

Gut bacteria's role in colon cancer (Broadcast)

INTRO:

COLORECTAL CANCER HAS LONG BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH OLDER AGE... BUT RECENT RESEARCH SHOWS A TROUBLING TREND IN YOUNGER ADULTS. A STUDY PUBLISHED IN NATURE FOUND THAT IN THE PAST TWO DECADES... THE INCIDENCE OF EARLY-ONSET COLORECTAL CANCER AFFECTING PEOPLE BELOW 50 YEARS OF AGE... HAS DOUBLED IN MANY COUNTRIES.

SIMILARLY – PROJECTIONS FROM FRONTIERS IN IMMUNOLOGY WARNS THAT WITH CHANGES IN WESTERN DIETARY HABITS... THE INDICENCE OF COLORECTAL CANCER IS EXPECTED TO INCREASE... RESULTING IN 2-POINT-2 MILLION NEW CASES BY 2030.

TAKE VO

EMERGING SCIENCE SUGGESTS A KEY PIECE OF THE PUZZLE LIES WITHIN OUR GUT. REFERRED TO AS THE MICROBIOME – IT'S A SEPARATE... LIVING ORGANISM WITHIN OUR BODIES. IT'S MADE OF BILLIONS OF BACTERIA... MOSTLY GROWING IN OUR COLON.

HOWEVER – SEVERAL HARMFUL GUT BACTERIA SPECIES – INCLUDING STRAINS OF E. COLI AND OTHERS – PRODUCE A TOXIN CALLED COLIBACTIN. RESEARCH OVER THE LAST TWO DECADES HAS LINKED THIS TOXIN TO D-N-A DAMAGE THAT MAY LEAD TO CANCER.

TAKE SOT | DR. DANIEL MARTIN | GASTROENTEROLOGIST | OSF HEALTHCARE

“They have recognized that there’s a much greater incidence of exposure to this particular strain of E. Coli that makes the Colibactin toxin in patients under the age of 50 who are diagnosed with colorectal cancer,” Dr. Martin says. “There’s also a recognition that Colibactin itself has some DNA-damaging properties within the GI tract. This is likely a direct contributor to the development of early, pre-cancerous dysplastic (abnormal growth) changes that ultimately lead to colorectal cancer in those patients.”

VO TAG

ULTRA-PROCESSED FOODS AND ANTIBIOTICS PLAY A ROLE... DR. MARTIN SAYS. HIS RECOMMENDATION? EAT REAL FOOD. AVOID FOODS FILLED WITH PRESERVATIVES AND FOOD DYES. EAT FOODS LIKE LEGUMES... BEANS... NUTS... PLANTS AND LEAN MEATS.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION/SOUNDBITES

“When we are consuming a food product of some kind, if it’s going to go bad quickly, it likely has prebiotics and probiotics in it, and those are good for us. If you leave a banana out on the counter for two weeks, no one wants to eat it because it goes bad. If you leave a Twinkie out on the counter for two years, it hasn’t changed,” Dr. Martin adds.

Dr. Martin also warns about hidden culprits like sugary drinks, sports beverages and food dyes.

“Products like sports drinks, juices and sodas can be laden with sugars, whether real or added (which Dr. Martin refers to as ‘fake sugar’). Many of these products also contain food dyes and preservatives which are bad for our gut health.”

The Search for Balance

While probiotic and prebiotic supplements can support gut health, they are not a perfect science.

“Currently, prebiotic and probiotic supplements are created using the ‘95% confidence interval,’” Dr. Martin says. “This means that out of a sample of people, it was determined that 95% of them would benefit from a certain culture, probiotic or prebiotic being included in the product. Because as mentioned earlier, the 100% perfect pie chart of what everyone’s gut microbiome looks like is not currently known.”

For now, the advice remains straightforward: eat whole foods, avoid ultra-processed options and care for the trillions of bacteria that work inside of us every day.