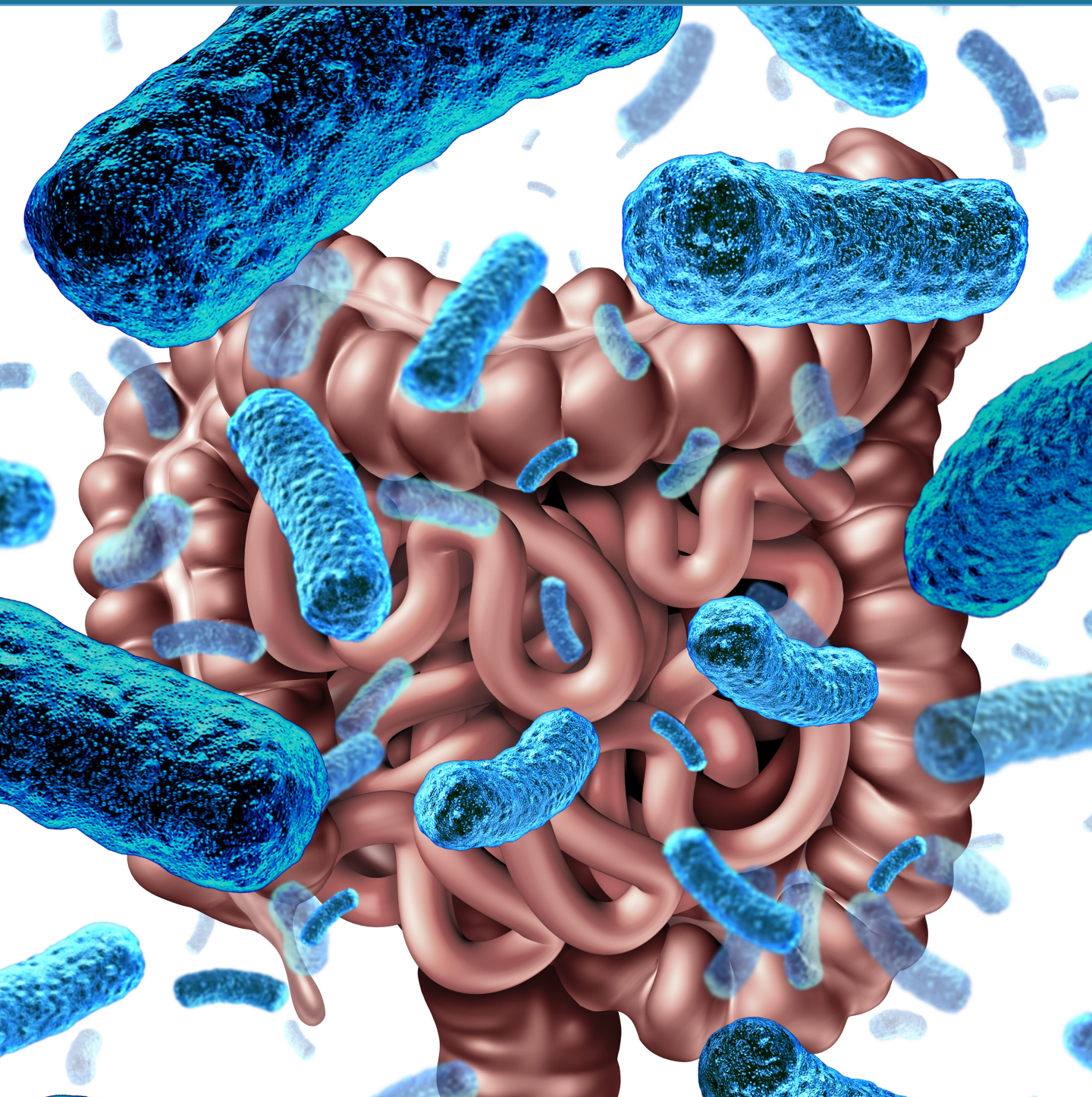


HOW HEALTHY IS YOUR GUT?

