

# Difference Between Cecum and Appendix

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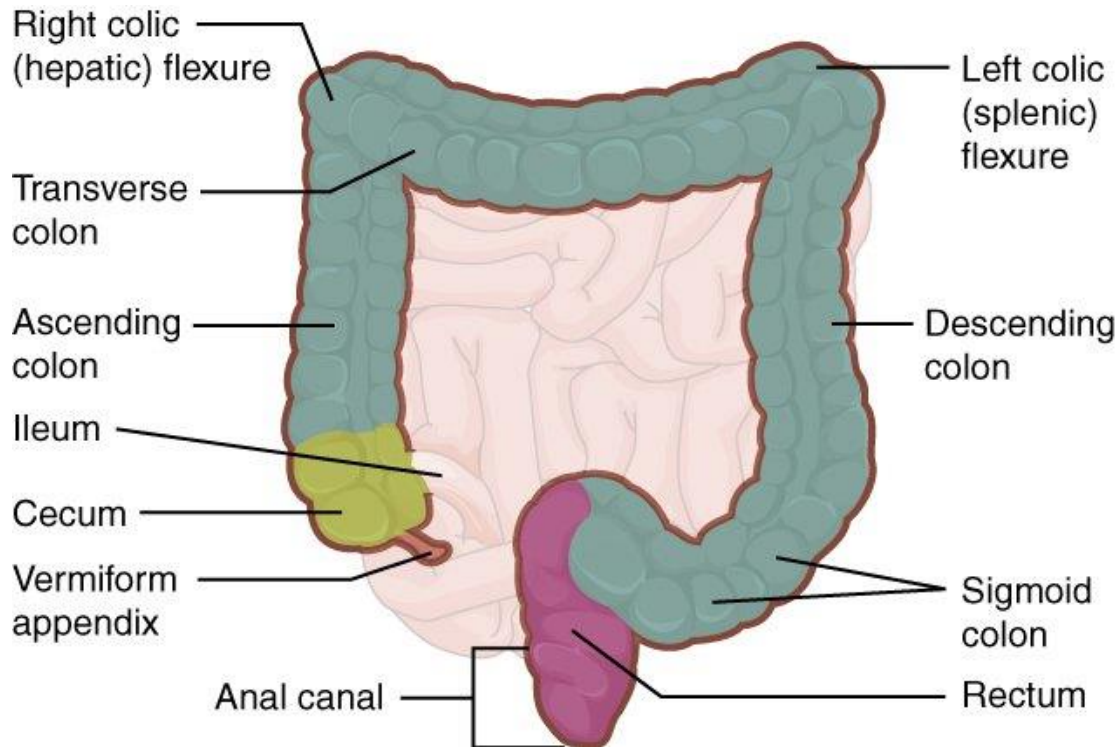
## Key Difference - Cecum vs Appendix

Cecum and Appendix are two parts of the gastrointestinal tract. Cecum is a pouch-like structure of the [large intestine](#) that provides the space for mixing [bacteria](#) with [chyme](#) (partially digested foods) for further [digestion](#) and faecal formation. The appendix is a fleshy tube-like structure connected to the cecum, which is an essential structure for maintaining gut microflora and in mucosal immunity. Cecum and appendix are situated at the junction of the small intestine and large intestine. The **key difference** between the cecum and appendix is **cecum is a pouch-like structure while appendix is worm-shaped tube-like structure.**

## What is Cecum?

Cecum is a pouch like region of the large intestine. It is an [intraperitoneal organ](#) surrounded by the peritoneum. The cecum is considered as the junction between the small intestine and large intestine. The main function of the cecum is to provide the space for mixing bacteria with partially digested food coming from the small intestine to form faeces. The cecum is situated in between the ascending colon and vermiform appendix. And it is located in the lower right quadrant of the [abdominal cavity](#) inferior and lateral to the [ileum](#).

The cecum is composed of four layers; the mucosa, submucosa, muscularis and serosa. All these layers work together to perform the function of the cecum. Cecum plays an important function in the formation of faecal matter. When partially digested food (known as chyme) enters into the cecum, bacteria are mixed with the chyme by the cecum wall contraction. Inside the cecum, there are a large number of bacteria that aid in the breakdown of foods.

