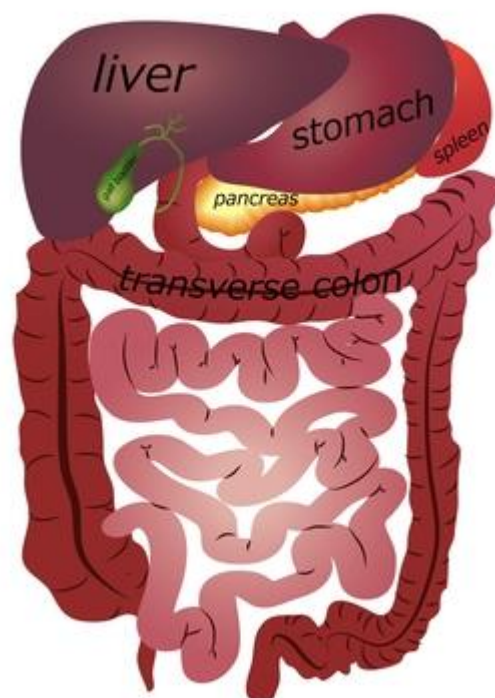


## Digestion Anatomy Overview: Top to Bottom Review

- **Mind:** Prepares your system for digestion of food.
- **Mouth:** Chewing prepares the food for digestion and swallowing brings the food to where it can be digested. Salivary amylase, an enzyme in saliva, begins the digestion of starches.
- **Esophagus:** Passage from mouth to stomach.
- **Stomach:** Secretes hydrochloric acid to begin the breakdown of protein and separate minerals from carriers so they can be absorbed. Your stomach also produces intrinsic factor so that Vitamin B12 can be absorbed.
- **Pancreas:** Secretes enzymes that break down food.
- **Liver:** Produces bile to emulsify fats (make them water soluble so they can be absorbed.)
- **Gall bladder:** Stores and concentrates bile and secretes barcarbonate into the small intestine to alkalize the food bolus that has become acid from the stomach's actions. An alkaline environment is needed in the beginning of the small intestine so that starchy foods can be digested.
- **Small intestine:** Digests and absorbs food.
- **Duodenum:** Continues the job of digesting foods into smaller molecules that is started by the stomach and prepares the molecules for absorption.
- **Jejunum:** Absorbs vitamins; minerals; and digested starch, sugar, and protein molecules. This is the part that can get damaged and become what's known as a "leaky gut".





- **Ileum:** Absorbs fats, fat soluble vitamins, bile salts, and vitamin B12 that's attached to the intrinsic factor made in the stomach.
- **Ileocecal valve:** A muscular valve that opens and closes on demand to allow waste products to pass from the small intestine into the large intestine and prevent backflow of feces from the large intestine to the small intestine. It sometimes gets stuck shut, resulting in bloating and constipation; or the valve gets stuck open, resulting in feces backing up into the small intestine and causing indigestion and potentially the absorption of toxins into your bloodstream.
- **Large intestine:** Absorbs water and salts from stool and stores wastes for evacuation.
- **Cecum:** Absorbs salts and electrolytes from the liquid passed to it from the small intestine through the ileocecal valve.
- **Ascending colon:** Propels fecal matter up and around towards the anus for excretion. It continues the job of absorbing water from the stool and secreting mucous to move it through more expediently.
- **Transverse colon:** The longest and most movable part of the colon, the transverse colon continues the job of propelling fecal towards the anus for excretion, absorbing water from the stool and secreting mucous to move it through more expediently.
- **Sigmoid colon:** The s-shaped curve in the last part of the large intestine just before the rectum.
- **Rectum:** A temporary storage site for fecal matter before it is eliminated from the body through the anal canal.
- **Anus:** Exit.

