Introduction to Gut Health

We have many more microbial cells in our body than human cells. The way in which we interact with those microbes is really important to our physiology.

Everything does seem to begin in the gut. It's very important that we do everything we can to have optimal gut health. Welcome to Health Breakthroughs with Dr.

Stengler. I'm Dr Mark Stegler and each episode we cut through the noise to bring you practical, science-backed insights for more energy, better health and a life that feels like yours again.

Hey everybody, so excited to have Dr Michael Murray with us, my good friend. And if you've been in natural medicine, integrative medicine for any period of time, you know who he is.

If you're new to natural medicines, he's really referred to by many as the voice of natural medicine. Here's a guy who looks at the evidence, but more than that he portrays, he distributes evidence to both doctors and the layperson, the public.

in a way that's very understandable, which is very, very important, because if you have someone as smart as he is, and he's looking at the evidence in natural medicine, but you can't understand what it means and how to use it, what good is it?

So, Dr. Moore, I've always appreciated that about you. You've collected over 65,000 scientific studies. That's probably a record in our field. I know you're looking studies pretty much on a daily basis.

And like I said, you train doctors you trained the public how to best use natural medicine and your website, Dr. Murray that's spelled out D O C T O R Murray M U R R A Y.com Dr Murray.

Dr. Murrayu2019s Background and Natural Medicine

You have a free newsletter and I get that and you always have updates and the breakthroughs in natural medicines. So I appreciate that. And you've written many books, I think you got, oh I don't know, haven't kept track, over 40 books.

You're well known for the textbook of natural medicine for practitioners. I have that in my library here. And then for public, the encyclopedia of Natural Medicine.

So this is really good stuff. Thanks so much for coming on the program today. Oh, it's my pleasure, Mark. You know, I think the other day, if I was going to get into a debate, maybe with some doctors who are skeptics of natural medicine, and let's say it was like a team debate.

I'm like, who would I choose? In about two seconds, my brain said, Dr. Murray. Well, likewise, for you and your work as well. So in this section, we want to talk about nutrients that heal the gut.

Now, before we get in to that, you have written extensively about the complexities, the dynamics of the digestive system, how that affects whole body health.

Am I just sharing your views on that? And then we'll talk about the nutrients that are so important for gut healing. Well, Hippocrates said it well. He said, all health begins in the gut.

So nowadays, there's a greater appreciation. We're learning more and more of the intricacies in gut health. we

have the microbiome to take into consideration as well as the terrain and As a naturopath, I always look at the terrain.

In the case of the gut, we're looking at interface, the lining of gut and how it interacts with the microbes. We have many more microbial cells in our body than human cells.

They play a huge role in the health. The way in which we interact with those microbes is really important to our physiology, the way our body works. It's very important for our immune system, and it's important in the gut-brain connection.

Yes, everything does seem to begin in our gut, so it is very much important that we do everything we can to have optimal gut health. Hey everybody, I want to take just a quick moment and invite you to my website drstengler.com.

Why Gut Health Affects the Whole Body

Here we have the supplements that we've been using with our patients for many, many years. High quality and high potency supplements, very pure. So, if you're looking for high quality supplements where you can notice a difference, both in how you feel and on your lab tests, go to our website at dr.stegler dot com.

Absolutely, that is so true. And so we recognize as holistic doctors, you can't have whole body health unless the gut's in good shape. I remember many decades ago, it was kind of pooh-poohed, this relationship, at least by conventional doctors.

You know, treating a guy can help say joint problems, skin problems brain problems. Now you look at the medical literature, tons and tons of studies of mainstream literature showing this axis.

between the gut and basically all the organ systems of the body. This is something you had written about a long time ago, but the evidence has accumulated even more so.

Absolutely, it's undeniable. It's really a fascinating frontier. We're learning more and more every day, and this knowledge has yet to be fully put into use.

And I think nature paths have become the closest to basically employing good measures to improve gut health. It's a very complex situation because everything affects gut help.

The way that we think, the way we feel, what we eat, how we supplement, our level of exercise, hormones we have floating around in our body, environmental factors, microplastics, pesticides, all sorts of different compounds can disrupt gut health.

It's a fun field, naturopathic medicine. It's been fun to learn how the gut influences our health, our mood, and our ability to function in this world.

