

The key to your health ... WHAT EVERYBODY SHOULD KNOW

The gut is the centre of your health and well being. If your digestive system is not in good shape, then it could be the reason behind your other health issues, symptoms and even disease processes you are experiencing, including mental health. Once the gut is working optimally other symptoms around the body reduce and often disappear.

How do you know if you have a healthy gut? Firstly, check your stool. It should be a well formed sausage or cylindrical shape which stays formed in the toilet bowl but breaks up when flushed. The colour should be mid brown with no sign of undigested foods (corn and sesame seeds are an exception!). It should have no great odor and should not be "sticky" – this can be gauged by whether it sticks to the side of the toilet bowl and/or a simple 1-2 wipes is enough or whether several wipes are necessary to be clean after a bowel movement.

If you have a healthy digestive system you should never suffer from any of the following symptoms... (unless you have succumbed to a gastrointestinal infection).

- Indigestion
- Reflux
- Burping
- Bloating
- Abdominal pain associated with digestion
- Constipation
- Loose stools or diarrhea
- Irregular bowel movements
- Excessive gas
- Excessively smelly stools
- Itchy anus

A healthy digestion system means that you will be effectively absorbing all the nutrients your body needs to have optimal health, and you will have a good immune system. 70% of the immune system is in the gut.

One of the components of a healthy digestive system is a healthy balance of micro-flora. Science has proved this to be essential for many reasons.

Healthy gut flora

- Synthesize B vitamins B3, B6, Biotin and folic acid
- Synthesize Vitamin K
- Recycle oestrogen for healthy female hormone balance
- Assist the absorption of iron and calcium
- Are involved with the binding of cholesterol in the gut, helping to minimize excess
- Help detoxify toxic substances
- Are the first line of defense against pathogens that enter the body
- Protect the delicate mucous membrane of our gut so that it can function at 100% of its capacity.

So, how to have a healthy gut?

- Eat only whole, natural foods, organic wherever possible
- Eat 5+ vegetable servings per day, preferably starting at breakfast, including at least 1 salad
- Eat 1-2 serves of fruit

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- Eat at least 2 servings of protein per day
- Eat raw nuts and seeds
- Eat fermented foods
- Drink at least 6-8 glasses of water each day
- Eliminate foods that you are intolerant to
- Eliminate coffee and alcohol
- Eliminate processed and refined foods
- Eliminate sugar
- Exercise daily
- Be happy!

In other words live a healthy, balanced, stress free lifestyle.

Reduce the risk of unnecessary health problems and suffering. Make bowel habits an open and healthy conversation in your family.

Don't hesitate to make an appointment with your Naturopath if you have any digestive issues. We specialize in digestive system health and can help you get it right.

If you have any questions or would like to set up an appointment to discuss your health issues, receive nutritional guidance for you and your family, look into possible food allergies and intolerances, or any other aspect of your health, please contact us (details below).

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