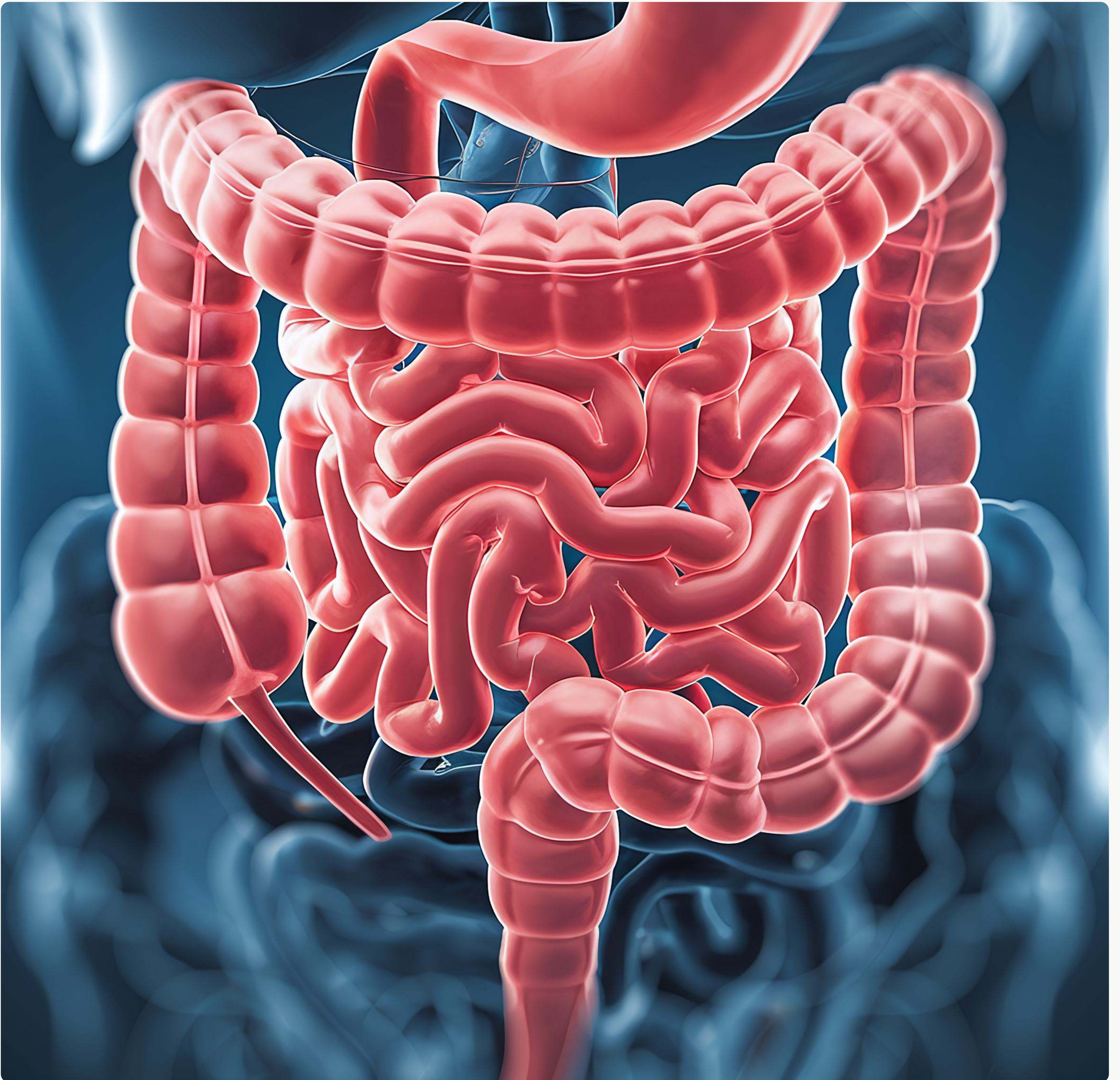


Digestive Enzyme Protocols



Overview

→ **Digestive enzymes** play a crucial role in supporting gut health by enhancing nutrient absorption and reducing digestive strain. When food is not fully broken down, it can lead to undigested particles lingering in the gut, causing inflammation, bloating, and other gastrointestinal symptoms. By supplementing with digestive enzymes, you help your body efficiently process proteins, fats, and carbohydrates. This can be an integral part of a gut-healing journey, promoting overall digestive balance. This guide walks you through simple steps to find the right enzymes for your needs and how to use them.

