Wellness Minute

Health Information You Can Use On Your Path To Wellness

Daily Shake For Gut Health

"When we eat a healthy diet, we are literally feeding the 'bugs' that turn on and off health in our bodies."

As many of you know, Dr. Alex Vasquez has an online 30-hour course on the microbiome as a Continuing Education course for MDs, DOs, and DCs. What you probably don't know is that the reason he is so passionate about this subject is that his health suffered dramatically for about 20 years. He developed some variant of IBS/SIBO and Fibromyalgia type symptoms. He was sure that his problems were in his gut, but no one was able to help him. During that time, he saw over 15 doctors in 3 states. He was eating a super clean diet and over the years tried botanical extracts, anti-fungal medication, probiotics, etc. Despite all his efforts, he felt like he was constantly fighting to get his health back. Interestingly, he and his girl-friend started experimenting making smoothie drinks for fun that contained seeds, sprouts, fruits, berries, and various fibers. In a few days, he started feeling a little better, and in a few weeks, he was noticeably better.

Here's the take away from this story. Dr. Vasquez was un-knowingly providing foods necessary to upregulate his microbiota biodiversity. He went beyond killing the dysbiotic bugs to feeding and propaga-ting the health of essential gut bacteria. The microbiome have millions of genes and can turn on and off thousands of swit-ches: pain switches, immune switches, cancer modulating switches, mitochondrial switches.

Experts agree that eradicating dysbiotic micro-organisms is an important step in treating any chronic condition. In fact, you can see a link to an earlier discussion about a morbidly obese scientist who went on a plant-based diet of whole grains, Chinese medical foods, and prebiotics to eliminate a bacter-ium called Enterobacter. He subsequently lost 113 lbs. in 23 weeks and recovered from both hypertension and hyper-glycemia, and got off of his medication.

This case study shows that when we eat a healthy diet, we are literally feeding the "bugs" that turn on and off health in our bodies. And in this case, by supporting the good bacteria, the dysbiotic bacteria, which caused the obesity and hyper-glycemia, were displaced. His scientific curiosity led him on to

inoculate the bacterium into germ free mice. The result: germ-free, lean mice became obese and developed insulin resistance. “The obese Enterobacter-induced mice showed increased serum endotoxin load and aggravated inflammatory conditions.” Based on the literature and his personal experience over the last 25 years, Dr. Vasquez has found that… “a diversified plant-based diet is essential to set the stage for a diversified microbiome.”

Knowing the American diet, and the need for healthy foods on the run, Dr. Vasquez partnered with Biotics to develop a formula called BioFiber Complete. The goal is to help patients “mimic” the benefits of a diversified plant-based diet to feed and support the microbiome. It’s important to underscore that this is quantum level thinking regarding the microbiome. This is going far beyond probiotics. The ingredients are designed to upregulate the health and more importantly, the diversity of your microbiome. Each serving of BioFiber Complete contains 5 grams of fiber as organic flax seed, organic broccoli sprouts, organic kale sprouts, chia seed fiber, fenugreek seed fiber, non-GMO sugar beet fiber, bamboo fiber, acai berry extract, apple fiber, and apple pectin. The organic flax and chia seeds provide a stool bulking effect and adds to the taste. They also provide a fiber that has low fermentation unlike psyllium seed. The organic broccoli sprouts and organic kale sprouts provide various phytochemicals like sulforaphane, indole 3 carbinol/DIM, and a term you may not be familiar with “AHR agonists” to stimulate gut immunity. AHR stands for Aryl Hydrocarbon Receptor. Strong systemic AHR activation can be initiated by toxins and create negative effects like insulin resistance. But mild activation initiated by foods and microbial metabolites stimulates detoxification and immunity. This is one way cruciferous vegetables enhance gut immunity.

Another ingredient in BioFiber Complete is Fenugreek. Fenugreek has anti-diabetic, anti-dyslipidemic, anti-obesity, anti-cancer, anti-inflammatory, anti-microbial, and anti-oxidant properties. The non-GMO sugar beet fiber, bamboo fiber, acai berry extract, apple fiber, and apple pectin provide additional fiber as well as“mimic” the benefits of a diversified plant-based diet with greater phytochemical diversity. Finding high-quality fiber supplements can be challenging because most of the fibers on the market contain gums that can irritate gut lining or contain inexpensive fibers such as psyllium from third world countries.

In terms of our discussion, they contain bulking agents but lack the ability to feed the microbiome. The average American ingests 15g fiber/day. The goal for FIBER is 14 grams per 1,000 calories consumed, so for women that means about 25 grams a day, for men about 38 grams. BioFiber Complete contains 10 different types of fibers, is over 70% organic, and contains 5 grams of fiber per scoop or serving. It also contains 3 grams of protein and 4 grams of healthy fats from flax and chia seeds. For people on the run, 2 scoops could also serve as a temporary meal replacement. BioFiber Complete is high in phytonutrients, mixes easily in water, and actually tastes good, without added sweeteners or flavoring agents.

It’s a whole food fiber supplement containing a combination of fibers derived from whole seeds, fruits, vegetables, and roots. Think of BioFiber Complete as the easiest and cheapest high diversity salad that you’ve never prepared and eaten in 30 seconds. As wellness clinicians, we have known that fiber has always been important. But as I mentioned in the beginning of our discussion, BioFiber Complete goes far beyond probiotics and is designed to upregulate the health and diversity of your microbiome on multiple levels.

Thanks for taking time to watch this week. I look forward to being with you again next Tuesday.