

Foundational Nutrition

By Dr. Humbart “Smokey” Santillo

An excerpt from his book

Your Body Speaks – Your Body Heals

It’s the intelligence within the body that heals, but we must supply it with supportive nutrients so healing and rebuilding can happen. In supporting the entire body with nutrition that’s foundational for good health, I usually suggest that people stay on two important supplements that work together: digestive enzymes and probiotics. No matter how clean your diet or lifestyle is, these are probably necessary. A failure in any health program can most likely be traced to a deficiency of enzymes and probiotics. Another important component of foundational nutrition is a whole-food or herbal supplement.

Enzymes. Supplemental enzymes provide very important support for the digestive system in general, and for the intestines and pancreas in particular. After the age of 30, most of us are deficient in one or more of the main digestive enzyme categories: *protease* for proteins, *lipase* for fats, *amylase* for carbohydrates and sugars, and *cellulose* to release the nutrients in fibers. Enzymes are produced in your body and occur naturally in raw foods, but if you eat cooked food or have a long-term history of eating cooked food, supplemental enzymes are necessary. Take them before meals in the quantity suggested on the package (if you eat meat, you may wish to take extra).

It’s almost impossible to maintain normal vitamin and mineral balances without good digestion. Efficient digestion of protein and fat, for example, is critical for proper hormone levels and nerve function. I can’t imagine trying to overcome any deficiencies or other health conditions without a normal digestive enzyme level to break down and release the building blocks from foods. My book *Food Enzymes: The Missing Link to Radiant Health* (Hohm Press, Prescott, AZ, 1993) explains how crucial enzymes are for weight loss, hormonal balance, athletics, and the control of allergies, hypoglycemia, and diabetes.

Probiotics. Probiotics – the name means “for life” – are bacteria such as lactobacillus that help maintain an important balance between beneficial and harmful microorganisms in the intestinal tract. You have 3-4 pounds of “friendly” and “unfriendly” microorganisms in there, and experts say you need 85 percent to be friendly to keep the remaining 15 percent at bay. The helpful bacteria assist with digestion, bowel pH and activity, and liver detoxification. They also stimulate the immune system, produce vitamin K and some B-vitamins, help prevent skin problems, and reduce cholesterol buildup.

Your internal bacterial balance can be upset by poor diet, coffee, antibiotics, drugs stress, and other

external influences. Bacterial imbalance in the bowel opens the door for infections and can produce a host of **symptoms:** acne, allergy, anxiety, bad breath, bloating, B-vitamin deficiency, and other fungal infection, cold and flu, constipation, depression, diarrhea, fatigue, fibromyalgia, flatulence, high cholesterol, itchy skin, muscle pain, premenstrual syndrome, psoriasis, tension headaches, and urinary tract infection.

Take your probiotic supplement on an empty stomach. Some foods containing friendly bacteria are fermented milk products, cultured dairy products such as yogurt and kefir, fermented pickles, and sauerkraut. To stimulate probiotic growth, eat “prebiotic” carbohydrates called *oligosaccharides* – soluble, nondigestible fibers naturally found in whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and legumes. Particularly prebiotic-rich foods are chicory, dandelion green, flaxseed, garlic, leek, and onion.

Juice Plus+. A whole-food supplement that supports all of the meridians, Juice Plus+ is the most studied nutraceutical in the world today. Its ingredients, demonstrated benefits, and role in foundational nutrition are detailed in chapters 4 and 5. But whatever whole-food or herbal supplement you choose, be sure there’s primary research behind it, as there is for Juice Plus+ - that’s research on the effects of its ingredients *in combination*, not separately. Not all foods or herbs work well together.

More digestion tips. A problem in any digestive organ affects your digestion of food and absorption of nutrients. To address difficulties in these areas, always consider taking supplemental enzymes and probiotics, then add more green foods to your diet, or try green powders such as wheatgrass, chlorella, barley grass, spirulina, and kamut.

For general digestive support and for constipation, plenty of fiber and water are important. For diarrhea, the green foods and powders are helpful, as are pectin-rich foods such as apple, blueberry, carrot, and grapefruit – carob powder is especially good in children. Enzymes and probiotics are helpful against both diarrhea and constipation. For circulatory issues related to digestion, onion and garlic have demonstrated benefits in lowering blood sugar, cholesterol, and pressure.

What makes any whole food work, nutritionally speaking, is its thousands of phytochemicals, also called phytonutrients. Many have been identified and studied, and many are yet to be discovered. The totality of a food’s phytonutrients produces its synergistic effects. But nowadays, even our whole foods are often nutrient-deficient. Supplements are therefore a necessity in today’s living experience—especially if you’re sick or weak or your digestion is not working properly. For complete health, optimal function, and healing, using a whole-food concentrate such as **Juice Plus+** to supplement your spectrum of nutrients may be your best bet.