



Gastro-Intestinal disorders

The main function of the gastrointestinal system is to break down and absorb nutrients. Without nutrients cells cannot survive or perform their tasks, which eventually leads to poor organ function and ultimately a chronic disease condition – basically you are starving slowly.

The digestive system extends from the mouth to the anus and includes the salivary glands, oesophagus, stomach, small intestine, liver, gallbladder, pancreas, and colon. Digestion is the result of mechanical and chemical processes. A dysfunction may occur involving any of these organs and include symptoms from indigestion to bloating, constipation, diarrhoea, etc.

Diseases involving the small intestine result in malabsorption syndromes leading to nutrient deficiencies, for example Celiac disease (autoimmune disease due to gluten intolerance), food allergies, intestinal infections, and Crohn's disease.

Diverticulosis and IBS are conditions associated with the colon. There are also conditions associated with the pancreas, small intestine, gallbladder, and symptoms related to altered bacterial flora.

Your gut requires a huge amount of energy to perform its task of digesting and absorbing nutrients. Stress, diet, exercise, relaxation, and drugs (prescribed or recreational) easily upset this delicate balance and over time may lead to irreversible damage and disease. [Please read my article on the long-term use of anti-acids on the blog page]

Your gut also plays an important role in your immune system, systemic inflammation (pain syndromes), and mood disorders. Unfortunately, symptoms of the gut are often ignored, yet so many people suffer from some or other gut dysfunction but often do not feel comfortable discussing it with their healthcare provider or resort to over-the-counter remedies.

Most people I meet in the practice have been on an anti-acid remedy for years without being informed about the long-term side-effects of such a drug. The truth is these kinds of drugs were developed to be used in acute cases of stomach ulcers and a few other more serious conditions, but not to be used for longer than 2 weeks as it increases your risk for various gastrointestinal cancers, osteoporosis, heart arrhythmias, intestinal infections, bacterial pneumonia, and multiple nutrient deficiencies.

Colon cancer is the second leading cancer killer in the world, yet it can be prevented.

If you often experience some of the symptoms below, you may have a dysfunctional gut.

- Belching
- Bloating
- Constipation (less than 1 bowel movement per day)
- Diabetes
- Diarrhoea
- Flatulence
- Food allergies

- Gallbladder disease
- Heartburn
- IBS
- Indigestion
- Inflammatory Bowel Disease
- Iron deficiency
- Nausea after taking supplements
- Rosacea
- Stomach cramps

Our guts are a living, dynamic ecosystem, that interacts with our central nervous - and endocrine system as well as our environment and are hugely affected by our lifestyles.

I take a functional approach to digestive disorders, trying to understand the factors that may contribute to your symptoms then implement nutritional changes, herbal or nutraceutical supplements and lifestyle changes to restore balance and reverse chronic conditions.

The longer I am in practice, the more I believe the words of Hippocrates:

"All diseases start in the gut".