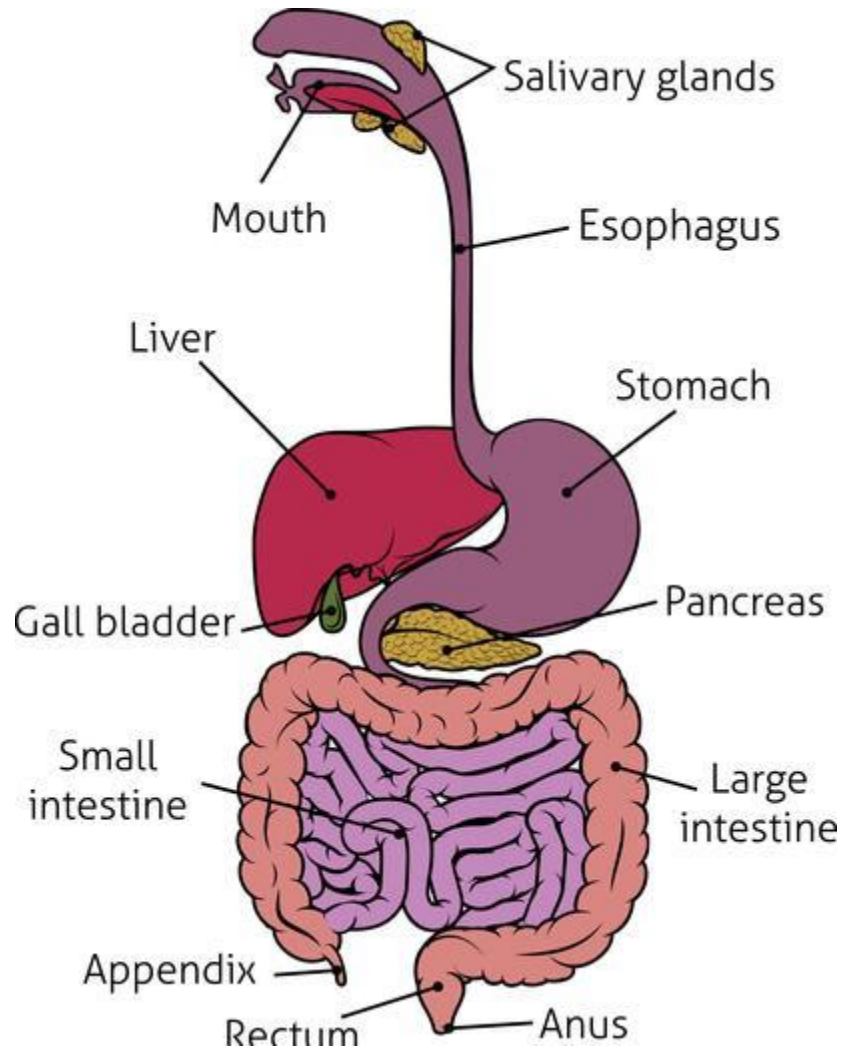


How Our Digestive System Works

Our body needs **energy** to grow, move, and stay healthy. The food we eat provides this energy, but first, it must be **digested**. Digestion is the process of breaking down food into **nutrients** that our body can use. This process happens inside a special group of organs called the **digestive system**.



[rgpde7.jpg \(411×540\)](#)

Major Organs of the Digestive System

1. **Mouth** – Digestion begins here! When we chew, our teeth break food into smaller pieces. Our **saliva** (spit) starts breaking down food into simpler forms.
 - *Example:* When you chew a cracker for a long time, it starts tasting sweet. This happens because saliva breaks down the starch into sugar.

2. **Esophagus** – After we swallow, food moves down this long tube to the stomach. The muscles in the esophagus push food downward in a wave-like movement called **peristalsis**.
3. **Stomach** – This organ is like a **mixer**. It uses **stomach acid** to break food into even smaller pieces, making it soft and liquid-like.
 - *Example:* If you put crackers in a bag with some vinegar and shake it, they will break down. This is similar to what happens in your stomach!
4. **Small Intestine** – This is where most digestion and nutrient **absorption** happens. Tiny finger-like structures called **villi** help absorb the nutrients into the blood.
 - *Example:* Think of a sponge soaking up water. The small intestine absorbs nutrients the same way.
5. **Large Intestine** – It absorbs water from leftover food and turns it into solid waste (poop), which leaves the body.

Why Is Digestion Important?

- It gives us **energy** to play, think, and grow.
- It helps our body get **vitamins and minerals** from food.
- It removes **waste** that we don't need.

Everyday Life Application

- **Chew your food well** – This helps digestion start properly.
- **Drink water** – It helps food move smoothly through the digestive system.
- **Eat fiber-rich foods** (like fruits and vegetables) – They help your intestines work properly.
- **Avoid too much junk food** – It can slow down digestion and cause stomach problems.

References:

- National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. (n.d.). *Your Digestive System & How It Works*. Retrieved from <https://www.niddk.nih.gov/>
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