



KidsHealth.org/classroom

Teacher's Guide

This guide includes:

- Standards
- Related Links
- Discussion Questions
- Activities for Students
- Reproducible Materials

Standards

This guide correlates with the following National Health Education Standards:

Students will:

- Comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.
- Analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors.
- Demonstrate the ability to access valid information and products and services to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.
- Demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.

Your state's school health policies:
nasbe.org

You look at the clock and notice it's lunchtime. Just thinking about food makes you salivate. Believe it or not, your digestive system is already at work! The following discussion questions and activities will help your students learn all about the digestive system and how it functions.

Related KidsHealth Links

Articles for Kids:

Your Digestive System

KidsHealth.org/kid/htbw/digestive_system.html

Constipation

KidsHealth.org/kid/ill_injure/sick/constipation.html

Indigestion

KidsHealth.org/kid/ill_injure/aches/indigestion.html

Are Your Bowels Moving?

KidsHealth.org/kid/stay_healthy/body/bowel.html

Articles for Teens:

Digestive System

KidsHealth.org/teen/your_body/body_basics/digestive_system.html

Constipation

KidsHealth.org/teen/diseases_conditions/digestive/constipation.html

Indigestion

KidsHealth.org/teen/diseases_conditions/digestive/indigestion.html

Discussion Questions

Note: The following questions are written in language appropriate for sharing with your students.

1. We don't usually think about our food after we've eaten it. What actually happens to it? How does the body digest it? Name the parts of the digestive system and describe how they work together to digest your food.
2. How does eating a diet rich in fiber and drinking plenty of water help maintain a healthy digestive tract? What problems can result from a poor diet? What other problems may occur in the digestive system that aren't a result of poor diet?
3. Believe it or not, it's completely normal to fart. What happens in the body that makes us produce gas? Is it possible to reduce the amounts of gas someone has? When might gas be a sign of a bigger problem?



Activities for Students

Note: The following activities are written in language appropriate for sharing with your students.

Food Guide

Objectives:

Students will:

- Explore the various parts of the digestive system
- Learn the role that each part of the digestive system plays
- Discover how the various parts work together to digest food

Materials:

- Computer with Internet access
- Pen and paper

Class Time:

1½ hours

Activity:

You just finished your favorite meal and now you have some schoolwork to do before it gets late. But even though your brain is no longer thinking about food, your digestive system is just getting down to business. In fact, the digestive process can take anywhere from 20 hours to a few days.

Using the articles at KidsHealth, write a guide that takes your favorite food through the digestive system. While you write your guide, be sure to talk about what organs the food will pass through, what each part of the system does, and how the parts work together to digest the food.

Extension:

1. Create a map of the digestive system that helps guide your favorite food through the digestive process. Clearly label the parts of the system and list their functions.



Expert! Expert!

Objectives:

Students will:

- Identify problems that occur in the digestive system
- Learn how to treat these problems

Materials:

- Computer with Internet access
- Pen and paper

Class Time:

2 hours

Activity:

When it's functioning properly, the digestive system helps the body get the nutrients it needs to stay healthy and gives us the energy we need to live. But problems can occur in the digestive system, ranging from mild to serious. As an expert in digestive problems, you've been asked to present information about one of these pressing topics.

Read the articles at KidsHealth and select one problem that occurs in the digestive system. Research as much information as you can about it – what the problem is, where and why it occurs, what it does to the digestive system, and what can be done about it. Be ready to discuss your problem in detail and answer questions from your audience.

Extensions:

1. Create a one-page leaflet to be shared with the audience, highlighting the most important information about your topic.
2. Discuss ways to avoid common digestive problems.

Reproducible Materials

Quiz: The Digestive System

KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/body/systems/digestive_quiz.pdf

Answer Key: The Digestive System

KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/body/systems/digestive_quiz_answers.pdf



Name: _____

Date: _____

Quiz

Instructions: Answer each question.

- _____ begins the process of breaking down food by making it moist and easy to swallow.
- True or false: Heartburn occurs when stomach acid moves into the heart.
- Gastric juices help break down food in the _____.
- The _____ is about 22 feet long and breaks down food into smaller nutrients that can be absorbed into the bloodstream.
- List two possible causes of diarrhea.

- The _____ protects us from choking by covering the windpipe and sending food down the esophagus.
- The _____ helps absorb water from undigested food and forms waste into a bowel movement.
- List two ways to prevent constipation.

- What is produced by the liver and helps the body absorb fats?
 - bolus
 - appendix
 - bile
 - colon
- List three ways to avoid indigestion.



Quiz Answer Key

1. Saliva begins the process of breaking down food by making it moist and easy to swallow.
2. True or **(false)**? Heartburn occurs when stomach acid moves into the heart.
Heartburn occurs when stomach acid moves up into the esophagus.
3. Gastric juices help break down food in the stomach.
4. The small intestine is about 22 feet long and breaks down food into smaller nutrients that can be absorbed into the bloodstream.
5. List two possible causes of diarrhea.
Any two of the following: germs (viruses or bacteria), stress, lactose intolerance, celiac disease, inflammatory bowel disease, Crohn's disease.
6. The epiglottis protects us from choking by covering the windpipe and sending food down the esophagus.
7. The large intestine helps absorb water from undigested food and forms waste into a bowel movement.
8. List two ways to prevent constipation.
Any two of the following: eating food with lots of fiber, drinking plenty of water, exercising regularly.
9. What is produced by the liver and helps the body absorb fats?
 - a. bolus
 - b. appendix
 - (c)** bile
 - d. colon
10. List three ways to avoid indigestion.
Any three of the following: avoid fatty foods, eat slowly, don't overeat, don't eat too much chocolate or citrus fruit, (or other foods that you know bother your stomach), reduce stress, don't smoke or drink alcohol, allow food to digest before doing a lot of physical exercise.