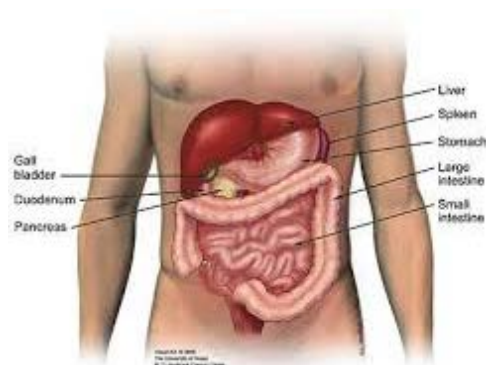


Acids and Bases in the Body

Acids and bases are very useful ingredients in many products we use every day but they are also in your body. Special cells in your stomach lining produce an acid called *hydrochloric acid*. This acid, along with other chemicals, helps to break down and digest food in your stomach. Hydrochloric acid is a strong acid, but your stomach lining produces a substance (a base) that protects it from being damaged by the acid.

Your body produces a base from an organ called the *pancreas*. The pancreas produces a solution rich in bicarbonate ion and sends it into the small intestines. The partially digested food from the stomach that goes into the small intestine is still pretty acidic. The bicarbonate from the pancreas helps neutralize the acid so other chemicals can help continue to digest your food.



Human digestive system