And lastly along those lines, now we're getting the nutrients that are so important for healing the And it kind of ties into why we need these nutrients and that's the idea of leaky gut syndrome.

You know, I wrote a book recently and I went through all the mainstream literature on leakey gut. And you know it's in the major literature in mainstream journals, Journal of Endocrinology, all these mainstream journalists talking about leakie gut Syndrome.

Interestingly, I had a patient just the other day who was at her primary care doctor's offices and said how, based on her symptoms, some tests we did.

I said she had leaky gut syndrome. And he said, oh, such a thing doesn't exist. Maybe talk about that if you would. Well, yeah, debt integrity is very important to We're a very simple being in some ways.

Leaky Gut and Intestinal Barrier Integrity

We have a tube inside of us and the health of the gastrointestinal tract is largely determined by the integrity of that protective layer. So when that protected layer is disrupted, we start absorbing compounds that the body is not designed to absorb.

When you have increased gut permeability, popularly known as leaky gut, you start absorbing compounds that create a lot of inflammation that can overwhelm the immune system, can lead to all sorts of liver issues and As a result, it can dramatically impact our health, and so it is a real thing.

It can be measured through diagnostic processes. As you said, there's a significant amount in medical literature these days on the role that increased gut permeability plays in health.

Absolutely. And so with the small intestine, the gut health, you know, we kind of have this paradox because that's where, basically the gatekeeper of the body is to allow things into the bloodstream and get to our cells.

So that is important. We want the good things coming in, nutrients and so forth. The bad things not coming, if leaky gut syndrome, malabsorption, things that shouldn't, immune response.

damage to the digestive tract. There's many factors, like you said, which affect that leaky gut. But talk to us about nutrients. So someone out there, let's say they have leky gut, they get all the symptoms of it.

What would you say are the key nutrients or supplements, if you will, that people should focus on to help heal up the lining of the gut? I know you've written about this in your books and materials.

Well, Basically, our overall health is determined by the health of each individual cell in our body and the cells that line our gastrointestinal tract, they're constantly turning over.

The lining is turned over every one to four days. a deficiency of any nutrient can lead to an inability to make a new intestinal cell. So a lot of times leaky gut is simply a result of a micronutrient deficiency, a vitamin and mineral deficiency.

Yes, it's popular to look at individual nutrients, some of the key ones, zinc, vitamin A, folic acid, these are all really critical nutrients. But in general, all the essential nutrients are necessary for that intestinal cell to function in its role as a barrier.

So if you are deficient in any single nutrient, it could lead to leaky gut. This goes a long way in supporting the use of a multiple vitamin and mineral formula, kind of your foundation upon which to build a nutritional supplement of strategy for intestinal health.

Some of the key nutrients, zinc is probably the number one key nutrient for the health of that intestina lining. And I would put vitamin A up there. along with it.

These days, most people are not getting vitamin A in their dietary supplement, multiple vitamin and mineral formula, they're getting beta carotene. And people still need that preformed vitamin a, I think.

So I that's kind of a missing element for a lot of people.

Key Nutrients for Healing the Gut Lining

Vitamin A was given that name for A being anti-infective. It was known as the anti infective vitamin and it's really critical to that health of that mucous membrane, that intestinal lining.

I just would recommend that people take 5,000 IUs per day. That's a safe amount of vitamin A, and it's going to provide the recommended dietary allowance for vitamin in that pretty formed form.

And that's gonna produce some really good health benefits for a lot of people, particularly the kids. Yes, and like you said, you can get higher quality multivitamins and minerals, which have the vitamin A in them, so you're getting that guaranteed amount.

What amount would you recommend for zinc for the average person? I like a higher amount than the RDAs. I'd like an amount between 20 and 30 milligrams per day.

That's a good, safe amount, as I said. If you are deficient in zinc, It's really, I think, the key nutrient for that intestinal lining. There's some specialty supplements that I'd think are really important as well, led by N-acetylcysteine.

N acetyylcystine is a form of the amino acid cysteines. It has great effects in boosting glutathione levels, so it can act as an antioxidant in the gut.

But it's also critical for the manufacturer of The mucin lining is very rich in sulfur molecules, mainly cysteine, and so you're providing a good nutrient boost for that protective layer.

I like n-acetylcysteines and there's some good data, I'm sure you wrote about it in your book, on n acetyylcystine and supporting intestinal integrity and helping with leaky gut.

