

**FREQUENT DIARRHEA**

**UNEXPLAINED  
WEIGHT LOSS**

**OILY, FOUL-SMELLING  
STOOLS THAT FLOAT**

**GAS AND BLOATING**

**STOMACH PAIN**

**COULD IT BE EPI?**

(Exocrine Pancreatic Insufficiency)



**DON'T KEEP  
A LID ON IT.**

Talk to your doctor.



Learn more at  
**identifyEPI.com**

# Opening up about your symptoms is the first step for getting help

It's the first thing on your mind and the last thing you want to talk about...the gas, bloating, and frequent diarrhea that have you running to the bathroom. And then there's what happens after you get to the toilet—the unusually bad smell and strange appearance of your stool!



**It's normal to feel uncomfortable talking about symptoms like these, but it's important to be honest with your doctor.**

Remember, there's no reason to be embarrassed discussing health issues with your doctor—so don't keep a lid on it, open up about ALL your symptoms.



**1 or more**

of these symptoms might be signs of a manageable condition called EPI

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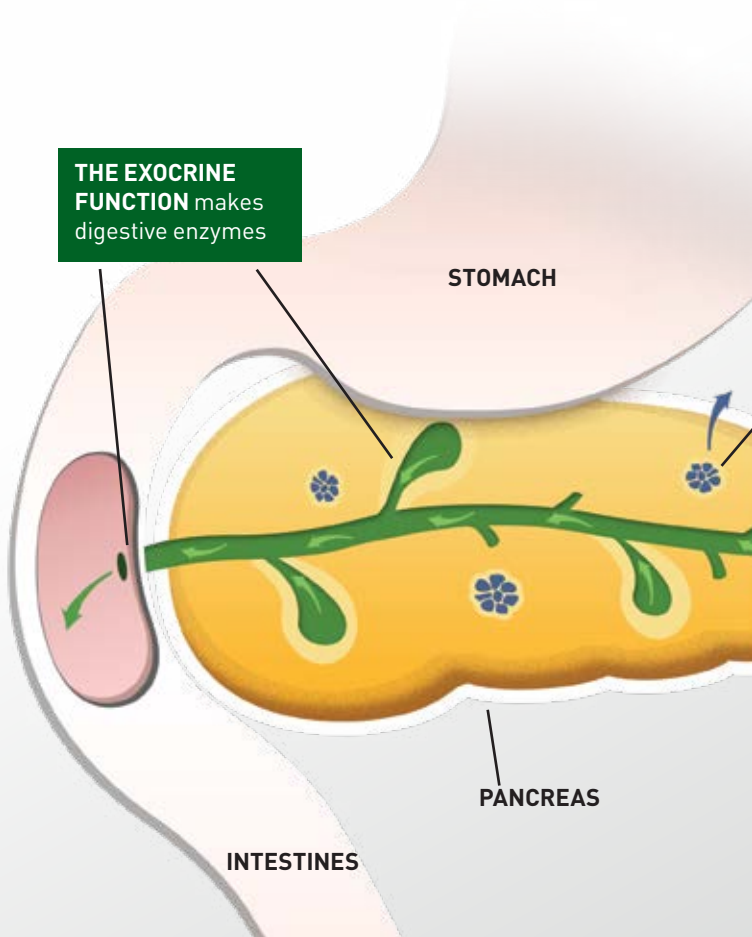
**Frequent diarrhea**  
**Unexplained weight loss**  
**Oily, foul-smelling stools that float**  
**Gas and bloating**  
**Stomach pain**

**Be sure to tell your doctor about ALL your symptoms**

# So, what is EPI?

EPI stands for **Exocrine Pancreatic Insufficiency**—a complex name to describe a condition in which the pancreas simply doesn't make enough chemicals—called enzymes—to digest the food a person eats. To better understand EPI, it helps to know what the pancreas does.

**THE EXOCRINE FUNCTION** makes digestive enzymes



## The pancreas has 2 jobs

Located in the center of the abdomen, the pancreas has 2 important functions:

- **Making insulin**, a hormone that helps the body process the sugar we eat (endocrine function)
- **Making enzymes** to help break down, or digest, food so the body can absorb it (exocrine function)



THE ENDOCRINE FUNCTION makes insulin

The diagram shows a cross-section of the pancreas. A green arrow points from the endocrine function text to the islets of Langerhans, represented by a blue star-like cluster. A blue arrow points from the exocrine function text to the acinar cells, represented by a yellowish area.



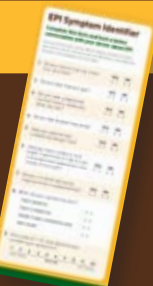
**In people with EPI, it is the exocrine function of the pancreas that is affected. And it is the undigested food moving through the intestines that causes the unpleasant symptoms of EPI.**

# Who is affected by EPI?

EPI has been associated with several different diseases and surgical procedures that affect the pancreas.

## People who have these **CONDITIONS** may have EPI:

- **Chronic pancreatitis**, an inflammation of the pancreas, is one of the most common causes of EPI in adults
- **Cystic fibrosis**, an inherited disease that affects the lungs and digestive system, is the leading cause of EPI in children
- **Diabetes (type I and type IIIC)**, a disease affecting the endocrine function of the pancreas
- **Pancreatic cancer**, cancer of the pancreas, may cause damage to the pancreas, leading to EPI. Pancreatic cancer is sometimes treated with pancreatectomy.



