Food

We need to eat a wide variety of foods to get all the food substances that we need. When we do this, we are said to have a **balanced diet**. Carbohydrates, proteins, fats and oils (lipids), vitamins and minerals are **nutrients**, which means that they provide the raw materials for making other substances that the body needs.

Substance needed	Examples	Why it is needed	Good sources
carbohydrate	starch, sugars	for energy (in respiration)	pasta, bread, rice, potatoes
protein		for growth and repair (building new substances)	meat, fish, beans
vitamins	vitamin C	for health	fruits and vegetables (e.g. oranges contain lots of vitamin C)
minerals	calcium	for health	fruits, vegetables and dairy products (e.g. milk contains calcium)
fibre		for health (helps to stop constipation)	wholemeal bread, wholegrain rice, celery and other fibrous vegetables
water		for health (water dissolves substances and fills up cells)	

We can do tests to find out which substances are in foods. For example, starch makes iodine solution go a blue-black colour.

Nutrition information labels on foods tell us what the food contains. The labels also tell us how much energy is stored in the substances that make up the food. The amount of energy is measured in **kilojoules (kJ)**. The amount of energy a person needs in a day depends on:

- levels of activity (more active people need more energy)
- age (teenagers need more energy from food than adults do)
- whether the person is a girl or a boy (boys need more energy than girls).

Food labels may also have health claims on them, which use persuasive language.

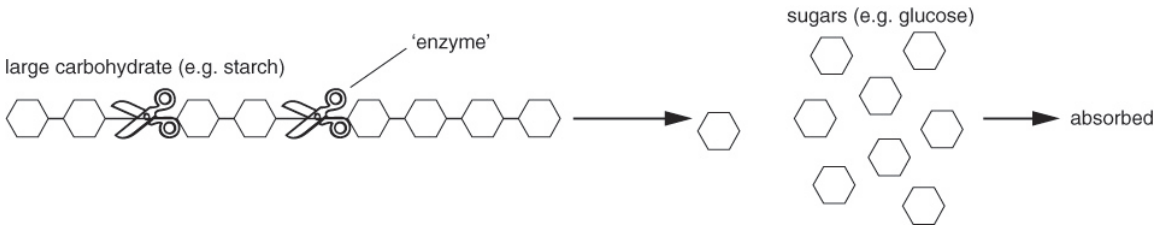
Eating too much or too little can cause problems. Too much fat may cause **heart disease** and can make people overweight. Very overweight people are **obese**.

People starve and become weak if they eat too little. **Starvation** and obesity are both forms of **malnutrition**. Other forms include **deficiency diseases** such as **scurvy**, which is due to a lack of vitamin C.

Digestion

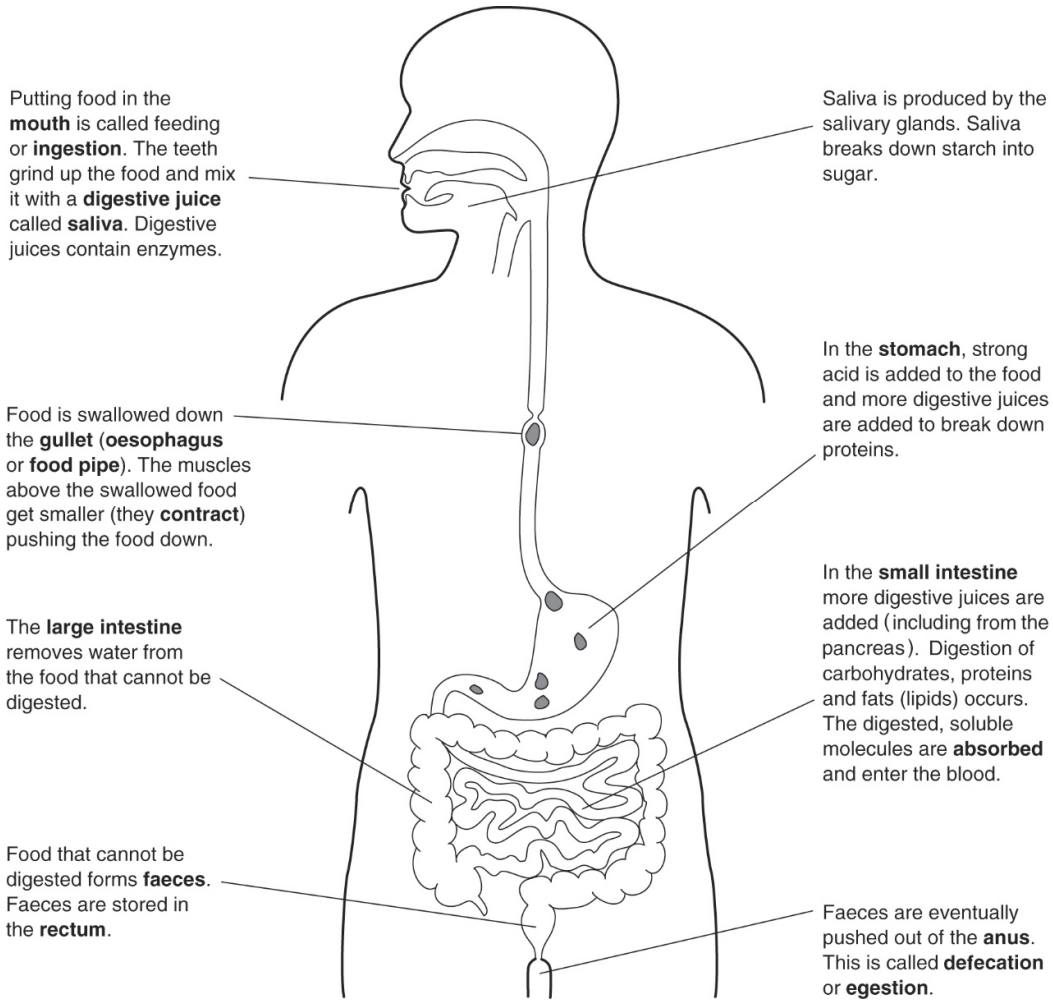
Digestion turns large **insoluble** substances into small **soluble** ones. The organs of the **digestive system** help us digest food. Many of them produce **enzymes** (substances that are **catalysts** and help speed up food digestion).

We can use a **model** to make it easier to think about how enzymes work:



The gut

Food is digested in the **gut**.



To help absorb the digested food, the wall of the small intestine is folded and covered with **villi**. The cells have microvilli. These features all increase the **surface area**. The wall of the small intestine is also only one cell thick, meaning that it is easy for small molecules to **diffuse** out of the small intestine and into the blood. The digested food molecules are carried in the blood **plasma**.

The surface area is the total area of the faces of a three-dimensional object. The volume is the amount of space the object takes up. An object's surface area : volume ratio is its surface area divided by its volume. The bigger the surface area : volume ratio, the more surface area an object has per unit volume. Cells need large surface area : volume ratios to get enough of the substances they need from the surroundings.