TAKE THE QUIZ TO FIND OUT



HOW HEALTHY IS YOUR GUT?

OVER 2000 YEARS AGO HIPPOCRATES,
THE FAMOUS GREEK PHYSICIAN,
STATED 'ALL DISEASE BEGINS IN THE GUT'

He was certainly on the right path with his statement, but he was incorrect in stating that all disease begins in the gut. Modern scientific research is, however, certainly helping us understand that many chronic diseases do have their origins in the gut. Interestingly, many people with compromised gut environments don't even get symptoms in their gastro-intestinal tract.

I think you will be surprised by just how many health conditions can be attributed to a compromised gut environment.

Go ahead, and note down your answers to the quiz on the following page, then read on to learn more about how the gut contributes to many of our modern health issues, even those found in other locations of the body that may be far away from the gut itself.



Respond to the statements below based on your experiences over the past 3 months, or use a longer time period if indicated.

SYMPTOMS	RESPONSE
I regularly experience diarrhoea or constipation	Yes No
I experience gas and bloating	Yes No
I get heartburn and/or reflux	Yes No
I have been diagnosed with IBS, Ulcerative Colitis, Crohn's or another gastrointestinal complaint	Yes No
I still get skin breakouts even though I'm no longer a teenager	Yes No
I get red blotchy or patchy skin, or have a history of experiencing hives	Yes No
I have experienced or am currently experiencing psoriasis, rosacea, eczema or itchy rashes	Yes No
I feel depressed or anxious at times	Yes No
I get headaches or migraines regularly	Yes No
I experience concentration issues	Yes No
I have short-term or long-term memory issues	Yes No
I have a history of being diagnosed with ADHD/ADD or developmental delays	Yes No
I have been diagnosed with Hashimoto's thyroiditis	Yes No
I experience fatigue or sluggishness	Yes No
I have experienced unexplained weight gain or weight loss in the past	Yes No
I experience moodiness, sadness, fluid retention or breast tenderness pre-menstrually	Yes No N/A
I experience excessive cramping and pain during menstruation	Yes No N/A
I have a history of infertility or miscarriage	Yes No N/A
I have trouble getting to sleep, staying asleep or I wake unrefreshed	Yes No
I need coffee to keep me going during the day	Yes No
I experience pain in my joints, and/or muscles that is unrelated to exercise or injuries	Yes No
I have experienced or currently experience asthma or allergies	Yes No
I experience persistent fungal infections such as tinea, ringworm or nail fungal issues	Yes No
I have been diagnosed in the past with one or more autoimmune conditions	Yes No
I experience colds and flu's more frequently than others around me	Yes No
TOTAL YES'S	

Count up your yes's. The more you have, the more likely it is that your gut is playing a central role in your current health challenges. Even if you don't experience any overt signs of gut dysfunction, such as constipation, bloating, gas, diarrhoea, or abdominal pain, many of the symptoms outlined above indicate that gut dysfunction may be present.

HOW THE MICROBES IN OUR GUT CONTRIBUTE TO OUR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

WE LIVE WITH BILLIONS OF BACTERIA IN AND ON OUR BODIES. MANY OF THESE RESIDE IN THE GASTRO-INTESTINAL TRACT

Imbalances in gut flora have been linked to all kinds of health challenges, as this type of imbalance contributes to inflammation, and inflammation is one of the key underlying factors contributing to the chronic disease epidemic we are experiencing today.

An easy way to explain this is that if our gut bacteria are 'sick' then we are likely sick too, as many of our immune system cells are located in the gut. When these immune cells are exposed to the byproducts from imbalanced gut bacteria, the system is triggered, and goes on high alert, leading to all sorts of health complications including run-away inflammation.

You may ask what has contributed to this phenomenon of imbalanced gut bacteria. The answer is that our food supply is not what it used to be. Processed, refined, sugar laden, and low fibre foods can substantially alter our gut bacteria. You see, our gut bugs are eating the same things we are.

