

How to Reduce Stress to Improve Gut Health



The Gut + Brain Connection

It is a well known fact that the gut and the brain are closely connected. Stress is a trigger and can worsen GI symptoms and vice versa. A person can become so stressed it triggers the nervous system, and in response digestion slows or even stops. Controlling stress is an important and key factor in gut health. Below are tips to reduce stress

Exercise

Mindful exercise can reduce stress levels and improve gut health. Exercise does not just include lifting weights at the gym, but implementing meditation, walks, yoga, or light jogging. Listen to your body and remember any movement is better than no movement. 20 minutes a day is enough to decrease stress levels.



Get enough sleep

Getting an adequate amount of sleep each night can decrease inflammation and reduce bloating and discomfort. The average adult should get between 7 to 9 hours of sleep per night. Establishing a relaxing night time routine can help your body prepare for a good night of rest.

Limit caffeine and alcohol

Alcohol and caffeine intake produce inflammation in the lining of the intestines and disrupt the normal gut bacteria. Alcohol can kill good bacteria and create an overgrowth of harmful bacteria. Caffeine can increase loose stool and increase gut motility.



Increase Fiber

Fiber is a powerful nutrient that feeds our "good" gut bacteria. Fiber passes through our digestive tract mostly whole and breaks down in our large intestine. Once it breaks down, it feeds the gut microbiome and promotes a healthy gut brain connection. Some examples of high fiber foods are apples, oatmeal, berries, and whole grain items.



To consult with a Registered Dietitian go to www.starmemnutrition.com or scan the QR code



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This handout is purely informational and not a substitute for medical advice. Consult with your health care provider before making changes.