STEP 1

Identify Your Digestive Needs

→ **Pay attention to how you feel after eating.** Your symptoms and the categories of food you commonly react to provide clues for which enzymes may relieve your symptoms. Here’s a quick breakdown to help you pinpoint the issue:

TROUBLE WITH FRUITS, VEGETABLES & FODMAPS

Symptoms: Gas, bloating, belching, abdominal discomfort or loose stool after fruits & vegetables

Try: Fruit & vegetable-digesting enzymes or FODMAP enzymes

TROUBLE WITH FATS

Symptoms: Bloating, nausea, indigestion, cramping after fatty meals, or stools that are greasy, sticky, light-colored, or float.

Try: Lipase or bile supports

DIFFICULTY DIGESTING PROTEIN

Symptoms: Feeling overly full, bloated, or burping after protein (meat, fish, eggs) and a sense of food “sitting” in the stomach.

Try: Hydrochloric acid (HCL)

MULTIPLE FOOD INTOLERANCES

Symptoms: Discomfort in 2 or more of the areas above

Try: Broad-spectrum digestive enzymes

STEP 2

General Digestive Enzyme Supports

→ Before using specific enzymes, try these natural options to help your body produce its own enzymes. However, if you’ve already tried these in the past without success, you can move on to step 3.

Do not make any changes or use any supplements until you speak with your doctor.

SUPPLEMENTS (PICK 1)

- **Digestive Bitters:** 1–2 droppers before meals.
- **Gentian Root:** ¼–1 dropper before meals (great for sensitive individuals).

EAT MINDFULLY

- Mindful eating plays a key role in optimal digestion, especially during the cephalic phase (the first stage of digestion, triggered by the sight, smell, and thought of food).
- This phase is activated more effectively when we eat mindfully, savoring each bite and focusing on our food. The brain sends signals to the stomach to release digestive enzymes and stomach acid, preparing the body to digest food properly.
- By being present during meals and engaging our senses, we support this critical phase, improving digestion and nutrient absorption from the very start.

MINDFUL EATING TIPS

- Take 3–5 deep breaths before beginning your meal.
- Avoid distractions while eating, such as your phone or TV.
- Don’t eat and work at the same time —be present with your meal.
- Pay attention to the smell and taste of your food.
- Put your utensils down between bites.
- Chew each bite thoroughly.

Trial these supports for a week on their own before adding in additional digestive enzyme support. This will allow you to assess your response more clearly. For some individuals, this may be all that is needed to improve digestive symptoms. If you don’t experience significant improvement in your symptoms, move on to step 3.



STEP 3

Personalized Digestive Support

→ If general supports aren't enough, tailor your approach based on your needs:

FRUITS, VEGETABLES & FODMAPS

- **Supplements:** [Fruit & Vegetable Digestive Enzymes](#) (1-2 capsules with fiber-rich meals) or [FODMAP enzymes](#) (¼ to ½ teaspoons, directly on FODMAP-containing meals).
- Start with fruit & veggie enzymes—Only switch to **FODMAP enzymes** if needed.
- **For reference, FODMAP foods include:**

Apples	Bread & wheat products
Onion & garlic	Dried fruits, mango & nectarines
Tomato	Avocado
Broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts	Most legumes
Mushrooms	Full list here

FAT DIGESTION

- **Supplements:** [Lipase](#) (1-3 capsules with meals containing fat) or [Ox Bile](#) (1-4 capsules with meals containing fat.)
- Start with lipase, then add ox bile if symptoms persist.
- If your **symptoms don't improve**, move on to **step 4**.
- If your **diarrhea worsens** from ox bile, move on to **step 5**.

