

When is Depression a gut feeling?

If we are going to look at causes of depression that are physiologically based, we have to understand that there is more to our psyche than the brain. The old expression, “You are what you eat,” has gained even more validity from recent research about causes of depression. It has turned our attention back to the issue of how our guts are functioning. It appears that some types of depression are clearly connected to having the right flora living in your digestive tract.

Over the last several years, reports about how mood is controlled in your gut have emerged and they all need to be replicated and supported. The possibilities for what could be happening based on the incredible variety of gut bacteria and the balance between them are too broad to make many definitive statements, but now a recent study has produced an intriguing and simple start to discerning what you could do to handle depression.

Seriously it is about having enough of the right bacteria. The way that your digestion manages the breakdown of food has a direct impact on your mood. Probiotics – the simple kind of bacteria you can get from food like yogurt – might be a primary factor in your mood.

So does this mean that all you need to do is to eat yogurt and your depression will go away? I wish it were that simple. It would be cheaper than medication and psychotherapy.

What it does mean is pay attention to factors of your physical health if you want your emotional health to be better. That starts with nutrition of course. And it does mean to note probiotics. What can diminish that factor? Taking an antibiotic can disrupt that balance in your gut because those medications succeed by destroying bacteria. And those include the necessary bacteria in your gut. It may be also that your diet has been too high in sugars that cause an imbalance in your digestive process.

This is completely within the realm of reason and the American diet does not lend itself to gut health. High in carbohydrates that feed sugar but not healthy bacteria, we can inadvertently create an environment in the gut that affects mood.