



The Digestive System

Study*ladder*

The Digestive System

The body needs food to get vitamins, minerals and energy.

Food must be broken down so that the organs in our body can absorb it.

This is the job of our digestive system.



Chewing

When you chew your food it breaks the big pieces into little pieces and mixes it with saliva.

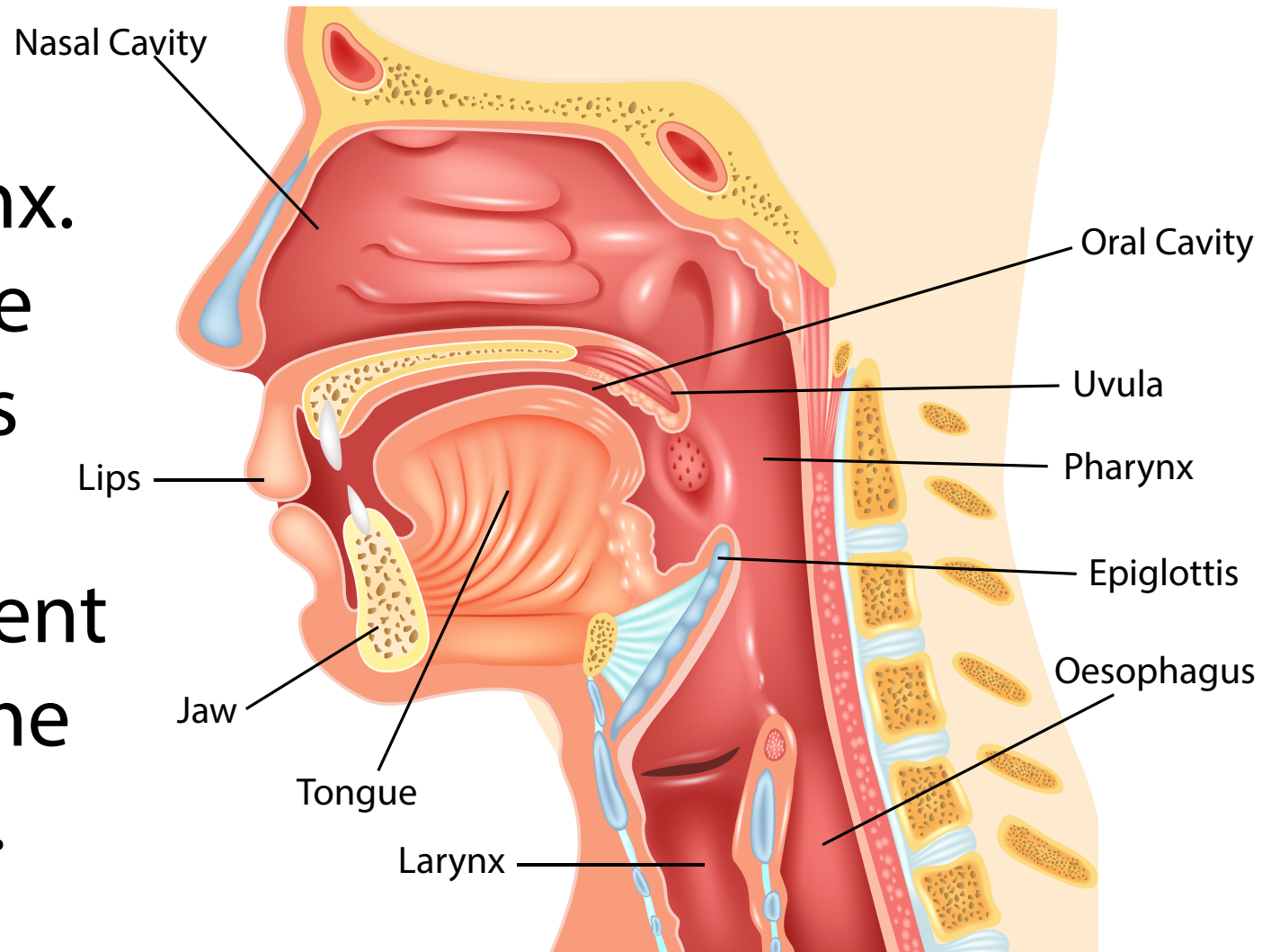
Saliva softens the food making it easier to swallow. Your saliva also has enzymes in it that start to break down food.



