



MEDIFAST NEWS

Updates on clinical obesity management with Medifast



summer 2009

Welcome to Medifast News!

Here's what's new from Medifast, your resource for clinical management of obesity.

This month:

Program update - Optimizing digestive function with Essential1®: Digestive Health

Food science - The Science of Meal Replacements

Nutrition - GI Tract Health

Compliance - Identifying and Overcoming Eating Triggers

Medifast

Program Updates and News

Optimizing digestive function with Essential1®: Digestive Health

They say you are what you eat: Is it true? Well, not entirely, particularly if the nutrients from the foods you are eating are not being optimally absorbed and utilized. So perhaps an updated perspective on this old saying is, “You are what you digest and absorb.”

The highest quality food is only as beneficial as the nutrients your body absorbs from it. This understanding—along with Medifast’s focus on

optimal health—is the inspiration for a new dietary supplement, Essential1®: Digestive Health.

Each daily dose of Essential1®: Digestive Health includes one capsule of dairy-free, freeze-dried probiotics in a prebiotic medium, and one tablet of natural digestive enzymes.

Three key ingredients to promote optimal health

Probiotics

These are the “good” bacteria found in the healthy digestive tract. Probiotics such as those used in Essential1®: Digestive Health help maintain the natural balance of good and bad bacteria in your body.

When good bacteria are added and allowed to multiply, they replace the bad bacteria—and this may improve digestive health, boost the immune system, and contribute to better optimal health.

Essential1®: Digestive Health’s custom probiotic blend

Each probiotic capsule contains three

strands of probiotics: *Lactobacillus acidophilus*, *Lactobacillus bulgaricus*, and *Bifidobacterium bifidus* in a prebiotic medium.

A body of science demonstrates the benefits of *Lactobacillus* and *Bifidobacterium* species in the gastrointestinal tract. Working together, *L. acidophilus*, *L. bulgaricus*, and *B. bifidus* produce hydrogen peroxide, which helps maintain optimal microbial balance and protects against pathogens.

Supplementing with *Lactobacillus* and *Bifidobacterium* provides a comprehensive approach working at different levels of the GI tract. *Lactobacillus* species attach in the small intestine while *Bifidobacterium* species attach in the large intestine. Unlike other supplements with just one probiotic, Essential1®: Digestive Health covers both intestinal areas.

Prebiotics

There’s competition between good and bad bacteria for space in the gut, and without a food source, a probiotic

continued on page 2

has a more difficult time surviving in the digestive system.

Prebiotics are non-digestible fibers that serve as a food source for probiotics and give them an advantage in the intestinal environment.

The prebiotic found inside each probiotic capsule in Essential1®: Digestive Health is fructo-oligosaccharides (F.O.S.).

Digestive enzymes

Digestive enzymes such as protease, amylase, and lipase break down food into simpler components that can be used by the body for energy.

Proper digestion plays a role in getting to and maintaining a healthy weight. Absorbing sufficient nutrients from food sends signals to your body that you are satisfied. Also, extracting and using more nutrients from food means you can eat less and still satisfy your body's needs for vitamins, minerals, and macronutrients.

As you age you can experience significant reductions in enzyme output. Plus, at any age, changes to your eating plan (such as including more fiber-rich vegetables, legumes, and whole grains) can contribute to intestinal gas, bloating, heartburn, and indigestion as your body gets used to them.

Supplemental digestive enzymes facilitate efficient breakdown of food, and are important for optimal health.

Essential1®: Digestive Health's custom enzyme blend

The digestive enzyme tablet contains a comprehensive enzyme blend of 14 enzymes from all-natural sources.

This multi-purpose formula provides adequate supplemental enzyme amounts with a low risk of stomach upset.

The tablet includes an unusually complete range of natural enzymes from plant, animal, and microbial sources that work in concert to help maintain normal enzyme levels.

