important elements in their diets, such as iron, iodine, and vitamin A.
- *Ulcers*: The wall of the stomach or intestine is digested (dissolved), and may lead to bleeding into the stomach or intestine. A *perforated ulcer* is when the ulcer goes right through the organ, and can cause infection (peritonitis). Ulcers are caused by the bacterium *Helicobacter pylori*, which impairs the production of mucus. Antibiotics are the treatment.
- *Gallstones*: Gallstones form when liquid in the gallbladder hardens to form stone-like material. The two types of gallstones are cholesterol stones and pigment stones. Cholesterol stones are usually yellow-green and are made primarily of hardened cholesterol. They account for about 80 percent of gallstones. Pigment stones are small, dark stones made of bilirubin. Gallstones can be as small as a grain of sand or as large as a golf ball. The gallbladder can develop just one large stone, hundreds of tiny stones, or almost any combination.
- *Lactose intolerance*: The inability to break down lactose (milk sugar) due to the absence of lactase.
- *Appendicitis*: If the appendix (part of large intestine) becomes inflamed.
- *Crohn's disease, Colitis*: Crohn's and colitis are inflammatory conditions of the digestive system, most commonly affecting the ileum of the small intestine.
- *Colon/stomach cancer*: Cancerous cells/tumours grow in these regions and if not treated can be fatal.
- *Diabetes*: Two types of diabetes, I and II, affect large numbers of people worldwide. The condition usually stems from a lack of insulin production by the pancreas, and requires insulin via pills or injection.
- *Diarrhea*: The speedy elimination of waste, which doesn't allow time for proper water reabsorption. Dehydration is a concern.
- *Amoebic dysentery, Bacillary dysentery, Cholera*: Protozoan and bacterial infections which can have mild to severe digestive systems. Usually are associated with contaminated water supplies.
- *Constipation*: Too much water is removed from feces, making elimination difficult.
- *Hemorrhoids*: Are swollen blood vessels in and around the rectal/anal area. They are identified when bright red blood appears in stool. Protruding hemorrhoids are when these vessels are so swollen they protrude from the anus.
- *Heartburn (indigestion)*: When stomach acid (gastric juice) backs up into the esophagus through the cardiac sphincter. Has been recently correlated to esophageal cancer.
- *Jaundice*: Skin has a yellowish tint due to the build up of bilirubin in the blood.
- *Hepatitis*: Inflammation of the liver. Viral hepatitis A, B or C are spread via blood products or sexual contact. It is more contagious than the AIDS virus.
- *Cirrhosis of the liver*: Common among alcoholics – the liver becomes fatty and tissue is replaced by scar tissue (cirrhosis).
- *Food poisoning, Typhoid fever* (staphylococcus and salmonella): Bacteria can cause mild to severe symptoms. Typhoid fever is a type of salmonella food poisoning that can last for years.

Disorder	Symptoms	Cause	Treatment

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References: