Understanding Gut Microbiome Health

**Gut Microbiome:** ALL of the microorganisms that live within the GI tract

The health of your digestive tract affects many aspects of your body:

IMMUNITY: 70% of your immune system is located in your digestive tract

MOOD: More than 90% of the body's serotonin is made in the gut (mood boosting neurotransmitter)

INFLAMMATION: Poor gut health can lead to intestinal permeability & increased leaking of harmful substances to the bloodstream

DIGESTIVE: Unhealthy gut can lead to constipation, gas, bloating, malabsorption of nutrients, food intolerance

SLEEP: Inadequate production of sleep-promoting neurotransmitters

**Dysbiosis:** an imbalance of healthy:unhealthy gut microbes OR a loss of key healthy microbes OR a loss of diversity of gut microbes. Here are ways to reduce dysbiosis:

| **Reduces Healthy Bacteria and/or Promotes Increased Harmful Bacteria** | **Increases Good Bacterial Growth** |
| --- | --- |
| * diets high in animal products * diets high in processed foods * diets low in fiber * alcohol * stress * taking antibiotics * pathogenic infections | * diets high in fiber * a diet that is varied, especially in plant foods * probiotic-rich foods * consuming prebiotics * reducing stress |

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Diet has the LARGEST impact on gut microbiome health. Changing your diet can affect your gut health in as little as 24 hours. Staying consistent with habits and dietary patterns is key.

**Mediterranean diet** (and other traditional diets such as Japanese & Nordic) has been found to be the BEST diet for gut health. What does this look like?

| **Food/Food Group** | **1 Serving Size =** |
| --- | --- |
| 3 servings fruit + at least 3 servings vegetables per day | ½ - 1 cup cooked or 2 cups raw leafy greens |
| 3-6 servings whole grains per day | ½ cup cooked grains, 1 small slice bread |
| 1-4 servings olive oil per day | 1 tbsp |
| 3 servings legumes (beans, lentils, peas) per week | ½ cup |
| 3 servings fish per week | 3-4 oz. |
| 3 servings nuts per week | ¼ cup or 2 tbsp natural nut butter |
| 1 serving red meat per week (at the most) | 3-4 oz. |

<https://oldwayspt.org/> - for recipes & other information

**In addition, regular consumption of foods high in prebiotics & probiotics is important**

3 things I can do weekly to improve my gut health are:



Questions I still have about gut health:

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