Together, the broad-spectrum combination maximizes the breakdown, absorption, and utilization of macronutrients from the widest spectrum of foods, including proteins, carbohydrates, disaccharides, sugars, fats, and vegetable fibers.

Ingredient synergy in Essential1®: Digestive Health

The three ingredients in Essential1®: Digestive Health support the functions of one another for improved well-being. Probiotics, prebiotics, and enzymes work together to ensure that the digestive tract is running smoothly. When taken together, they assure greater levels of digestion and absorption of your food.

Digestion is an intricate process that starts in the mouth and ends in the large intestine. Consider the metaphor of an assembly line (or, more accurately, a "disassembly line") for the digestive system, where if one step in the process is not working properly, the entire system is affected.

When symptoms of indigestion, bloating, fatigue, or poor immunity are present, supplementing with digestive enzymes, prebiotics, and probiotics may provide positive results by addressing any broken steps in the process.



Essential1®: Digestive Health provides the right mix of ingredients to ensure greater levels of digestion and optimal absorption of nutrients from food to keep your digestive system and immunity in balance.

These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. These statements are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease.

In the next issue of

MEDIFAST NEWS

Program update: Resveratrol & Anti-aging

Food science: Healthy Eating: Medifast & Organic

Nutrition: Gluten Intolerance

Compliance: Food Focus & Mindful Eating



Food Science:

The Science of Meal Replacements

In the past, meal replacements (MRs) have had a bad reputation thanks to celebrity yo-yo dieting trends, nutritionally inadequate liquid products, and the perception that MRs are not “real” food.

Nowadays people are rethinking MRs. Scientific research strongly supports the use of MRs, such as Medifast Meals, in portion-controlled, structured diet plans for successful weight loss or maintenance.

A meta-analysis of six clinical research studies found significantly greater weight loss among those completing a partial MR diet (7-8 percent weight loss) compared to those receiving a conventional reduced-calorie diet (3-7 percent weight loss), at both three months and one year.

Weight loss at both time points was significantly associated with improvements in biomarkers of health risk, and no adverse events attributable to MRs or conventional diets were reported in these studies.

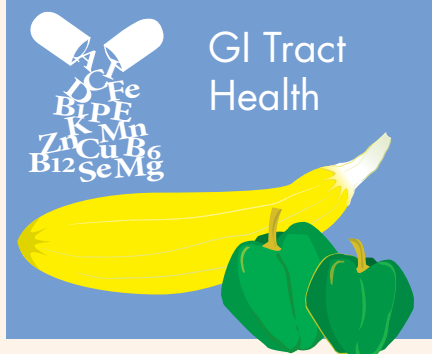
Additionally, MRs get a high rating from the American Dietetic Association’s Evidence Analysis Library as a strategy for weight loss or maintenance, especially for those who have difficulty with self-selection or portion control. Medifast Meals and

other MRs are calorie- and portion-controlled, so those who use them are freed from confusion and anxiety around what—and how much—to eat.

Not all MRs are alike; the formulation is everything. Each individually packaged Medifast Meal offers a consistent nutritional footprint that balances protein and carbohydrate. They contain very little fat and are fortified with dietary fiber, as well as 24 vitamins and minerals, which make them nutritionally dense and energy-effective.

Together with personal commitment, support, and exercise, MRs in general—and Medifast Meals in particular—can provide the perfect formula for successful weight loss and long-term weight maintenance.

Nutrition Corner:



For comments or questions regarding nutrition, please contact:

NutritionSupport@ChooseMedifast.com

The digestive process starts in the mouth with mastication and the release of amylase by the salivary glands. In the stomach, pepsin and other enzymes, hydrochloric acid, and intrinsic factors assist with further hydrolysis of food.

The partially digested food (chyme) then travels to the duodenum, the jejunum, and then the ileum where nutrient absorption and indigestible food residues are separated out for “processing” in the colon. The colon absorbs water, electrolytes, and vitamins produced by bacteria before peristalsis advances the indigestible matter to the anus for defecation.

