

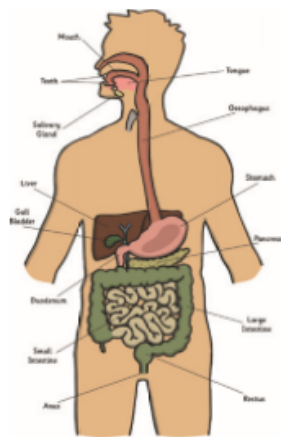
Your Digestive System

Have you ever wondered what happens to your food after you've chewed it in your mouth? Your body is amazing and has a system that sorts and uses the food you eat to make sure you get everything you need to stay healthy. It's called your digestive system. Here's how it works...

Before the Stomach

Firstly, we all know that you put food in your mouth to eat it. You enjoy the taste and the texture of the food whilst your teeth break it down into smaller pieces. Saliva is then mixed with it to help make it softer and break it down. Also, your mouth cools it or warms it to an acceptable temperature for you to swallow.

When the food is broken down enough, it is swallowed and goes down to your stomach via a tube called the oesophagus (pronounced 'a-soff-a-guss'). Muscles in the oesophagus move in waves to move the food down to your stomach. These muscles are so good at this job that they could even get the food to your stomach if you were standing on your head! (Don't try this though!)



Fact File

- The average adult eats about 500kg of food per year.
- Your body can produce up to 1.5 litres of saliva every day.
- An adult oesophagus is about 25cm long.
- A camera has been invented now that is as small as a pill (called Pillcam). It can be swallowed so it passes through your oesophagus in order to take photos of the inside of your body. It can take up to 55,000 pictures over the 8 hours that it's in there! It's been used since 2001 to let doctors see inside patients.

At the Stomach

When the chewed-up and softened food arrives in the stomach (which is a stretchy sack shaped like a letter 'J'), it is mixed with acid and enzymes (pronounced: en-zymes) that break the food down. Once it's broken down, it looks a bit like porridge- it is a substance called 'chyme'. The stomach juices also help to kill any bad bacteria that might be in the food, which could potentially make you ill.

After the Stomach

The next part of the journey for your food (which doesn't look like food anymore) is through the small intestine. It's here that all the goodness is taken out of the food, which goes off to different places in the body for you to use.

When the small intestine has done its job of getting all the goodness out of the food, all the material that is unwanted goes into the large intestine. Then, it makes its way out of the body as poo at the end of the large intestine.

So, there you have it. Isn't your body clever?

Your Digestive System: Questions

List three things that happen to food in your mouth to prepare you for swallowing it.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

Where in the body is your oesophagus?

- _____

...called the esophagus (pronounced 'a-soff'a-guss)

What is the purpose of the brackets used here?

- _____

Read the section headed 'After the Stomach'. Find and copy a word that means 'nutrients'

- _____

How can you tell the writer thinks that the way the human body works is very impressive?

- _____

The average adult eats about 500kg of food per year.

Circle all the nouns in this sentence.

Underline an adjective.

Suggest a synonym for the verb: _____

Put these parts of the digestive system in the order that food passes through them: small intestine, oesophagus, stomach, large intestine, mouth.

- _____

Estimate how long your oesophagus is, using evidence from the text to explain how you worked this out.

- _____

Your Digestive System: Answers

List three things that happen to food in your mouth to prepare you for swallowing it.

- 4) Your teeth break it into smaller pieces
- 5) Saliva makes it softer
- 6) It changes temperature (gets colder or warmer)

Where in the body is your oesophagus?

- In your throat – between your mouth & your stomach

...called the esophagus (pronounced 'a-soff'a-guss)

What is the purpose of the brackets used here?

- To show you how to read the word as it is a tricky word that you might not know how to say

Read the section headed 'After the Stomach'. Find and copy a word that means 'nutrients'

- Goodness

How can you tell the writer thinks that the way the human body works is very impressive?

- Accept any responsible answers that refer to the text, such as: they describe it as 'amazing' or 'clever'; they include questions to make the reader agree; they include fascinating facts about the body.

The average adult eats about 500kg of food per year.

Circle all the nouns in this sentence. (adult, food, year)

Underline an adjective. (average)

Suggest a synonym for the verb. (eats: consumes, gobbles, ingests etc.)

Put these parts of the digestive system in the order that food passes through them: small intestine, oesophagus, stomach, large intestine, mouth.

- Mouth, oesophagus, stomach, small intestine, large intestine.

Estimate how long your oesophagus is, using evidence from the text to explain how you worked this out.

- Accept any reasonable answer that related to the fact that an adult oesophagus is 25cm long. E.g. I'm about half the height of my mum and an adult's is 25cm long, so mine would be about half