

# Gut Health

## What is the Gut?

- **Your Microbiome** - a community of microorganisms (such as bacteria, fungi and viruses) that inhabit a particular environment and especially the collection of microorganisms living in or on the human body
- **Your Digestive System** - food breakdown, absorption and nutrient utilization
- **Your Enteric Nervous System** - a part of the autonomic nervous system, the brain to gut connection

## What is the Gut For?

- Immune System
- Food Utilization
- Hydration
- Mood Regulation
- Skin Health
- Dental and Oral Health
- Appetite Regulation
- Support Hormonal Regulation
- Overall Health

## Know Your Gut

### Risks and Symptoms

- Changes in bowel movements
- Appearance of bowel movements
- Persistent bloating and gas
- Acid reflux and/or heartburn
- Food sensitivities vs. food allergies
- Changes in skin
- Chronic stress and poor sleep
- Unexpected weight loss
- Family history of GI disease

## Your Microbiome Story

The Womb ⇨	Birth and Infancy ⇨	Childhood ⇨	Adulthood ⇨
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## The Stress Response

During an inflammatory response, immune cells are released and adrenal glands release cortisol. This causes an increase of cardiac output, blood glucose, heart rate and blood pressure, as well as a greater colonic activity that can or may manifest itself into unfavorable symptoms such as changes in bowel movement, increased gut lining permeability, changes in skin and overall decline in health.

## The Second Brain

A deeper understanding of this mass of neural tissue, filled with important neurotransmitters, is revealing that it does much more than merely handle digestion or inflict the occasional nervous pang. The little brain in our innards, in connection with the big one in our skulls, partly determines our mental state (e.g., serotonin and dopamine response) and plays key roles in certain diseases throughout the body.

## **Supporting Your Internal Garden - Weed, Feed, and Seed**

### **Weed (*foods and other things to caution*)**

- Added sugar and alcohol
- Research any medications you take (especially antibiotics), cleaning supplies and skin care
- Artificial sweeteners and excessive intake of processed foods
- Avoid excessive intake and reliance of animal foods and products

### **Feed (*foods and other things to prioritize*)**

- Non-starchy vegetables (e.g., dark leafy greens, brussels sprouts, cauliflower, broccoli)
- Starchy vegetables (e.g., potatoes)
- Fruit (e.g., berries, apples, pears, mango, pineapple, citrus, apricots, peaches, melon, bananas, plantains)
- Nuts and seeds (e.g., almonds, walnuts, cashews, pumpkin seeds, chia seed, flaxseed)
- Avocado, olives, dark chocolate, coconut
- Fermented foods (e.g., sauerkraut, kimchi, pickles, kombucha, etc.)
- Probiotic-rich foods (e.g., yogurt, kefir) - look for “live and active cultures”
- Sprouted foods (e.g., sprouted grain bread, sprouted grains)
- Omega-3 fatty acids (e.g., salmon, sardines, anchovies, nuts and seeds, seaweed - in sushi)
- Monitor cooked vs. raw foods
- Bone broth, golden milk, nutrient-dense smoothies and soups, herbal teas and water

### **Seed**

- Probiotics - review with trusted health professional
- Vitamin D3 and/or adequate sunshine
- Dandelion, camomile, lavender, peppermint, ginger, honey

### **Recommendations**

“Eat Dirt” by Dr. Josh Axe

“The Microbiome Solution” by Dr. Robynne Chutkan

Human Microbiome Project: <https://hmpdacc.org/> (National Institute of Health)