



[KidsHealth.org/classroom](http://KidsHealth.org/classroom)

## Teacher's Guide

This guide includes:

- Standards
- Related Links
- Discussion Questions
- Activities for Students
- Reproducible Materials

## Standards

This guide correlates with the following National Health Education Standards:

Students will:

- Comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.
- Analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors.
- Demonstrate the ability to access valid information and products and services to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.
- Demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to use goal-setting skills to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.
- Demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

National Health Education Standards:  
<http://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/sher/standards/index.htm>

The more your students know about their digestive systems, the better prepared they will be to make good decisions about nutrition.

## Related KidsHealth Links

### Articles for Teens:

#### **Digestive System**

[TeensHealth.org/en/teens/digestive-system.html](http://TeensHealth.org/en/teens/digestive-system.html)

#### **Mouth and Teeth**

[TeensHealth.org/en/teens/mouth-teeth.html](http://TeensHealth.org/en/teens/mouth-teeth.html)

#### **Metabolism**

[TeensHealth.org/en/teens/metabolism.html](http://TeensHealth.org/en/teens/metabolism.html)

#### **Stomachaches**

[TeensHealth.org/en/teens/stomachaches.html](http://TeensHealth.org/en/teens/stomachaches.html)

#### **Gastrointestinal Infections and Diarrhea**

[TeensHealth.org/en/teens/diarrhea.html](http://TeensHealth.org/en/teens/diarrhea.html)

#### **Indigestion**

[TeensHealth.org/en/teens/indigestion.html](http://TeensHealth.org/en/teens/indigestion.html)

#### **Constipation**

[TeensHealth.org/en/teens/constipation.html](http://TeensHealth.org/en/teens/constipation.html)

#### **Fiber**

[TeensHealth.org/en/teens/fiber.html](http://TeensHealth.org/en/teens/fiber.html)

#### **MyPlate Food Guide**

[TeensHealth.org/en/teens/myplate.html](http://TeensHealth.org/en/teens/myplate.html)

#### **Go, Slow, and Whoa! A Quick Guide to Healthy Eating**

[TeensHealth.org/en/teens/go-slow-whoa.html](http://TeensHealth.org/en/teens/go-slow-whoa.html)

## Discussion Questions

*Note: The following questions are written in language appropriate for sharing with your students.*

1. What does it mean for the digestive system to “break down” food? How does this happen in the mouth, stomach, and intestines? How does the food move from the digestive system into the rest of the body?
2. In addition to the structural parts of the digestive system, various chemicals are also at work. Discuss the roles they play in digestion.
3. How do healthy foods help digestion? Why do fiber-rich foods like fruits, veggies, and whole grains, as well as drinking lots of water, help digestion?
4. There are several common problems with the digestive system, like indigestion and diarrhea. How do they happen?



## Activities for Students

*Note: The following activities are written in language appropriate for sharing with your students.*

### Lunch's Long and Winding Road

#### Objectives:

Students will:

- Learn how foods are broken down into nutrients and energy as they go through the digestive system

#### Materials:

- Pen or pencil
- "Lunch's Long and Winding Road" handout
- Computer with Internet access

#### Class Time:

30 minutes

#### Activity:

Food gives you energy, right? When you eat a sandwich, for example, your digestive system breaks it down into the fuel your body needs to build tissue and keep your organs functioning properly. How does it do it? It's not sending little chunks of sandwich to your tissues, so what's happening?

On the "Lunch's Long and Winding Road" handout sheet, describe what happens to food at each stop along the digestive system. At the same time, other parts of the body are playing their roles. Fill in a description of each of their functions.

#### Extensions:

On the back of the handout, answer these questions:

1. What can you do to help food move through your digestive system? What foods help? What roles do water and exercise play in aiding digestion?
2. What happens when a person gets diarrhea? What should people do if they have this problem?



## Digestive Health Problems

### Objectives:

Students will:

- Learn about various diseases and problems related to the digestive system
- Understand how these diseases affect the body's ability to get the nutrition it needs

### Materials:

- Pen or pencil and paper, or word processing program
- Computer with Internet access

### Class Time:

30 minutes

### Activity:

So you've learned how the digestive system delivers nutrients to the body. But what if something goes wrong? There are many different digestive health problems. Some, like constipation, originate in the digestive system, while others don't but still cause digestive symptoms. For example, bulimia is a mental health problem, but people with bulimia can often experience stomach damage, tooth decay, and swollen salivary glands as a result of constant vomiting.

List the following health problems on a separate sheet of paper. Using TeensHealth.org articles, give a one-sentence description for each problem, and then write another sentence or two about how the problem affects the digestive system's ability to do its job. Finally, write a sentence or two how the problem can be prevented and/or treated.

- Alcoholism
- Bulimia
- Celiac Disease
- Constipation
- Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD)
- Indigestion
- Inflammatory Bowel Disease
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome
- Lactose Intolerance
- Ulcers

## Reproducible Materials

### Handout: Lunch's Long and Winding Road

[KidsHealth.org/classroom/9to12/body/systems/digestive\\_handout1.pdf](http://KidsHealth.org/classroom/9to12/body/systems/digestive_handout1.pdf)

### Quiz: Digestive System

[KidsHealth.org/classroom/9to12/body/systems/digestive\\_quiz.pdf](http://KidsHealth.org/classroom/9to12/body/systems/digestive_quiz.pdf)

### Answer Key: Digestive System

[KidsHealth.org/classroom/9to12/body/systems/digestive\\_quiz\\_answers.pdf](http://KidsHealth.org/classroom/9to12/body/systems/digestive_quiz_answers.pdf)

