

TRANSCRIPT OF MEDIA- World Digestive Health Day: Daily habits that protect your gut for life

Dr. Omar Khokhar, gastroenterologist, OSF HealthCare

Dr. Khokhar says avoid eating convenience or ultra processed food.

"So for me, ultra processed food is something that comes out of a wrapper, out of a box, out of a can. It's something that was made in a factory 300 miles away two months ago that you now see in your local grocery store, so there is a convenience factor, but we're starting to see that we're paying for that convenience because those foods are difficult to digest and they can result in inflammatory changes to your gut." (:21)

Research now shows that when the lining of your gut is disrupted, it can have negative impacts.

"So the more that we don't do on a daily basis, whether it's fiber, having good bowel movement, making sure we keep a good microbiome, that may result over time in disruption of the mucosal or lining of your stomach and your intestine." (:19)

If you can only do two things to improve your gut health, Dr. Khokhar says adopt these two habits.

"Flush the pipes. Make sure you drink enough water. Make sure you get enough fiber – whether that's in diet, whether that's a supplement, it really doesn't matter to me at this point. If you get enough fiber and you flush your pipes and you're evacuating your G.I. tract, it's gonna help remove the waste product." He adds, "Once you remove the waste product from the colon, everything else can flow down." (:20)

. Dr. Khokhar advises even short walks after a meal can improve digestion and reduce discomfort.

"After you eat, go for an eight to 10 minute walk. The activity helps everything, literally from a grabbing point of view, a physical point of view, a gas expulsion point of view." He adds, "It almost helps you reset and recalibrate before you inevitably in our society – we sit back down." (:16)