Excellent. And what about a lot of people recommend the amino acid L-glutamine. What are your thoughts now? Do you like it as a supplement? People trying to treat leaky gut?

You want people to just get in the diet? What do you normally recommend? I like whey protein for athletes and there are certain indications for L-glutamine.

It's great for patients that are going chemotherapy. Chemotherapy and radiation has a ravaging effect on the body and it really disrupts that intestinal barrier and L glutamine has been shown to be very helpful and protecting against that side effect of chemotherapy.

So, I like it specifically for that. I think that's the real key use for L-glutamine. Otherwise, if you're eating a pretty high protein diet, you can get a good amount of L glutamine in your diet.

You've done everything you were told to do and something still feels off. Health Breakthroughs with Dr. Stengler, we go beyond symptom management to explore integrative, science-backed approaches to the issues that medicine too often overlooks.

Chronic fatigue, brain fog, gut dysfunction, inflammation, hormone imbalance, and healthy aging. If you're ready for real answers and practical tools to support your health naturally, follow Health breakthroughs of Dr Stegler on Doctor Talks or wherever you listen to podcasts.

And we're getting near the end of our time, so I don't want to, you know, get into too much depth, but you're also an expert on prebiotics, probiotics, postbiotic.

Digestive Secretions, Microbiome, and Flavonoids

What's your recommendation in terms of those supplements? Obviously, like people getting these things in their diet, fermented foods, low sugar yogurt products.

It seems to me the supplements, it's a little tricky because a lot of the probiotic out there, they're using strains which don' have human studies. Now there are very good probiotcs available, But tell us your thoughts on how that.

I mentioned the intestinal terrain and I focus on improving that intestino terrain. So my key approach to helping people with digestive issues is make sure they have the right digestive secretions.

Many people are low in hydrochloric acid, and if they're low on hydro-chloric acid that is an important barrier to

infectious organisms and it leads to various nutrient deficiencies as well.

So I like hydro chlorec acid supplementation when indicated. I can go to my website and do a search. I have a protocol for testing. It's just a trial of taking, it identifies who has HCL deficiency and then there's a trail process to know what your right dosage is.

Generally, if someone has digestive bloating and irritation, almost immediately when they eat. That's usually a sign of low HCl. If the gas and bloating comes 30 minutes or more, that's a usually sign a low pancreatic enzyme activity.

So then I'll use pancreatic enzymes in those patients. But I think making sure that they have sufficient digestive secretions is really important for gastrointestinal health and that plays a huge role in the composition of the microbiome and I don't generally take probiotics myself.

I look at our intestinal flora a lot like a person's lawn. If you have a really healthy lawn or garden, you don't need to keep throwing seeds on it. What you need is you keep feeding it and watering it, and the way we feed our microbiome We hear a lot about prebiotics, but the most important class of compounds I think for microbiome health are the flavonoids.

I love flavanoids, I've written about them extensively. These are plant pigments, they're responsible not only for many of the colors in flowers and fruits and vegetables, but they're also responsible for many of the medicinal effects that we get from various medicinal herbs.

So I like a high flavonoid diet. Again, I've got a lot of information on how to measure your intake of flavanoids and try to hit a certain target. If we look at all the healthy diets around the globe, it's pretty clear that those that have a varied amount of flavonoids are associated with the greatest degree of health.

So yes, before we go to any extensive probiotics, let's make sure we're giving our microbiota, the microorganisms in our gut the foods that they need to flourish.

And I think flavanoids I probiotic compounds that we have out there. Yeah, I think you're exactly right. That's a higher level of prescribing as I call it, you know, starting with and making sure the digestion from the beginning is working well, because obviously that affects your absorption, the health of your small intestine.

Then the microbiome, like you said, getting those flavonoid-rich diets, which feed the good bacteria. So that's a higher level of prescribing. That makes a lot of sense.

Dr. Murray, thank you so much for your time. Everyone can get more information at drmurray.com. We'll have another segment with him as well on anti-aging.

Very good. Thanks, Mark. Thanks for listening to Health Breakthroughs with Dr. Stengler. If today's episode resonated with you, please follow the show, share with someone who needs it, and leave a review.

It helps more people find us. For more resources and wellness support, visit DrStenglar.com.