



3 Simple Steps to Better Digestion

By Andrea Holwegner BSc, RD

Spring is here and it is a great time to think about spring-cleaning your diet to help with better digestive health. Here are 3 simple steps to better digestion:

1. Regular meals & fluids

Your gut likes a routine (it does not appreciate being stuffed or starved). Go for small, frequent, regular meals and fluids. This means eating a meal or snack every 3-5 hours. Skipping breakfast or lunch and overeating in the evening is one of the most common ways to disrupt having normal bowel movements (aka keeping you regular).

Adults need to drink 2-3 litres of fluid per day. Outside of standard water, try making a flavoured water with lemon, mint or cucumber or enjoy decaf warm tea or chill this for a summer fresh iced tea.



2. Boost your fibre intake

Adults need approximately 21-38 grams of fibre per day and considering many people fall short, increasing fibre rich foods is likely a good idea. Top fibre choices include bran-based cereals, whole grains, fresh fruits, dried fruits, frozen berries, fresh veggies, nuts and seeds. Since many people fall short on vegetables in particular I encourage people to try what I call the “2-by-2” rule (have two different veggies twice per day).

Fibre should be increased in your diet gradually – too much too soon can cause discomfort. Be sure to increase your fluid intake as you increase your fibre intake to help maximize the benefits of the fibre.



3. Add a probiotic punch!

Fermented foods such as wine, sauerkraut, kimichi and yogurt have always been popular for their bold and delicious taste. Kombucha tea which is fermented by mixing tea with a small amount of sugar, bacteria and yeast has also made it into the nutrition spotlight.



These fermented foods contain probiotics, which are the friendly bacteria in the gut that may help with digestion and reduce the frequency of minor digestive issues such as gas, bloating and tummy tantrums. Consider adding probiotic foods such as yogurt, kefir, kombucha tea to your diet regularly.

For me the easiest way to boost my probiotic intake is to enjoy a probiotic rich yogurt such as Activia in a smoothie, a yogurt parfait or make a “yo-nut” dip (plain yogurt mixed with nut butter) as a raw veggie or fruit dip.



Andrea Holwegner, known as the Chocoholic Dietitian, is founder and president of Health Stand Nutrition Consulting Inc., a member of the Canadian Association of Professional Speakers and a media expert for the Dietitians of Canada. For nutrition counselling information and to sign up for a free monthly newsletter loaded with nutrition tips, recipes and more visit www.healthstandnutrition.com. Twitter @chocoholicRD.

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