## Start the Conversation

Fill out the EPI symptom identifier attached to the back cover of this brochure and bring it to your next office visit. It's an easy way to open a discussion with your doctor about your symptoms.

## Patients who have had these **SURGERIES** may also have EPI:

- **Pancreatectomy**, the surgical removal of all or part of the pancreas, usually performed as a treatment for pancreatic cancer or chronic pancreatitis or when the pancreas has been severely damaged by injury
- **Gastrointestinal surgery** (i.e., Whipple procedure or gastric bypass) involving the stomach and intestines may affect how the enzymes made by the pancreas work



# Can EPI be treated?

EPI is a condition that can be managed with medicine prescribed by your doctor called **PERT (pancreatic enzyme replacement therapy)**. PERTs replace the enzymes your pancreas is no longer making. They are taken with every meal to help break down food into nutrients your body can absorb.

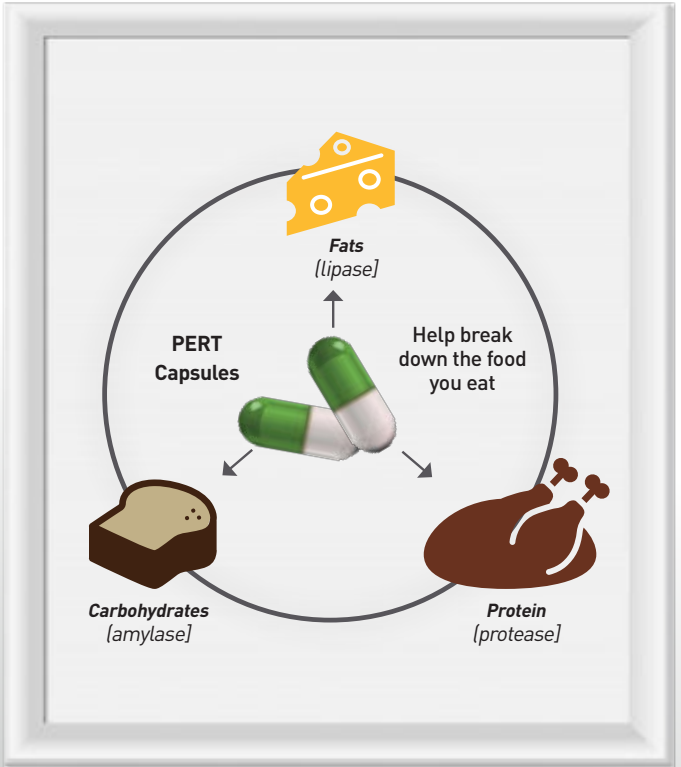
PERTs contain the digestive enzymes produced by a healthy pancreas: *lipase, protease, and amylase*. Each of these enzymes is responsible for breaking down one of 3 main nutrients found in food: *fat, protein, and carbohydrates*, respectively.

## Watch How EPI Affects Digestion

To see a visual demonstration of the connection between the pancreas and the digestive process, visit [identifyEPI.com](https://www.identifyEPI.com)



## 3 enzymes for 3 nutrients



# How do I know my symptoms are not caused by another condition?

Only your doctor can determine if you have EPI or another condition. That's why it's so important to talk to your doctor about all of your GI symptoms.

It is also important to talk to your doctor about all your medical history, past and current, and all of your medications including all vitamins and supplements you take.

While some symptoms of EPI, such as diarrhea, are similar to those caused by other conditions like celiac disease, Crohn's disease, and irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), the causes and treatment for EPI are different.

Learn more at [identify\*\*EPI\*\*.com](https://www.identifyEPI.com)

# Questions For Your Doctor



## **Could my symptoms be caused by:**

Something I'm eating?

Medications or supplements  
I'm taking?

A GI condition?



## **If it is EPI ...**

Do I need to change my diet?

Are there lifestyle changes  
I should make?

What are my treatment  
options?



# EPI Symptom Identifier

**Complete this form and have a better conversation with your doctor about EPI**

Be sure to tell your doctor about all your medical history, past and current, and all of your medications, including all vitamins and supplements you take.

1. Do your stools look oily, smell foul, and float? **YES** **NO**  
( ) ( )

2. Do you have frequent gas? **YES** **NO**  
( ) ( )

3. Do you have unexplained stomach pains, especially when you eat? **YES** **NO**  
( ) ( )

4. Do you feel bloated frequently? **YES** **NO**  
( ) ( )

5. Have you experienced unexplained weight loss? **YES** **NO**  
( ) ( )

6. Have you been unable to hold bowel movements or had to rush to the bathroom especially in the middle of the night? **YES** **NO**  
( ) ( )

7. Are you currently taking any medication(s) or supplement(s)? **YES** **NO**  
( ) ( )

8. When did your symptoms start?  
PAST MONTH ( )  
PAST 6 MONTHS ( )  
MORE THAN 6 MONTHS AGO ( )  
NOT SURE ( )

9. On a scale of 1-10, how severe do you consider your symptoms?

**1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10**  
LEAST SEVERE CIRCLE ONE MOST SEVERE

# Getting help starts with your doctor getting all the facts

The EPI symptom identifier on the back of this page can help you and your doctor have a more thorough discussion about your health. Complete the form and share it with your doctor.



## **CHECK**

the answers that best describe your symptoms and health history



## **DISCUSS**

The EPI symptom identifier with your doctor

Learn more at  
identify**EPI**.com



TAKE THE FIRST STEP AND  
OPEN UP ABOUT YOUR SYMPTOMS

**ASK YOUR DOCTOR  
ABOUT EPI.**

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