

PATIENT CONNECTION



Published by Dr. Alexander Kopp

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Digestive Trivia Questions

1. Approximately, how many different species of bacteria live inside an average human's colon?
2. How long does it take food to travel from your mouth to your stomach?
3. The liver has how many different functions?
4. On average, how long does food stay in the stomach?
5. The hydrochloric acid in the stomach is able to dissolve metal but not plastic. True or False.
6. On average, how long is the entire digestive tract – from mouth to rectum?
7. The stomach has how many layers of muscles?
8. What is the total surface area of the small intestines (in square feet)?



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What is IBS?

Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) is an intestinal disorder that causes belly pain, cramps, gas, diarrhea, and constipation. Although many experience occasional digestive issues, what sets IBS apart is the belly pain and frequent and reoccurring diarrhea or constipation.

IBS is a common condition that affects between 25 and 55 million Americans. Although it is not a life-threatening condition, it can significantly impact a person's quality of life. It is unknown what causes IBS. Available treatments include diet, lifestyle changes, exercise and medications.

What is IBD?

Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) is a chronic condition of the digestive tract and involves ongoing inflammation of all or part of the intestines. The intestinal walls become inflamed, swollen and develop ulcers, which can cause discomfort and serious digestive issues. It can cause symptoms such as fever, cramps, bloody diarrhea, and weight loss.

It is unclear what causes IBD. People who have had IBD for at least eight years have a higher risk of developing colon cancer. The exact symptoms and course of treatment depends on which part of the digestive tract is involved.

What is Constipation?

Constipation is the most common digestive concern in the U.S. It can make a person feel bloated, headachy, and irritable. Constipation is a condition in which a person has difficulty emptying their bowels. It's also often associated with hardened stools. It occurs when bowel movements become infrequent or difficult.

Constipation can be caused by inadequate water intake, nutritional deficiencies, stress, pregnancy, cancer, depression, IBS, certain medicines and more. The best way to prevent constipation is by eating a healthy diet (with plenty of fiber), exercising, and drinking plenty of water.

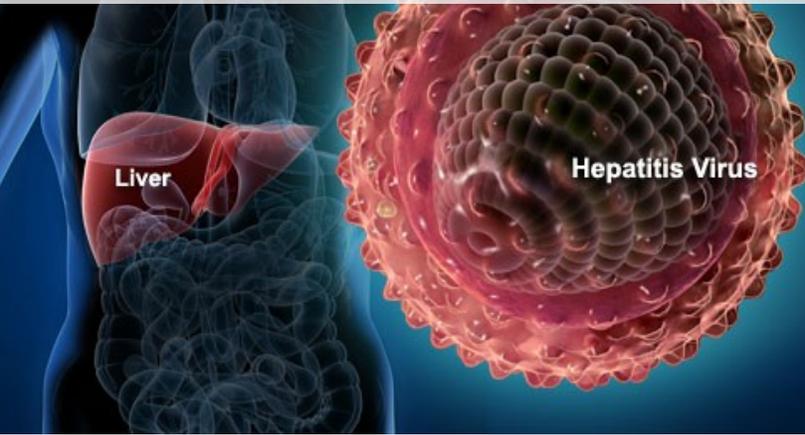
What is Gastroparesis?

Gastroparesis is a condition that affects the stomach muscles and prevents the stomach from properly emptying its contents. Ordinarily, strong muscular contractions move food through your digestive tract. However, with gastroparesis, this process works poorly or not at all.

Gastroparesis can interfere with normal digestion, cause nausea and vomiting, and create issues with blood sugar levels and nutrition absorption. The cause of gastroparesis is unknown and there is no cure. However, diet changes and medication may offer some relief.

If you have any questions about the topics in this newsletter or if you are experiencing any digestive discomfort, schedule an appointment with Dr. Kopp to discuss your health concerns.

Hepatitis B, C, A



What is Hepatitis?

Hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver. It may be caused by drugs, alcohol use, or certain medical conditions. However, in most cases it's caused by a virus and is known as viral hepatitis. The most common forms are viral hepatitis A, B, and C. Each type presents different issues, symptoms and treatments.

Sometimes there are no symptoms of hepatitis in the first weeks after infection. However, when they occur, symptoms of hepatitis A, B, and C may include fatigue, nausea, poor appetite, belly pain, a mild fever, or yellow skin or eyes (jaundice). When hepatitis B and C become chronic, they may cause no symptoms for years. By the time there are any warning signs, the liver may already be damaged.

Hepatitis B

Hepatitis B is a serious liver infection caused by the hepatitis B virus. For some people, hepatitis B infection becomes chronic, meaning it lasts more than six months. Having chronic hepatitis B increases your risk of developing liver failure, liver cancer or cirrhosis, a condition that causes permanent scarring of the liver. It is most often transmitted from mother to baby during birth or by being exposed to infected blood or blood products. While less common, Hepatitis B can also be spread through exposure to mucous membranes.

Hepatitis C

Hepatitis C is a serious liver infection that spreads through infected blood. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention an estimated 2.7 million people in the United States have chronic hepatitis C virus. Moreover, most are unaware that they are infected due to a lack of symptoms. Even after decades without symptoms, an infected person is able to transmit the hepatitis C virus to others. They are also at elevated risk for developing chronic liver disease, liver failure and liver cancer, and even death. There is no vaccine for Hepatitis C, but there are effective treatments for the virus.

Hepatitis A

Hepatitis A is a highly contagious liver infection that can spread from person to person in many different settings, usually through food and water. It typically causes only a mild illness, and many people who are infected may never realize they're sick at all. The virus almost always goes away on its own and does not cause long-term liver damage. Practicing good hygiene, including washing hands frequently, is one of the best ways to protect against hepatitis A. Vaccines are available for people most at risk.

Source: *WebMD.com & Centers for Disease Control*

Hepatitis A and B Vaccines

There are vaccines to protect against hepatitis A and B. The CDC recommends hepatitis A vaccination for all children ages 12 to 23 months and for adults who plan to travel or work in areas with hepatitis A outbreaks or who have other risk factors. The hepatitis B vaccine is recommended for all infants at birth and for adults who have any of the risk factors. There is no vaccine for hepatitis C.



Trivia Question Answers

1. 400 | 2. 7 Seconds | 3. 500 | 4. 2 to 3 hours | 5. True | 6. 29-33 Feet | 7. 3 | 8. 2,700 ft