

March "OM" Newsletter

This month we will focus on Gut Health. Microbiome challenges are one of the hallmarks of aging. A balanced gut is crucial for overall health and longevity.

There are trillions of bacteria (or microbes) in and on our bodies. Many microbes are helpful like in our digestive tracts where they break down food. But others can make us ill or more susceptible to disease. Dysbiosis (alterations in diversity of microbes) means a microbial imbalance and can have negative effects on overall health.

The main benefits of gut bacteria include:

- Protecting you against pathogens
- Regulating metabolism, hormone production, and immune function
- Contributing to drug metabolism
- Communicating with your central nervous system
- Influencing brain processes

The NIH (National Institutes of Health) Microbiome Project began in 2008. They are studying how the microbiome contributes to our normal physiology and disease predisposition. They are investigating how changes in the gut microbiome are linked to various health issues such as obesity, inflammatory bowel disease, type 2 diabetes, pregnancy and even preterm birth. Some studies have suggested a link between gut bacteria and disorders of the central nervous system such as anxiety, depression, autism and even Alzheimer's and Parkinson's.

The gut is full of nerve endings that communicate with your brain. This is often referred to as the gut brain axis. The gut is often called the "second brain". It is the housing to a network of our nervous system, brain chemical production such as serotonin, and our immune system.

The gut is responsible for digesting food, extracting and absorbing energy and nutrients, and preparing waste to exit the body. The bacteria in our gut (microbiota) stimulate the immune system (60%-70% of our immune system lies beneath the gut lining), break down potentially toxic food compounds, and synthesize certain vitamins and amino acids, including the B vitamins and vitamin K. For example, the key enzymes needed to form vitamin B12 are only found in bacteria, not in plants and animals.

Think of our microbiome as a garden. Bad bugs grow like weeds especially when we feed them with sugar, flour and processed foods. And we under-fertilize the good bugs without fiber or plant rich phytonutrients. The foods we eat feed the bacteria in our gut. One of the most important steps you can make is adding fiber (prebiotics) into your diet through whole foods such as vegetables, fruit and whole grains (versus ground fours and processed grains). High-fiber diets increase levels of short chain fatty acids (SCFAs) which lower inflammation, reduce your risk of colon cancer, prevent bad bacteria from growing and increase your absorption of minerals.

Announcements

Dr. Amy March "OM"
LIVE Virtual Seminar

Friday, March 29th, 12:30PM

Artificial sweeteners disrupt the balance of gut bacteria. Some studies show that 1 packet of artificial sweetener can cut the healthy bacteria count in half! Ultra-processed foods also affect gut health, allowing bad bacteria to overgrow and decreasing the healthy bacterial microbiome that is so crucial to our overall health.

So in other words....good bugs create health, bad bugs create disease.

Focus this month on balancing your microbiome and feeding it fiber-fueled foods such as the recipe below.

Dr. Amy

Book of the Month

Fiber Filled



Video of the Month

Healing Benefits of Fiber



Supplement Highlight

Organic Psyllium Husk Powder, 1tsp mixed in 8 ounces of water then drink another 8 ounces of water after. Do this 1-3 times daily before a meal



Recipe of the Month

Chicken & Kale Soup

