

GUT INSTINCT



LOOKING AFTER YOUR GUT

One of the best things you can do for your gut is to stay hydrated. When your fluid intake is insufficient, your body will absorb it from the contents of your large intestine. This can result in firm stools and can lead to constipation.



Drinking plenty of water also has a beneficial effect on the mucosal lining of the intestines, as well as on the balance of good bacteria in the gut. If you feel thirsty, you are already dehydrated. Having a glass of water at your desk or a water bottle when out, is a good habit to get into.

SHOULD I BE ON MY PROTON PUMP INHIBITOR (PPI) LONG-TERM?



PPIs (Nexium, Losec, Pariet, Somac) are widely used for the treatment of acid-related gastrointestinal disorders - from heartburn to more severe reflux disease or Barrett's Oesophagus. They are very effective and well-tolerated medications.

Recent guidelines by the American College of Gastroenterology have emphasised the importance of being on the lowest effective dose of PPI. It is worth speaking to your doctor if you have been on your PPI for a long period of time.

-  If your symptoms are under control on your PPI, you may be able to lower your dose, take your PPI intermittently, or even discontinue.
-  If you still have symptoms despite being on a PPI, you may not have reflux and further investigation may be necessary.

It is important to note that the guidelines do support long term use as maintenance therapy for more severe reflux disease or Barrett's Oesophagus, where high dose PPI may actually be required for healing and the prevention of complications.

Even though PPIs have been studied extensively and are considered safe, the guidelines are supporting re-evaluation of your PPI therapy. As with any medication, you don't want to be taking it unnecessarily.

COULD VITAMIN D HELP PROTECT AGAINST YOUNG-ONSET BOWEL CANCER?

Since the mid 1990's, bowel cancer incidence rates have been increasing in younger Australians (aged under 50 years), but declining in older age groups.



A recent study published in the Journal of Gastroenterology, highlighted that higher vitamin D consumption, mainly from dietary sources, may help protect against young-onset bowel cancer, or pre-cancerous bowel polyps.

The researchers found that consuming 300 IU or more vitamin D per day, was associated with approximately a 50% lower risk of developing young-onset bowel cancer. There wasn't however, a significant link between total vitamin D intake (dietary & supplements) and risk of bowel cancer in those aged over 50. More research would need to be conducted to confirm this finding.

Vitamin D levels have been extensively studied as a protective factor for bowel cancer. Vitamin D intake (from food sources) has declined since the 1980's, which supports the idea that vitamin D intake may be a factor in the noted recent increase in younger-onset of bowel cancer.

This study may lead to recommendations for higher vitamin D intake to reduce bowel cancer risk in those aged under 50 years.

Foods rich in Vitamin D -

Salmon, tuna, lean pork, egg yolk, milk, tofu, sardines

DELICIOUS BANANA CAKE

Is it just us, or do bananas seem to ripen quicker these days? Here's a great recipe to use up your ripe bananas. So easy to make, and delicious to eat.



INGREDIENTS -

125g butter
1/2 cup raw caster sugar
1 tsp vanilla extract
2 mashed bananas
1 1/2 cups SR flour
1/4 cup almond meal
1 egg
1/4 cup milk

METHOD -

To the melted butter, add in all the ingredients, mixing after each addition. Pour in a non stick or lined cake tin, and bake at 180 degrees for 45 mins.