

# The Core

**Mouth to Anus:** The simplest description of the human digestive tract.

- Medical reminders for a healthier you:
  - Visit your dentist twice a year for teeth cleaning and checkups.
  - Frequent heartburn should be addressed by your doctor; Barrett's Esophagus is a **CANCER** linked to heartburn.
  - Unexplained stomach pain that occurs often, especially after meals, could indicate a serious condition such as an **ULCER**.
  - Any blood in your stool is cause for concern; **PLEASE** see your doctor if you see any. Things that cause blood:
    - Crohn's disease
    - Ulcerative colitis
    - **CANCER**
    - Diverticulitis/diverticulosis
    - Hemorrhoids
    - Anal fissures
    - Ulcers (blood is normally very black and tarry in appearance)
- When and what to have done:
  - 40 years of age: men should have a digital rectal exam to check the prostate.\*
  - 40 years of age: men and women should have their stools checked for any microscopic blood.\*
  - 50 years of age: men and women should have a screening colonoscopy or sigmoidoscopy.\*

*\*Please understand this is purely a reference for you. Use it as a discussion guide the next time you visit your doctor. Other risk factors might warrant testing at an earlier age. Let your doctor decide your initial testing timeline, and the frequency of any future testing.*

## Healthy Bites

While nutrition news is frequently changing, most everyone can agree on one thing: fruits and vegetables are good for everyone, but few of us eat enough of them regularly.

- Fruits and veggies are especially important for digestive health. Not only does the fiber in them keep you regular, the nutrients in them prevent cancers and other chronic diseases.
- Fresh fruits and veggies are abundant in the spring at the grocery store, Farmer's Market, and your garden.
- Buy local and/or organic produce to get the freshest food with fewest additives.
- Whatever you buy, wash it thoroughly before eating or cooking it to minimize digestive distress from dirt or pesticides.
- Regardless of what you buy and where you get it, keep in mind that the benefits of fruit and veggies far outweigh that risk! Work your way up to 5-9 servings per day.

*Use the chart from the City Market in Kansas City to see what's in season regionally. Fruits and veggies in season not only taste better, they're cheaper too!*

Food	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Apples			X	X	X	X	X	X	
Blackberries			X	X	X				
Blueberries			X	X	X	X			
Cantaloupe			X	X	X	X	X		
Grapes				X	X	X	X		
Peaches			X	X	X	X			
Pears				X	X	X	X	X	
Plums			X	X	X	X	X		
Raspberries			X	X	X	X	X		
Strawberries		X	X	X	X				
Watermelon			X	X	X	X	X		
Asparagus	X	X	X						
Snap beans			X	X	X	X			
Broccoli		X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Carrots			X	X	X	X			
Cucumbers		X	X			X	X	X	
Eggplant			X	X	X	X	X		
Lettuce	X	X	X			X	X	X	
Green peas	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Bell peppers				X	X	X	X	X	
Spinach	X	X	X			X	X	X	X
Squash		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Sweet corn			X	X	X	X			
Sweet potatoes					X	X	X	X	X
Tomatoes		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	