

Darm

Der **Darm** (lateinisch *intestinum*, griech. ἔντερον, *enteron*) ist der wichtigste Teil des Verdauungstraktes von höheren vielzelligen Tieren einschließlich des Menschen. Er erstreckt sich vom Magenpförtner bis zum After, davor liegen der Magen, die Speiseröhre und die Mundhöhle. Der Darm ist beim erwachsenen Menschen ca. acht Meter lang und besitzt wegen der feinen Darmzotten eine Oberfläche von etwa 400 bis 500 m². Die Gesamtheit der Mikroorganismen im Darm ist die Darmflora.

Länge

Die Länge des Darmes bei verschiedenen Tierarten – besonders im Verhältnis zur Körperlänge – hängt hauptsächlich von der prinzipiellen Ernährung der Art ab. Fleischfresser (Carnivoren) haben einen sehr kurzen Darm, da Fleisch leicht verdaut werden kann. Allesfresser (Omnivoren) haben einen längeren Darm, da pflanzliche Nahrung langsamer verdaut wird. Die längsten Därme haben Pflanzenfresser (Herbivoren), da das Verdauen von Pflanzenfasern (meist indirekt mit Hilfe von einzelligen Symbionten) viel Zeit benötigt.

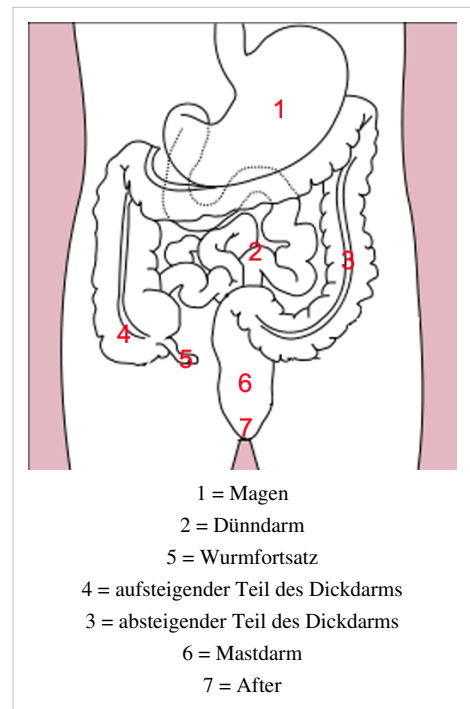
Das Verhältnis von Darmlänge zu Körperlänge beträgt beim Menschen (ein Allesfresser) etwa 6:1 und liegt damit zwischen dem eines reinen Fleischfressers wie der Katze (3:1) und dem eines Pflanzenfressers wie dem Schaf (24:1). Dieses Verhältnis (neben den Zähnen, dem Magen und dem Blinddarm) deutet darauf hin, dass der Mensch zu leichter verdaulicher, tierischer Nahrung tendiert.

Unterteilung des Darmes

Der Darm ist unterteilt in den

- Dünndarm (lat. *Intestinum tenue*), bestehend aus
 - Zwölffingerdarm (lat. *Duodenum*),
 - Leerdarm (lat. *Jejunum*) und
 - Krummdarm (lat. *Ileum*),
- sowie den Dickdarm (lat. *Intestinum crassum*), bestehend aus
 - Blinddarm (lat. *Caecum*) mit dem Wurmfortsatz (lat. *Appendix vermiformis*, umgangssprachlich fälschlich als „Blinddarm“ bezeichnet),
 - Grimmdarm (griechisch/lat. *Colon*) mit aufsteigendem (*Colon ascendens*), querverlaufendem (*Colon transversum*) absteigendem (*Colon descendens*) und S-förmig verlaufendem (*Colon sigmoideum*) Teil und
 - Mastdarm (lat. *Rectum*) auch als Enddarm bezeichnet.

An den Mastdarm, aber feingeweblich kein Darmbestandteil im engeren Sinn, da von äußerer Haut und nicht von Schleimhaut ausgekleidet, folgt der Anus, der mit dem endständigen Venengeflecht des Mastdarmes und dem inneren und äußeren Schließmuskel zusammen das Kontinenzorgan bildet.



Funktionen des Darms

- Verdauung
- Regulation des Wasserhaushaltes
- Ausbildung eines Großteils der Abwehrezellen des Immunsystems
- Produktion von Hormonen und Botenstoffen

Darmwand

Die Darmwand zeigt den typischen dreischichtigen Aufbau eines häutig-muskulösen Schlauches. Der Innenraum wird durch eine Schleimhaut (Mukosa) ausgekleidet. Ihr liegt außen eine zweischichtige Tunica muscularis an, die aus einer inneren Ring- und äußeren Längsmuskelschicht besteht. Zwischen Mukosa und Muskelschicht befindet sich der Plexus submucosus, zwischen den beiden Muskelschichten der Plexus myentericus – beides Anteile des darmeigenen Nervensystems. Außen grenzt – je nach Lage des Darmabschnitts – entweder eine Tunica serosa oder eine Tunica adventitia das Organ ab.

Untersuchungsmöglichkeiten des Darmes

Der Darm ist zum Teil abtastbar und abhörbar. Weitergehende diagnostische Möglichkeiten bieten die Ultraschalluntersuchung (Sonografie), Kontrastmitteluntersuchungen, Darmspiegelung (Koloskopie) und Computertomografie (CT) bzw. Magnetresonanztomografie (MRT). Zusätzlich kann durch eine zu schluckende Endokapsel mit einer Minikamera der Dünndarm und auch der Dickdarm untersucht werden.

Weitere diagnostische Hinweise bietet die Untersuchung des Stuhlgangs, Gewebeprobenentnahme und Blutuntersuchung.

Trivialnamen

In der Jägersprache wird der Darm als (kleines) Gescheide oder auch Geschlinge bezeichnet. Ein weiterer Trivialname ist der Begriff Kaldaunen.

Darmkrankheiten und -störungen

- Fehlbesiedelung des Dün- oder Dickdarms
- Reizdarm
- Chronisch-entzündliche Darmerkrankungen
 - Morbus Crohn
 - Colitis ulcerosa
- Nahrungsmittel-Intoleranzen
 - Laktoseintoleranz
 - Fruktosemalabsorption
 - Nahrungsmittel-Intoleranz
 - Zöliakie
- Blähungen (Flatulenz)
- Verstopfung (Obstipation)
- Durchfall (Diarrhoe)
- Familiäre adenomatöse Polyposis (FAP)
- Hermansky-Pudlak-Syndrom

Diese Liste versteht sich ohne Anspruch auf Vollständigkeit.

Verwandte Themen

- Ausdärmen – Eine qualvolle Hinrichtungsmethode
- Wursthülle aus Naturdarm

Literatur

- Franz-Viktor Salomon: *Darm, Intestinum (Enteron)*. In: Salomon u. a. (Hrsg.): *Anatomie für die Tiermedizin*. Enke-Verlag Stuttgart, 2. erw. Aufl. 2008, S. 293–311, ISBN 978-3-8304-1075-1

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