If we are feeding our gut bugs unhealthy foods, the less than desirable bugs will proliferate. And it is not only the foods we eat that affect them, overuse of various medications can negatively impact bacteria too. For example acid blockers, pain killers and antibiotics have a negative impact on our gut microbes. They can also damage the cells that line our gastrointestinal tract, which can also impact our health through the gut-immune interface. Environmental toxins and stress can also impact the health of our digestive tract. Even less than stellar production of digestive enzymes and low levels of stomach acid can lead to gut dysfunction.

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

IS ALL HOPE LOST? ABSOLUTELY NOT!

Food can be used as a medicine to positively impact the health of the gut, and the immune system in general.

It is estimated that up to 90% of Australians are not getting enough of the nutrients that are critical for optimal functioning of the body, and many are deficient in essential nutrients such as omega three fatty acids, vitamin D and magnesium. These deficiencies then compound over the years. But this is not entirely our fault. In the past, the food we ate was far more nutrient dense than it is today with dramatically higher levels of vitamins, minerals and essential fats. Our food is now more heavily processed, and our crops are often grown on nutrient deficient soils due to modern farming methods. These factors have led to nutrient depleted foods, and nutrient depleted humans.

Optimising nutrition with specific dietary recommendations, and targeted supplementation can improve levels of these important nutrients which can help modulate our immune system responses. Additionally there are a number of other important dietary factors you can consider:

- Avoiding foods that you are sensitive to will help the immune system stop being so reactionary, and allow it to get back into balance.
- Ensure an adequate intake of phytochemical (plant-based compounds) and fibre, as these are the healthy food source for our gut microbes. Avoid those foods that feed the not-so-desirable microbes.
- Having adequate protein in the diet provides the raw ingredients for repair and restoration of bodily functions.
- Optimising digestion (that's the breakdown of the food components we eat into their smallest digestible parts) and assimilation of these nutrients and molecules is essential to return the gastrointestinal system to balance.

HI, MY NAME IS CARRIE

I'M A NUTRITIONAL MEDICINE PRACTITIONER WITH SPECIALIST TRAINING IN FUNCTIONAL NUTRITION AND LIFESTYLE MEDICINE. I LOVE SHARING KNOWLEDGE WITH PEOPLE ABOUT HOW THE HEALTH OF THE GUT IS INTIMATELY CONNECTED WITH OUR GENERAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING.

A little about me: I enjoy helping people feel better in their own skin. Who wants to feel fatigued, foggy, hormonal, irritable and generally blah? I know I don't, but that was the story of my life during my late 20's, 30's and early 40's. I had the kids, the station wagon, the dog and even the picket fence. From the outside it might have seemed idyllic, but on the inside, my life felt far from it. My health challenges were leading to symptoms that were seriously affecting my life.



It was a wake up call when I realised I was 'apparently' in the prime of my life, and that things would probably only go down hill from there. Aagh! Some things needed to change.

As a result of my own health challenges I discovered Nutritional Medicine, a complimentary healthcare modality that fills the gaps in what mainstream medicine can offer. It focusses on diet and lifestyle habits that provide our bodies with the raw materials and healthy practices they need to support a 'return to health'.

I went to University to learn more, and became qualified as a Nutritional Medicine Practitioner. I became my first client. I learned first hand the benefits gained through improving diet and lifestyle habits. I can help you gain these benefits too, by helping you understand the role the gut plays in our general health and wellbeing. The gut-immune interface is 'ground zero' for our health. Yet it is regularly ignored by many of our health care providers, not on purpose, but because Doctors aren't trained in nutrition, and there is no simple 'pill' that can fix the gastro-intestinal tract.

The fix comes from what we eat, how we eat and our everyday lifestyle choices in areas like sleep, hydration, stress reduction, community connection and regular exercise.

I hope you don't mind if we stay in touch, as I want to share more information via email over the next ten days that will help you on your health journey.

Till then,

Carrie

P.S. If you have any questions about what you have read here, or want to have a complimentary chat on the phone about how a Functional Nutrition approach can help you with your health challenges, please email me at info@carriereedy.com

