

# Digestive Health: Listen to Your Gut, Know Your Core Score

(NAPSA)—More than 81 million Americans experience chronic digestive health problems according to a recent survey by the American Gastroenterological Association (AGA). If you're not paying attention to the quality of your digestive health, you're ignoring your body's core—the vital part of your body that provides the delivery system for nutrients you consume. When the digestive system malfunctions, the entire body and all organs are at risk.

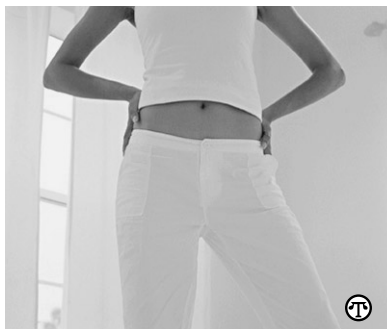
“Quality of life is tied to what you eat,” explains Dr. Samuel Klein, medical director of the Washington University Weight Management Center and chairman of the AGA's nutrition education campaign. “Poor food choices can lead to disruptive digestive symptoms like gas and abdominal pain.”

“By making healthy decisions and eating a balanced, varied diet of foods and beverages, you can reduce disruptive digestive symptoms and may prevent weight gain and eventually obesity—which can cause a number of health problems,” added Dr. Klein.

Improve your digestive health with these tips:

- Eat a balanced and varied diet that contains fruits and vegetables. Other foods that specifically promote or aid intestinal health and function include bran and other whole grain breads and cereals, beans, nuts and dried plums. Try to limit fats and avoid sweets, emphasizing instead complex carbohydrates.

- Get enough fluids via beverages or foods. Include a beverage with every meal or snack. Low-calorie or non-caffeinated selections could include water and



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herbal teas and fruit juices such as prune juice.

- How you eat is just as important as what you eat. Eat slowly, stop eating when you feel full, and don't eat just before bedtime. Make time for proper nutrition. If you find that you're always on the go, take along good-for-you portable snacks such as fresh fruit, granola, almonds and dried plums.

- Exercise, doing activities you like. Try aerobic or strength-building activities. Or try stretching exercises like yoga or pilates.

- Manage your stress. Relaxing should be a part of your daily to-do list, just as work, social and family obligations are.

The AGA developed a “Core Score” quiz to help you assess the quality of your digestive health. To take the Core Score quiz and learn more about digestive health, visit the AGA's Web site at [www.gastro.org/corescore](http://www.gastro.org/corescore). This information is brought to you by the AGA via a grant from the California Dried Plum Board (CDPB). Visit the CDPB's Web site, [www.CaliforniaDriedPlums.org](http://www.CaliforniaDriedPlums.org), for more about healthy eating.