

UNC Wellness Centers

Food For Thought

Gut Health and Nutrition: A Food First Approach



Objectives

- GI tract and how it impacts the body
- What is “gut health”
- Why it’s important
- Foods that cause distress
- Ways to improve

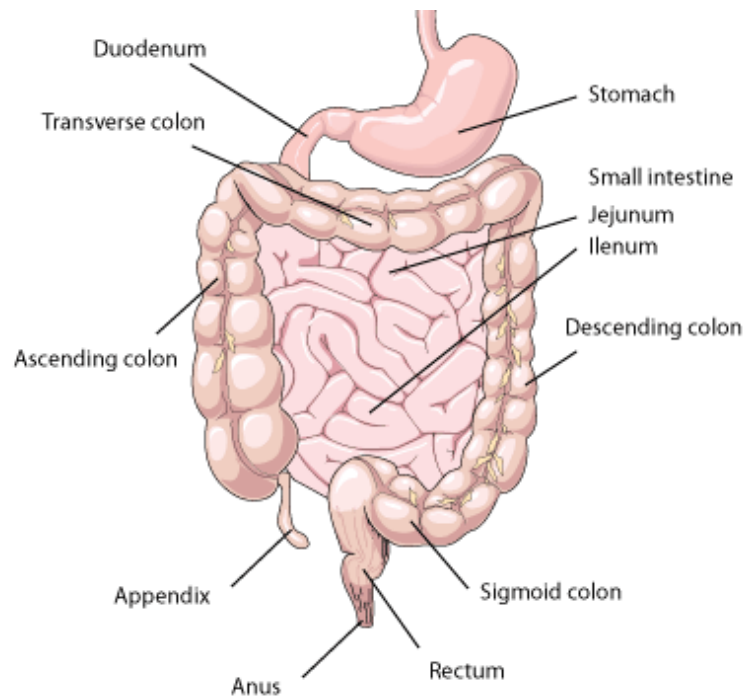
The GI Tract

- Stretches from mouth to anus
- Digestion, absorption, excretion
- Physical and immunological barrier to harmful bacteria

Definitions

- Microbiota
- Gut Health

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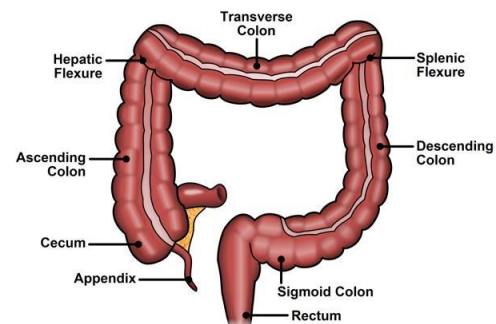
The Gut Microbiota

- Trillions of microorganisms living within your gastrointestinal system
Consists of bacteria, fungi, parasites, and viruses
- Symbiosis
- Digestion and absorption of nutrients, synthesizing vitamins, immune function, and detoxification
- Each person's microbiome is unique to them but it is modifiable
- Dysbiosis
 - IBD, DM, obesity, CVD, Alzheimer's

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Digestion in the Gut

- Simple carbs → small intestine
- Complex carbs → large intestine by the microbiota
- Indigestible fibers → fermented in the large bowel
 - Short-chain fatty acids



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Immunity and the Gut

- Over 70% of immune cells reside in the gut
- T-cells
- Gut barrier



What Causes GI Distress

- Refined sugar and carbohydrates
- Red and processed meats
- Pesticides
- Nonnutritive sweeteners
- Stress
- Anti-biotics

What Can Improve Gut Health?

- Fiber
- Phytochemicals
- Vegetables, fruits, whole grains, legumes, beans
- Fermented foods
- Prebiotics

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Exciting New Research

- Brain health and the Gut Microbiome
disruptions in the gut microbiota influence brain chemistry affecting memory, learning and anxiety
- Bone health and the Gut Microbiome
gut microbiota may affect bone metabolism and the absorption of bone-related minerals (ie, calcium)
- Personalized diets
specific diets prescribed to help prevent disease based on each person's gut microbiota

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Gut Health Is HIGHLY Individualized

Contact me for your specific needs

Elizabeth A. Watt, RD, CSOWM, LDN

Elizabeth.watt@unchealth.unc.edu

984-974-2552

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References

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Coming Up Next!

Thursday, October 21 12-1 pm

Mindfulness, Intuitive Eating, and Health At Every
Size

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