PROTEIN DIGESTION

- **Supplements:** [Digestive Acid HCL](#) (1-4 capsules, MUST be taken with food).
- Discontinue if you feel any discomfort or irritation.

MULTIPLE FOOD INTOLERANCES

If you have difficulty digesting multiple food groups (e.g. fats, proteins, fibers, FODMAPs), we recommend trialing a more broad-spectrum digestive enzyme product.

- **Supplements:** [Digest Gold](#) (1-2 capsules per meal), [Pancreatin and Ox Bile Extract](#) (1-2 capsules per meal) or [Pancreatic Enzymes](#) (1-2 capsules per meal).
- **Start with Digest Gold.** If this doesn't improve digestive symptoms after a week, then move on to Pancreatin and Ox Bile.
- **If ox bile causes any distressing symptoms**, try the pancreatic enzymes as these do not contain ox bile.

Dosing Tips for All Supplements

1

Start with the lowest dose recommended.

2

Increase the dose every 2-3 days if there isn't a significant improvement in symptoms.

3

Stay at the dose you feel best.

4

You can stop taking any supplement after 1-2 weeks if no change is observed.



STEP 4

Bile Flow Supports

→ If you get pain in your right upper abdomen, have a history of “sluggish bile” or gallstones, have consistent constipation or diarrhea, or persistent bloat, it may be time for a bile flow support:

TUDCA

- **1–2 capsules daily**, best taken with food.

CHANCA PIEDRA

- **¼ capsule to 2 capsules**, can be taken with or without food.
- **Start low**, and increase incrementally every few days. If the dose is too high, you may feel cramping in the liver region, which indicates gallstones are being dissolved. Pause the supplement, wait for symptoms to abate, and then restart at a lower dose or switch to [liquid Chanca Piedra](#) (2 drops to 2 full droppers)

****Do not take if you have a blood clotting disorder****

Watch For: Loose stools—this is a sign your bile flow is improving. You may need to reduce any additional constipation support. Be sure to consult your physician.

STEP 5

Bile Acid Malabsorption Supports

→ If diarrhea worsens from ox bile supplementation or you have increased bowel frequency & urgency, a diagnosis of either Crohn’s disease, SIBO, IBS-D, microscopic colitis, or a history of gallbladder removal, it may be time for bile acid malabsorption supports:

[Activated Charcoal](#): 1–2 capsules with meals

[Psyllium Husk](#): 1–4 capsules with meals

STEP 6

Track Your Progress

Track Your Progress	Evaluating After 1–2 Weeks	When to Reduce Supplement Use
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep a daily log of meals, symptoms, and the enzyme or supplement dosages you're taking. This will help note any patterns or improvements.• Note any changes in symptoms as you adjust dosages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If an enzyme or supplement hasn't improved your symptoms within 1–2 weeks, consider trying the next enzyme in the sequence.• Introduce only one new enzyme or supplement at a time to accurately gauge its effects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• After 1–2 months of symptomatic improvement, gradually reduce your enzyme or supplement doses. For instance, if HCL or lipase helped initially, try decreasing by one capsule every few days and monitor any changes.• The ultimate goal is to build resilience in your digestion and gradually reduce reliance on supplements. However, if you reduced your dose and felt worse, then it's okay to remain on the effective dose for another 1–2 months and then consider trying to wean again.

Important Tips

- 1. Consult Regularly with Your Provider:** If you have questions about how to use or adjust dosages, your practitioner and team are your best resource.
- 2. Prioritize a Balanced Diet:** Minimize processed foods, which can strain digestion, and aim for whole, fresh ingredients.
- 3. Stay Patient:** Digestive health takes time, so focus on consistency and small changes.

Always check with your doctor before starting or adjusting supplements. This guide is here to empower you, but your practitioner is your ultimate resource for personalizing your approach.

DISCLAIMER

*This handout is for educational purposes only and is not intended to diagnose, treat, or prevent any medical condition. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition.