The digestive process is aided by intestinal flora, which include both anaerobic and aerobic microbes. Most microorganisms live in the distal duodenum, jejunum, ileum, and colon—stomach acid and secretions from the pancreas and gall bladder hinder colonization of most bacteria in the stomach and proximal small intestine. Intestinal flora assist the body in various functions such as digestion, stimulating cell growth, sequestering harmful microbes, and aiding the immune system in response to and defense

against pathogens. The quantity and types of intestinal flora fluctuate daily and are highly influenced by environment, food, health conditions, and pharmacotherapy.

The homeostasis of microbes in the GI tract is essential to overall health. Imbalances can cause adverse reactions such as diarrhea caused by improper digestion of carbohydrates and bile acids. A reduction in beneficial bacteria can alter the host’s ability to contain growth of harmful species, leading to overgrowth of dangerous bacteria and fungi such as *C. difficile*, *E. coli*, or *Candida*.

Supplemental probiotics, prebiotics, and digestive enzymes can restore a proper balance of intestinal flora, resulting in optimal digestion and absorption of nutrients.



11445 Cronhill Drive
Owings Mills, MD 21117

PRE-SORTED
STD U.S.
POSTAGE
PAID
RIDGELY, MD
PERMIT #40

Compliance:

Identifying and Overcoming Eating Triggers

What are the dynamics that make us reach for food—whether we're actually hungry or not? Understanding eating triggers (especially the emotional kind) can go a long way in helping you and your patients learn healthier ways of relating to food.

Physiological eating triggers are the ones resulting from actual physical sensations. Think of a growling stomach after a skipped meal or the urge to eat when patients have headaches or other pain.

Social eating triggers occur in group settings, when custom, conviviality, and even peer pressure encourage patients to eat. In some social situations, patients may overeat due to feelings of shyness or inadequacy around other people.

Situational triggers occur when patients eat because an opportunity (or temptation) is there. Examples include a man who sees an advertisement for a pizza delivery and calls the number, or a woman who passes

a bakery, smells the fresh cookies, and goes inside. Patients are likely to encounter plenty of situational triggers while watching television, going to the movies, or attending sporting events.

Eating triggers can also include thoughts. Cognitive dynamics such as negative self-talk, making excuses for eating, and scolding oneself for appearance or lack of will power may contribute to negative emotions, which can trigger emotional eating.

Emotional triggers can include negative feelings such as stress, depression, anxiety, or frustration. The major issue with emotional eating is that patients tend to overeat, consume too many calories, and choose foods that are nutrient-poor.

Boredom, stress, depression, anxiety, and loneliness can be emotional triggers for vulnerable patients. A tough day at school, an argument with a spouse, or a long, dull day at work can trigger emotional eating.

There are two main reasons for this: Food does more than nourish the body; it has a profound effect on the emotions as well. Food can be a distraction in times of emotional pain—or even an actual physiological relief.

Researchers believe that eating certain foods can release hormones associated with feelings of well-being

and satisfaction. Patients who have repeatedly experienced this positive reinforcement may develop strong cravings for foods that bring them pleasure, and will habitually seek them out in emotional moments.

It's a tough pattern to break. Identifying emotional eating triggers is essential when identifying how and why extra calories are consumed. The next step is to devise a plan to help your patients break the emotional eating cycle and adopt new coping mechanisms.

You can advise your patients to try one of the following activities when an emotional eating trigger hits: Take a walk, call a friend, write in a journal, play a game, listen to music, or find another pleasurable activity to do until the urge passes.

To more effectively cope with emotional stress, patients may benefit from relaxation exercises, meditation, or individual or group counseling. These techniques address any underlying emotional problems that may be supporting the cycle of emotional eating.

Having a (non-food) reward system will positively reinforce appropriate coping strategies and increase the likelihood of your patients maintaining new, healthier habits.