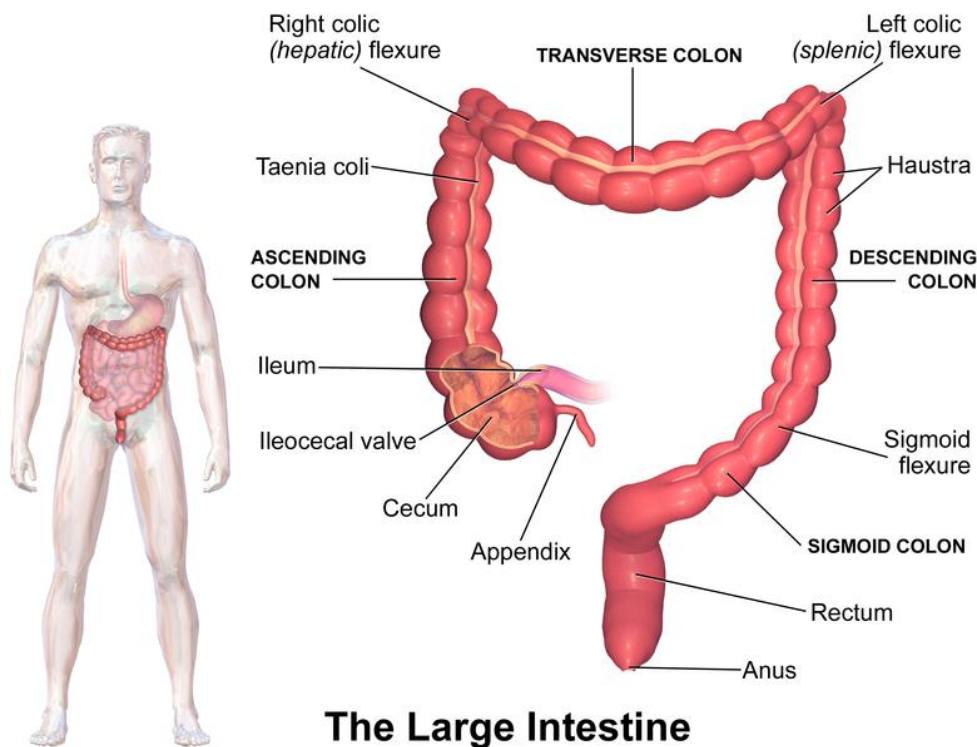


**Figure 01: Cecum**

[Mammalian herbivores](#) possess comparatively a large cecum to provide bigger space to reside bacteria that are useful in secreting [enzymes](#) to digest plant material composed of cellulose. Carnivores have a smaller cecum since meat is easier to digest than plant materials.

## What is Appendix?

Appendix is a worm-shaped blind-ended tube that is connected to the cecum of the digestive tract. Appendix is also known as a cecal appendix or vermiform appendix. The normal length of the human appendix is 9 mm. But it can vary from 2 to 20 mm. The diameter usually lies between 7 to 8 mm. Appendix is located on the right side of the body in the lower quadrant of the abdomen near the right hip bone.



**Figure 02: Appendix**

Appendix serves several functions in the digestion process. It provides the place for gut flora. It is an important component of mammalian mucosal immune function. The appendix is associated with two common diseases namely appendicitis and appendix cancers. Appendicitis is the inflammation of the appendix due to blockage of the tube by the stones of the faeces.

## What are the Similarities Between Cecum and Appendix?

- Cecum and appendix are two parts of digestive tract.
- The appendix is connected to the cecum.
- Both are located at the junction of the small intestine and large intestine.
- Cecum and Appendix are located on the right side of the body.
- Both are formed by the enlargement of the post arterial segment of the midgut loop.
- Cecum and Appendix are intraperitoneal organs.

## What is the Difference Between Cecum and Appendix?

**Cecum vs Appendix**

Cecum is an intraperitoneal pouch that is located at the right side of the lower abdomen.	Appendix is a tube-like structure that is connected to the cecum.
<b>Shape</b>	
Cecum is pouch-like shaped.	Appendix is worm-shaped.
<b>Size</b>	
Cecum is larger than the appendix.	Appendix is smaller than the cecum.
<b>Connection</b>	
Cecum is connected to ascending colon and vermiform appendix.	Appendix is connected to the cecum.
<b>Function</b>	
Cecum provides a space for chyme to mix with bacteria for further digestion.	Appendix is important in maintaining gut microflora and in mucosal immune response.
<b>Significance to Immune Functions</b>	
Cecum is not involved with immune functions.	Appendix is important for immune functions.

## Summary - Cecum vs Appendix

The gastrointestinal tract is composed of different components such as mouth, [Oesophagus](#), Stomach, Small intestine, Large intestine, [Liver](#), [Gallbladder](#), Pancreas etc. Cecum and appendix are two parts of the large intestine. Cecum is the pouch-like region of the large intestine that is located at the junction of the small intestine and large intestine. Cecum receives partially digested foods from the small intestine and mixes with bacteria for further digestion to form the faeces. Appendix is a worm-shaped tube-like structure connected to the cecum. It is a small part that is important in maintaining gut microflora and performing immune functions. It is located in the lower right quadrant of the abdomen near right hip bone. Both structures are located on the right side of the body. This is the difference between cecum and appendix.

### Reference:

- 1.“Cecum.” Innerbody. [Available here](#)
- 2.The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica. “Cecum.” Encyclopædia Britannica, Encyclopædia Britannica, inc., 1 Apr. 2015. [Available here](#)
- 3.“Appendix (Anatomy).” Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 1 Feb. 2018. [Available here](#)

### **Image Courtesy:**

- 1.'2420 Large Intestine'By OpenStax College - Anatomy & Physiology, [Connexions Web site](#) , Jun 19, 2013., [\(CC BY 3.0\)](#) via [Commons Wikimedia](#)
- 2.'Blausen 0604 LargeIntestine2'By Blausen.com staff (2014). "Medical gallery of Blausen Medical 2014". WikiJournal of Medicine 1 (2). DOI:10.15347/wjm/2014.010. ISSN 2002-4436. - Own work, [\(CC BY 3.0\)](#) via [Commons Wikimedia](#)

### **How to Cite this Article?**

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