Swallowing

The tongue pushes food into the back of our throat.

At the back of the throat is the pharynx. It has a flap of tissue called the epiglottis that closes during swallowing to prevent food going down the trachea (windpipe).





Travelling to The Stomach

Throat muscles force the food down into a long tube that leads to our stomach.

This tube is called the oesophagus.

It links the mouth to the stomach.

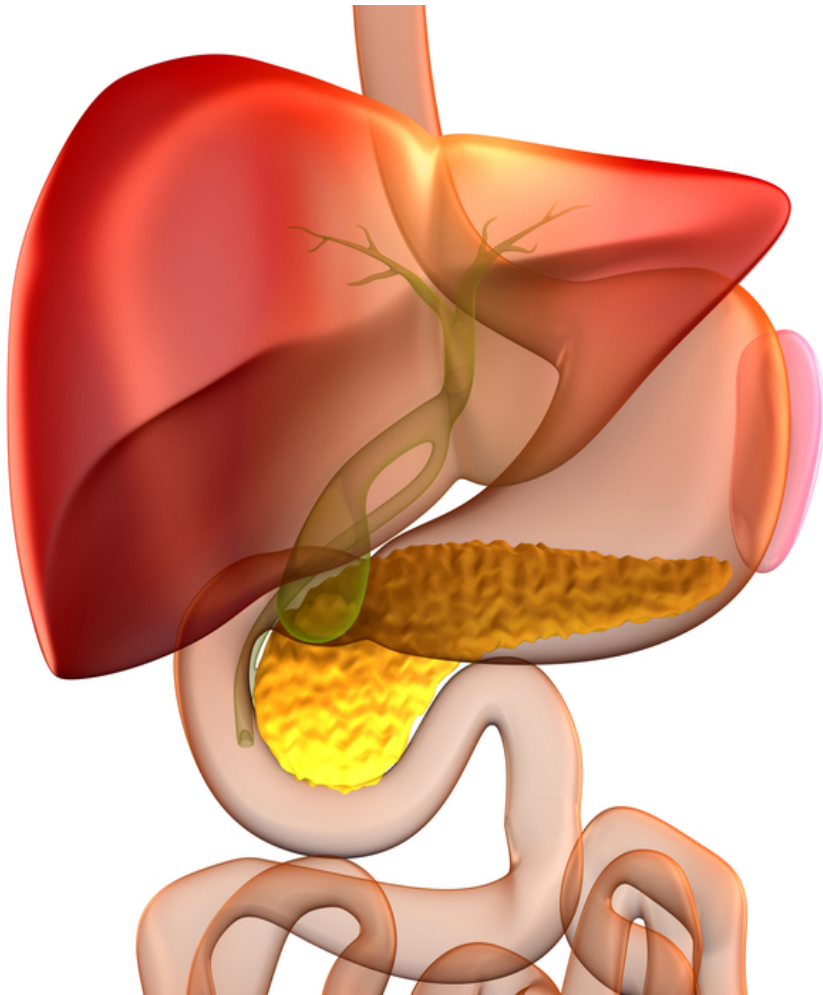
Stomach

Food is in the stomach for about four hours. Enzymes aid in the digestion of food and the inner wall of the stomach secretes acid to help kill bacteria.

The stomach lining creates a thick coating of mucus to protect itself from the acid.



The liver and pancreas do a lot to help the digestive system.



The liver provides bile (stored in the gall bladder) that helps break down fats, carbohydrates and proteins.

The pancreas provides additional enzymes to help digest your food.

The small intestine



Most of the digestion and absorption of nutrients takes place in the small intestine.

The stomach passes on a thick liquid called chyme, and enzymes continue to break this down in the small intestine which absorbs the nutrients into the bloodstream.

The large intestine

The large intestine is the final part of the digestive system.

It absorbs water from the remaining indigestible food matter.

It then passes any waste from the body through the bowel.

