

Apple Cider Vinegar

So many cultures include some type of vinegar or a fermented food with their meals. For example, a dish in Germany will include sauerkraut or a side dish of beans and vegetables fermented in vinegar. Besides being very tasty, fermented foods and vinegar assist in healthy digestion. Since many people do not include these food varieties on a daily basis, a good alternative is to drink a little apple cider vinegar (fermented apple cider) with water before meals. In this article I'll provide some background information about the digestive system and how fermented vinegar can help.

Many people experience gas, bloating, or acid reflux ("heart burn") and think that they have too much acid in their system. Quite the opposite is true, there is not enough acidity, such as hydrochloric acid in the stomach, and digestive enzymes to properly absorb, digest and assimilate food. The food then ferments or putrefies, which is what we typically feel coming up and burning our esophagus. This is generally true for people unless there is an ulcer present, in which case vinegar would not be appropriate.

Why does our digestion decrease in it's effectiveness? There are many reasons, two main reasons are:

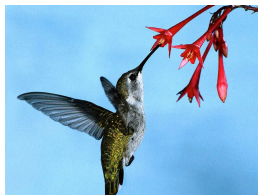
- > a natural decrease in digestive enzymes and hydrochloric acid occurs as we age,
- > stress and fear puts the system into a state of "fight or flight" which draws attention away from the digestive system and engages muscle coordination and circulation

How does fermented vinegar help?

- > Fermented apple cider vinegar is fermented apple cider, not all vinegars go through the fermentation process, some are distilled. It is the fermented vinegar that works to bolster digestive enzymes within the digestive system. Fermented vinegar is cloudy, not clear. Most people know of Bragg's organic apple cider vinegar sold in a glass container at supermarkets.
- > Fermented and acidic foods such as vinegar and citrus do not make the system more acidic, but more alkaline. It is an acidic environment that cancer cells and candida/yeast flourish, so it is important to keep a pH balance of 7 (neutral) or slightly lower (alkaline). Another example, meat has a low pH, (more alkaline) but when assimilated into our system, contributes to an acidic environment.

I hope this was a concise and informative article. If you would like to read more about fermented apple cider vinegar and fermented foods, I'd like to recommend my favorite nutrition book by Paul Pitchford, "Healing with Whole Foods".

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