- Digestion

The pursuit of gut happiness

The key to improved mental health and wellbeing

Manila Bulletin · 31 May 2022 · C-3 · GUTS AND GLORY A healthy gut translates to a happy life

When pursuing the things that bring us joy or happiness, we often "go with our gut." Over the past 20 years, prevailing research has revealed that there is a connection between gut health and other aspects of our body, such as immunity, mental health, and overall wellbeing.



While the brain sends messages to various parts of our body, studies show that the gut may be "talking back." The complex network of microorganisms in our gut, or the gut microbiome, needs to be in a state of balance for us to be healthy and happy.

When this balance is affected, our gut acts as a second brain and communicates this to the rest of our body by influencing our mood and emotions and affecting the way our brain manages information from our various senses. That's why some researchers think that gut health can be linked to anxiety, depression, fatigue, and chronic pain, among other health issues. The chronic stress and anxiety then affect our gut, even more, leading to belly pain, constipation, diarrhea, and even liver problems. It's a vicious cycle that can be stopped when we are more proactive in caring for our gut health.

The best way to keep your gut healthy is by drinking a lot of water and having a good diet. Avoid diets that are high on sugar and processed foods, as these can lessen the good bacteria in our gut. The good bacteria found in our gut not only help our digestion, they also positively affect our mental and physical health.

Include more fiber-rich food in your diet, such as vegetables. Fermented or pickled foods and drinks—such as kefir, kimchi, sauerkraut, and yogurt, which contain probiotics—also help to keep your digestive system healthy and restore good bacteria in the gut.

Another way to keep your gut healthy is to act quickly when problems arise, and most of all, by being proactive. At the sign of problems such as lower abdominal pain, hilab, or an ipit or tusok feeling in your belly area, Hyoscine N-butylbromide (Buscopan) is the go-to aid that provides relief within 15 minutes. For problems

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such as constipation (e.g. not being able to relieve yourself for two to three days) Bisacodyl (Dulcolax) provides the healthy bowel movement that you need. You can also avoid such issues by being proactive and including probiotics in your regular routine. These increase the resilience of the gut and help with gut immunity. Erceflora Kiddie is the most recommended probiotic as it restores and strengthens gut health, uniquely made to ensure it delivers the protection you need. As we age and our lifestyle changes, we may often neglect our liver, causing us to feel sluggish and unhealthy. Phospholipids (Essentiale) support your liver's daily function and is the number one recommended liver remedy.

Sanofi Consumer Healthcare Philippines has been advocating for better care of our gut health for years now. It is leading the way when it comes to the role of gut health in ensuring healthier fuller lives.