**Poor Digestion / Malabsorption Syndrome**

Thinking about low stomach acid, pancreatic insufficiency (low digestive enzymes), poor intestinal health, some type of “bad bug” or irritant (SIBO, parasites, candida, food allergies/sensitivities).

Your best overall testing would be to do a Comprehensive Digestive Stool Analysis (CDSA). However, we can get some indicators from blood chemistry testing.

**Protein:**

* Poor protein digestion will often cause or contribute to more gas / bloating / foul smelling gas and stool / heartburn / acid reflux.
* Think about low HCL first . . . then pancreatic insufficiency. \*\*Low HCL will also lead to low minerals levels in blood testing (electrolytes, iron, zinc (low Alkaline Phosphatase), selenium as indicated by low Free T3).
* BUN - low levels indicate dysbiosis and poor protein digestion.
* Creatinine - low levels indicate poor protein intake, poor protein digestion, and poor liver function.
* Total Protein - low levels indicate poor protein intake, poor protein digestion, and poor liver function.
* Albumin - low levels indicate poor protein intake, poor protein digestion, and poor liver function.
* Prealbumin - low levels indicate poor protein intake, poor protein digestion, and poor liver function.
* Elastase (stool testing) - pancreatic insufficiency / poor protein digestion.

**Carbs:**

* Think about pancreatic insufficiency.
* Think about carbohydrate/sugar intolerance, and symptoms of candida.
* No direct blood lab testing for poor carbohydrate digestion.
* Lots of blood lab indicators for poor sugar metabolism (serum glucose, hemoglobin A1c, triglycerides elevated (insulin resistance), fasting insulin.

**Fats:**

* Think about gall bladder removal / poor gall bladder function . . . then pancreatic insufficiency.
* Think about fatty stool / floating stool.
* Fecal Fat stool test
* Low Vitamin D that does not improve after taking a higher therapeutic dose could indicate poor fat digestion.
* GGT is best indicator of gall bladder function.

**Side Note:**

Your best therapeutic approach of if a patient reports digestive issues as a main concern, or you suspect this is a concern is:

1. Digestive Repair protocol
   1. HCL and pancreas enzyme support
   2. Product to get rid of “bad bugs”
   3. Probiotic
   4. Prebiotic - very important to improve population of “native bacteria”.
2. Comprehensive Food Sensitivity Testing
3. Paleo-type diet.

This combination will easily take care of 80 - 90% of digestive issues. Most patients will likely see weight loss as a side benefit while focusing on the above to improve digestive function.

\*\* Good liver function can also be critical to good digestion and metabolism of proteins, carbohydrates and fats.