

Intestinal flora

BACTERIA

We typically associate bacteria with infectious diseases. In reality, only a few known bacteria actually cause disease. Most bacteria are actually very beneficial.

The digestive tract contains several hundreds of billions of bacteria. To put this into perspective, bacteria make up to 1 kilogram (that is 2.2 pounds) of your body weight. These bacteria form what is called the **intestinal flora**. This flora plays an essential role during digestion. In particular, it breaks down certain nutrients that the body cannot digest. Dietary fibre for example.

The density of bacteria increases gradually from the stomach to the large intestine. There are up to 1000 billion bacteria per gram of faecal matter, which means that there are about 10 times more bacteria in the digestive tract than there are cells in the body!

This intestinal flora consists of a **unique ecosystem** made up of several hundreds of species. Besides playing an important role in digestion, intestinal flora also helps maintain health and prevent the development of certain diseases.

INTESTINAL FLORA IN DIGESTIX



In DIGESTIX, the intestinal flora is the only digestive piece that has an impact on dietary fibres.

4.2.9 Intestinal flora

Most bacteria cause infectious diseases.

- True
- False

Bacteria are useless.

- True
- False

How many bacteria are there in your digestive system?

- Tens of millions
- Tens of billions
- Hundreds of billions

What is the average weight of all the bacteria in the body?

- 10 grams
- 100 grams
- 1 kilogram

What is the name given to the community of bacteria in the digestive tract?

- The intestinal fauna
- The intestinal flower
- The intestinal flora

What effect does intestinal flora have on certain nutrients?

- Fermentation
- Hydration
- Absorption

Dietary fibre is digested.

- True
- False

Where in the body are most bacteria found?

- In the intestines
- In the stomach
- In the oesophagus

The intestinal flora comprises hundreds of species.

- True
- False

How many bacteria are there in the body compared to the number of cells?

- The same amount
- 10 times more
- 100 times more

Answers

Most bacteria cause infectious diseases.

- True
Wrong! That's not the right answer.
- False
Well done! Fortunately, most bacteria are inoffensive.

Bacteria are useless.

- True
Wrong! Bacteria are not useless.
- False
Well done! Bacteria ferment dietary fibre in your colon.

How many bacteria are there in your digestive system?

- Tens of millions
Wrong! It is much more than that.
- Tens of billions
Wrong! It's more than that.
- Hundreds of billions
Well done! That's right.

What is the average weight of all the bacteria in the body?

- 10 grams
Wrong! It is a lot more.
- 100 grams
Wrong! It's more than that.
- 1 kilogram
Well done! That's right.

What is the name given to the community of bacteria in the digestive tract?

- The intestinal fauna
Wrong! But it was good try.
- The intestinal flower
Wrong! Try again!
- The intestinal flora
Well done! That's right.

What effect does intestinal flora have on certain nutrients?

- Fermentation
Well done! That's right.
- Hydration
Wrong! That's not the right answer.
- Absorption
Wrong! Try again!

Dietary fibre is digested.

- True
Wrong! That's not the right answer.
- False
Well done! Dietary fibre is not digested, it ferments.

Where in the body are most bacteria found?

- In the intestines
Well done! That's right.
- In the stomach
Wrong! That's not the right answer.
- In the oesophagus
Wrong! There are more elsewhere.

The intestinal flora comprises hundreds of species.

- True
Well done! Intestinal flora is highly diversified.
- False
Wrong! Try again!

How many bacteria are there in the body compared to the number of cells?

- The same amount
Wrong! It's more than that.
- 10 times more
Well done! That's right!
- 100 times more
Wrong! It's less than that.