



Women and Dysbiosis | *By Tricia Talerico, D.C., M.S., Nutr.*

According to the Oxford dictionary, dysbiosis is “an imbalance between types of organisms present in a person’s natural microflora, especially that of the gut, thought to contribute to a range of conditions of ill health.” So, why am I writing specifically about women? Dysbiosis in women often results in very specific negative effects on a woman’s urogenital health. Women are more prone to UTIs (urinary tract infections) from birth to old age and experience changes in vaginal health as hormones fluctuate throughout their lifetime. Other contributing factors to dysbiosis are diet, body wash use, sex, swimming (chlorine), medications (antibiotics, birth control), stress and yoga pants (sweat).

So, how can we address this ever-changing environment of the female body. Of course, diet is always a great place to start. A few guidelines I might suggest:

1. *Not more than 60 grams of carbohydrates per day. This would not include grains, alcohol, refined sugars or noncaloric artificial sweeteners.*

2. *Wild-caught fish, grass-fed beef or organic chicken. We should aim for 1.2-1.8 gms protein/kg body weight. For example, a 150 lb. female weighs 67.5 kg. So, if she needs 1.8 gms protein per kg of body weight, she would eat approximately 81 gms protein/day. Of course, there is wide variation here usually determined by age and activity level.*

3. *Eat a diet rich in leafy greens, cooked cruciferous vegetables, alliums to tolerance (garlic, onions, etc.), herbs and spices, berries and cranberries (or unsweetened juice).*

4. *Support the microbial balance of the urogenital tract. Let’s talk about this a little more in-depth.*

Urogenital health relies, in large part, on two specific bacterial strains. The strains *L. rhamnosus* GR-1 and *L. reuteri* RC-14 have been studied extensively for their effects on vaginal microbiota when taken orally. When taken in capsule form, these strains are able to survive the passage through the GI tract and then colonize the vagina. In a

2020 survey of women taking these “probiotics”, 80% experienced a health benefit within the first 2 weeks!

So, when are important times for women to take a specific “probiotic” for urogenital health? If you are:

1. Sexually active
2. History of yeast infections and UTIs
3. High stress
4. Family planning/fertility
5. Diagnosed with IBS or IBD

6. Diagnosed with autoimmune conditions

7. Perimenopause or menopause

8. Diagnosed with any hormonal conditions

9. Taking birth control or antibiotics

10. Use douche products

Of course, there are many other probiotic strains that are important to our health. Here we are speaking very specifically about one population of women with certain health needs. In my office we use Metagenics Ultraflora Womens with great success. Use drtrish.metagenics.com for promotion at checkout.

IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH... IMPROVE YOUR LIFE!



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