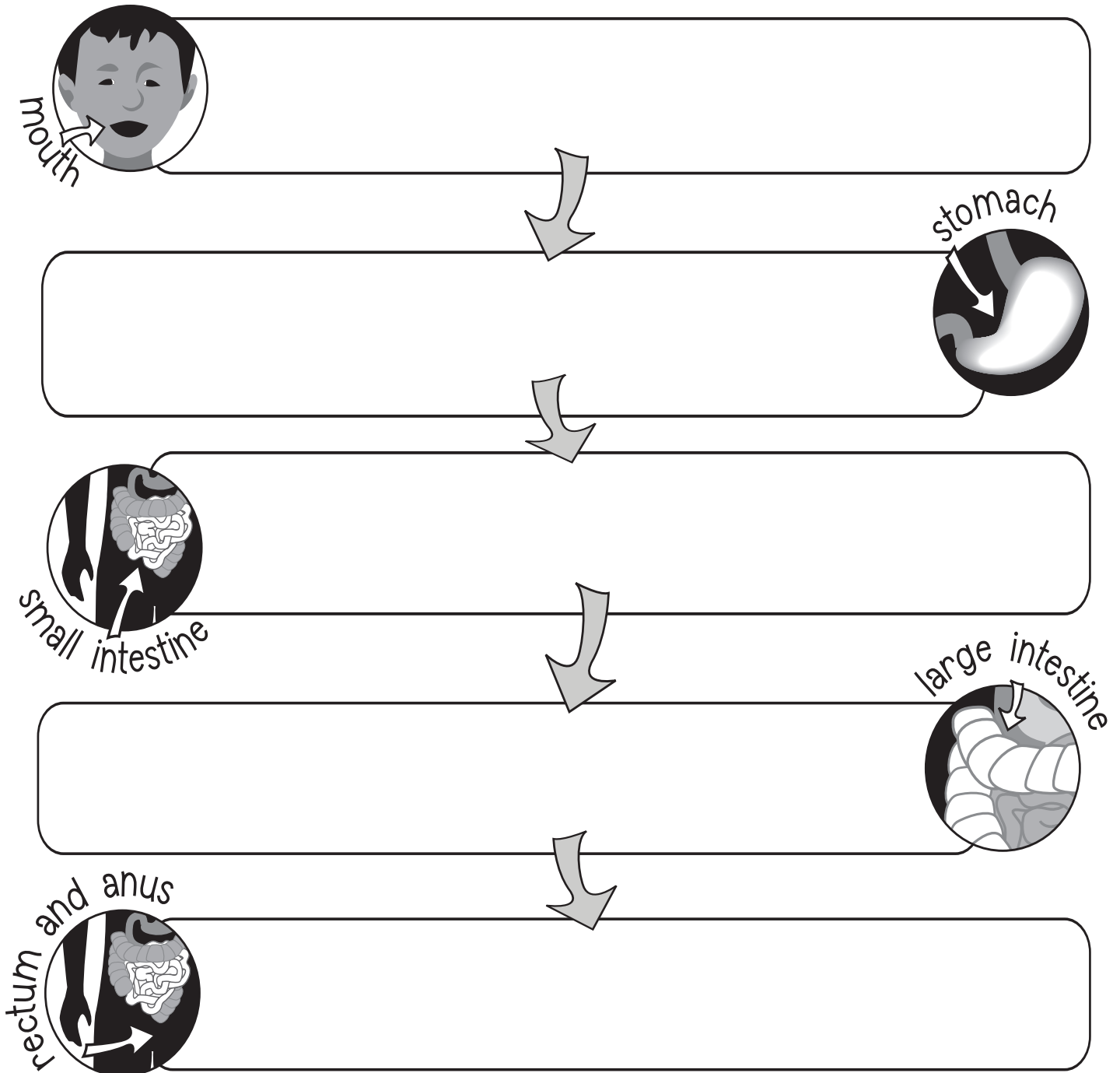


Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Lunch's Long and Winding Road

Instructions: Use this flowchart to explain how a food goes from being an item on a plate to energy and nutrients for your body. In the spaces provided, write a sentence or two about what happens at each location.





Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Quiz

Instructions: Answer each question.

1. Your digestive system works on the foods you eat for about:
  - a. 5 hours
  - b. 10 hours
  - c. 15 hours
  - d. 20 hours
2. The digestive system breaks down food into:
  - a. nutrients
  - b. amylase
  - c. saliva
  - d. sphincters
3. During the process of absorption, nutrients from food go from:
  - a. the intestines into the bladder
  - b. the blood into the organs
  - c. the intestines into the bloodstream
  - d. the mouth into the stomach
4. The alimentary canal, or digestive tract, is made up of the:
  - a. pancreas, liver, and gallbladder
  - b. esophagus, stomach, and intestines
  - c. colon, rectum, and anus
  - d. mouth, esophagus, and stomach
5. These move food through the digestive system:
  - a. digestive fluids
  - b. enzymes
  - c. mucous membranes
  - d. smooth muscles
6. In the stomach:
  - a. muscles churn and mix the food with acids and enzymes
  - b. glands make 3 quarts of digestive juices each day
  - c. food leaves as a thick liquid called chyme
  - d. all of the above
7. The pancreas, liver, and gallbladder help digestion in these ways, respectively:
  - a. making enzymes; making bile and processing nutrients; and storing bile
  - b. producing saliva; digesting carbohydrates; and eliminating waste
  - c. producing hormones; producing enzymes; and eliminating waste
  - d. making acids; producing digestive juices; and storing enzymes



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Quiz Answer Key

Instructions: Answer each question.

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  - a. making enzymes; making bile and processing nutrients; and storing bile
  - b. producing saliva; digesting carbohydrates; and eliminating waste
  - c. producing hormones; producing enzymes; and eliminating waste
  - d. making acids; producing digestive juices; and storing enzymes