

Amazing facts about your gut



Your belly is a powerhouse of the body

What is the gut?

When you think of “gut,” do you think of your belly or your bowels? Those are both part of your gut, but not all of it. The gut (gastrointestinal or GI tract) is actually the long tube that starts at the mouth and ends at your bottom. The gut processes food from the moment it enters the mouth until it is either absorbed by the body or passed out as waste (stools).¹

Every day, it seems that science is discovering new ways the GI tract protects us. Here are just some of the benefits that may be associated with a healthy gut:

- Improves digestion, immune system, central nervous system, and other bodily processes²
- Lowers cholesterol and the risk of heart disease²
- Regulates metabolism and weight management³
- Improves skin, reduces stress levels, and balances energy³
- Improves sleep³



The more you know about the role your gut plays in your health, the more we hope you will be motivated to take care of it. Here are some other amazing facts about the GI tract:

1. The human intestine is much longer than the length of the body (about 15 feet or more in length).⁸
2. The gut harbors a dynamic network of around 40 trillion bacteria that impact the body in a myriad of ways.³
3. Diversity is key to gut health. Gut microbiota, also called gut flora or gut microbiome, are the legions of simple creatures — bacteria, fungi, viruses, archaea and protozoa that live in the gut.²
4. Laid end to end, our body's bacteria would circle the earth 2.5 times.¹⁰
5. The GI tract surface is about half the size of a badminton court.⁸
6. At least 1,000 unique species of bacteria can be found in the human gut.²
7. In terms of genes, humans are more than 99 percent microbial.¹⁰
8. Altogether, the gut microbes may weigh as much as two to five pounds, which is roughly the weight of your brain.²
9. About 90 percent of food absorption happens in the small intestine.⁸
10. The composition of our gut microbiota is unique to each person, just like your fingerprints.¹⁰
11. The Enteric Nervous System (ENS) lining the gut contains over 100 million nerves — more than the human spinal column or central nervous system.^{7,9}
12. The gut is called “the second brain” — and the brain in your head and your gut are constantly communicating back and forth.⁷
13. 95 percent of the body's serotonin, which is associated with regulating appetite, a sense of well-being and sleep, is found in the bowels.

1. National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, “Your digestive system and how it works,” December 2017

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3. Prime, “Immediate Benefits of Improved Gut Health”, accessed at <https://keepmeprime.com/benefits-improved-gut-health-immediate/>, February 2021

4. Journal of the American College of Cardiology, “Intestinal microbiota in cardiovascular health and disease: JACC state-of-the-art review,” April 2019

5. Journal of Food and Drug Analysis, “Revisit gut microbiota and its impact on human health and disease,” July 2019

6. BMJ, “Role of the gut microbiota in nutrition and health,” June 2018

7. Healthline, “What's the length of your small and large intestines?,” September 2019, accessed at <https://www.healthline.com/health/digestive-health/how-long-are-your-intestines#takeaway> on October 20, 2020

8. Scientific American, “Think Twice: How the Gut's ‘Second Brain’ Influences Mood and Well-Being”, accessed at <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/gut-second-brain/>, February 2021

9. Journal of Neuroscience, “Advances in enteric neurobiology: The “brain” in the gut in health and disease,” October 2018

10. Gut Microbiota for Health, “Your gut microbiome is like a unique fingerprint,” accessed at <https://www.gutmicrobiotaforhealth.com/your-microbiome-is-like-a-unique-fingerprint/>, February 2021

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