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What to Eat to Produce More Bile in the Liver

TRACEY ROIZMAN, D.C. | Last Updated: Oct 08, 2015

Bile is a digestive fluid the helps break fats into fatty acids that the body can absorb. Your liver produces bile from cholesterol and a byproduct of the breakdown of red blood cells called, bilirubin. Promoting the production and flow of bile helps your digestive system function optimally, keeps cholesterol levels down and helps prevent gallstones. A variety of foods can increase bile production.

Celery and Radish

To stimulate bile production, Elizabeth Lipski, author of the book "Digestive Wellness for Children: How to Strengthen the Immune System," recommends celery, daikon radish, garlic, horseradish, lemon, lime, watercress and high-quality dietary oils. An eight-week

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Singapore, found that celery extract lowered total cholesterol levels in laboratory animals. It increased excretion of bile without causing any adverse side effects. The study appeared in the January 2000 issue of the journal "Life Science."

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Artichokes

Artichokes increase bile production and also help the liver process fats, according to naturopath and certified nutritional consultant Michelle Schoffro Cook, author of "The 4-Week Ultimate Body Detox Plan." Researchers at the Pharmacology Department, Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Seville, Spain, confirm this advice. They found that 400 mg of artichoke leaf extract significantly increased bile flow after a single dose. Artichoke leaf extract was more effective than a reference compound used in the study and known to stimulate bile flow. The researchers noted no differences in cholesterol levels from the use of artichoke leaf in this study, published in the December 2002 issue of the journal "Phytomedicine."

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High-fat Diet

A high-fat diet may stimulate bile production, according to Robert Wallace, author of "Public Health and Preventive Medicine." However, health factors associated with high-fat diets may include increased risk for certain types of cancer. Fat in the large intestine can encourage the growth of bacteria, some of which produce cancer-causing toxins. Cancers of the colon, breast and prostate, which link to high-fat diets, possibly arise through this mechanism.

Fat Types

The types of dietary fats you consume may exert different influences on your gall bladder, according to a study conducted at the Department of Clinical Nutrition, Sun Yat-sen University Northern Campus, Guangzhou, China. In the laboratory animal study, published in the May 2005 issue of the journal "Lipids," saturated fat-rich diets decreased bile acids and increased blood and liver cholesterol levels, while polyunsaturated fat-rich diets increased bile acids and decreased cholesterol levels in the liver and blood.

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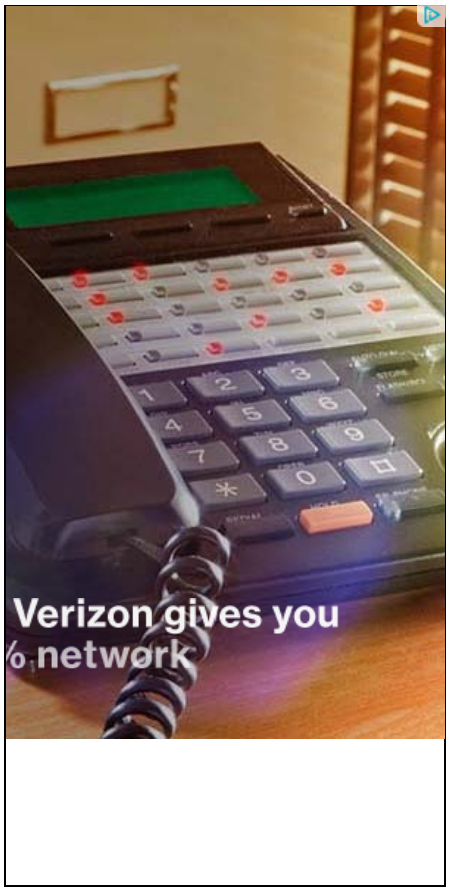
by STEPHANIE CHANDLER | Last Updated: Dec 24, 2015



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The human digestive tract functions to break down food particles into smaller molecules the body can absorb through the lining of the small intestines. The body performs two main types of digestion; mechanical digestion involves the physical breakdown of food such as the action of chewing, and chemical digestion involves digestive acid, digestive enzymes and bile salts, also commonly called bile acids or just bile. Bile salts and

digestive enzymes perform different functions in different sections of the digestive tract.

Production

Several different glands produce digestive enzymes. The salivary glands produce and secrete saliva, which contains the digestive enzyme known as salivary amylase. As food progresses to the stomach, two additional enzymes aid in the process of digestion: pepsin and gastric amylase. The pancreas, classified as a solid digestive organ because food does not pass through it, secretes the three digestive enzymes known as pancreatic amylase, pancreatic protease and pancreatic lipase. In contrast to these enzymes, the liver produces bile salts and releases the substance to the gall bladder, which stores it until needed in the small intestine.

Type of Substance

Digestive enzymes are proteins that enhance biochemical reactions that occur in the digestive tract. Although stomach acid produced by the cells lining the stomach performs a major part of the digestive process, digestive enzymes speed up the process by breaking down different types of food molecules. Bile describes the fluid produced in the liver that contains water, electrolytes and organic molecules including the bile acids, cholesterol, fats and bilirubin – the waste product produced by the breakdown of old red blood cells. The liver uses cholesterol to produce two main bile acids: cholic acid and chenodeoxycholic acid. When the bile acids combine with the amino acids glycine or taurine, they form the bile salts.

Function

The different types of digestive enzymes break down different types of macronutrients – those nutrients the body needs in large amounts. The amylase enzymes break down carbohydrate molecules. Salivary amylase and gastric amylase cleave the long chains of sugar molecules into smaller molecules consisting of only two sugars, while pancreatic amylase breaks those down further into the simple sugar known as glucose. Pepsin, classified as a protease enzyme, and pancreatic protease break down complex proteins into the individual amino acids the body can absorb. Pancreatic lipase breaks down fat molecules. In order for pancreatic lipase to work, the fat must mix with digestive fluids. Because bile salts contain a fat-soluble portion and a water-soluble portion, they act as a detergent, causing the fat globules to break down into tiny droplets that allow the lipase enzyme to access and break down the fat.

Location

Digestive enzymes work throughout the digestive tract, from the first contact with food in the mouth to the small intestine, where the body absorbs the majority of nutrients. Bile salts come into contact with the food particles only in the small intestine.

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