

Digestion

Ingestion - the taking of substances into the body through the mouth

Digestion - the breaking down of large insoluble molecules into small soluble molecules so that they can pass through the gut wall into the blood

Absorption - the movement of small food molecules and ions through the wall of the intestine into the blood.

Assimilation - the movement of digestive food molecules into the cells of the body where they are used, becoming part of the cells

Egestion - the passing out of food that has not be digested or absorbed, as faeces through the anus.

Mechanical digestion - the breaking down of large pieces of food into smaller pieces of food without changing the food molecules. This starts in the mouth where chewing breaks down food into smaller pieces that can be swallowed.

Muscular contractions of the stomach continue this. In the small intestine, large globules of fat are broken down into smaller globules by emulsification by bile.

Chemical Digestion - the breakdown of large insoluble food molecules into smaller soluble ones by the action of enzymes. Mechanical digestion gives a larger surface area for enzymes to work on.