



How to keep your gut healthy

Your gut bacteria play a crucial role in not only your gut health, but your overall health. Probiotics are live microorganisms (good bacteria) that reside in the gut, and support our immune system, aid digestion and assist with nutrient absorption into the bloodstream. Prebiotics refer to natural soluble fibres that feed the good bacteria in our large intestine, helping to promote balanced gut flora and healthy bowel function. As you age, having lots of “good” bacteria living in your gut is increasingly important, as it helps fight infection and prevent the onset of type 2 diabetes, depression, and common gut disorders.

There are many contributing factors that affect your gut health. Diet, food intolerances, lifestyle, hormones, sleep and medications will affect the state of how your body digests and eliminates what you eat and drink.

Now we know how crucial a healthy gut is, here are some tips to keep yours in good working order:



1. Eat more foods with resistant starch



Most of your gut bacteria are found in the large bowel, and to support a number of functions - including the absorption of nutrients - they need to feed on resistant starch. Most of the carbohydrates you consume, such as those in grains, pasta and potatoes, are starches. Some types of starch are resistant to digestion, hence the term resistant starch. Resistant starch functions similarly to soluble, fermentable fiber, helping feed the friendly bacteria in your gut. It also increases the production of short-chain fatty acids that nourish cells and reduce inflammation, keeping the large intestine tissue healthy. Studies have shown that this can help with weight loss and benefit heart health, as well as improve blood sugar control, insulin sensitivity and digestive health. Good sources of resistant starch include oats, rice, whole grains and legumes.

2. Avoid inflammatory foods



When it comes to inflammatory foods, highly processed and sugary foods are at the top of the list. Quite simply, eat good food and you allow a healthy gut community to flourish. Eat bad food, and you support bad communities of bacteria. Healthier guts have also been tied to a lower risk in depression and cardiovascular disease, better immunity, and preventing excessive weight gain.

3. Manage your stress

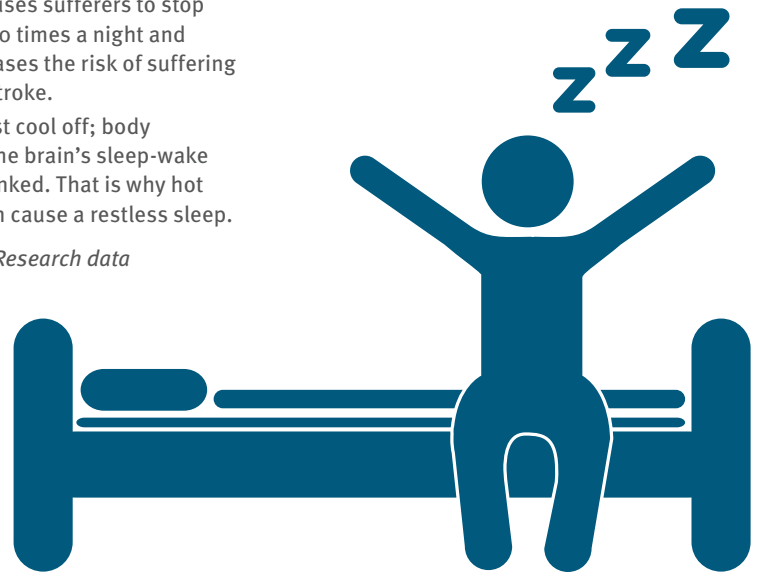


Research shows that ongoing stress can negatively affect the trillions of bacteria in your gut. Put simply, when you are experiencing elevated stress levels, your brain goes into fight-or-flight mode, which can impact the blood flow to your gut. This is why it is common to experience a lull in digestive and immune health in tandem with episodes of heightened stress. Whether it is saying no more often, practicing yoga or meditation, or simply spending more time with the people you love, finding ways to support your mental and emotional health is paramount to both living life and to optimizing your gut and overall health.

Fast Facts – SLEEP*

- ▶ Seventeen hours of sustained wakefulness leads to a decrease in performance equivalent to a blood alcohol-level of 0.05%.
- ▶ Experts say one of the most alluring sleep distractions is the 24-hour accessibility of the internet.
- ▶ Taking less than five minutes to fall asleep at night means you are sleep deprived. The ideal is time is between 10 and 15 minutes, meaning you are tired enough to sleep deeply, but not so exhausted you feel sleepy during the day.
- ▶ 10% of snorers have sleep apnoea, a disorder which causes sufferers to stop breathing up to 300 times a night and significantly increases the risk of suffering a heart attack or stroke.
- ▶ To drop off we must cool off; body temperature and the brain's sleep-wake cycle are closely linked. That is why hot summer nights can cause a restless sleep.

*The National Sleep Research data



Salmon patties

Salmon is a great source of omega 3 fatty acids that are anti-inflammatory to the body and critical for good health. These patties are delicious thrown into your lunchtime salad for an added protein hit.

Ready in 20 minutes, serves 6

- ▶ 2 (240g) cans red salmon
- ▶ 1/4 cup oats
- ▶ 1/2 cup ricotta cheese
- ▶ 2 egg whites
- ▶ 1/2 can corn
- ▶ 2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives
- ▶ 2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill
- ▶ 2 tablespoons chopped fresh coriander
- ▶ Salt and Pepper
- ▶ Lemon wedges and garden salad to serve
- ▶ Creamy dill sauce - mix together 2 tsp ricotta with 1 tsp mayo, some dry dill and ground pepper to taste.

Method:

1. Mix all ingredients together.
2. If the mixture is too soft, add more oats. If the mixture is too dry, add another egg white.
3. Shape into cakes.
4. Spray non-stick frying pan and cook until golden on each side.
5. These are delicious hot or cold.
6. Serve with lemon wedges, garden salad and sauce as desired.



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