

The Digestive System

Name _____

The digestive process begins in the mouth as food is mixed with saliva and broken down into starches and simple sugars. Teeth chop and grind up food to make it easy to swallow. This mashed food is pushed by the tongue and carried to your stomach through the esophagus.

The stomach is a J shaped bag with a muscular lining. These muscles, along with strong chemical juices, (enzymes and gastric acid) mix and break down food into a thick liquid. The stomach is coated with a thick layer of mucus that is renewed every 3 days so it cannot digest itself. This thick liquid travels from the stomach to the small intestine where food is converted into vitamins and nutrients. In an adult, the intestines are about 6 to 9 metres long.

The biggest internal organ, the liver, converts food into energy. Vitamins and minerals collect here and travel into the bloodstream. Excess water is removed in the large intestine and solid waste leaves the body through the anus (rectum).

Excess water and chemical build up in the blood are filtered out by the kidneys and sent to the bladder to be disposed on as urine.

Every day your digestive system handles 10 litres of food and drink. Only 125 ml leaves your body as waste.

The main function of the Digestive System is the chemical and physical breakdown of food into molecules small enough to pass into cells.

The main organs that make up the digestive system are stomach, esophagus, liver, and intestines.

The major tissues of the digestive system are nerve, connective, epithelial, and muscle.