**Good Digestive Health = Good Health!**

Just recently you’ve started hearing about Prebiotics and Probiotics and gut health. When you consider that 70-80% of your immune system is in your digestive system, the word should get out much faster. Studies have also linked a good digestive system to good heart health too. It is important to have a good balance of the good bacteria and gut flora to help with both nutritional breakdown and absorption, but also support the immune function. Sugary and processed foods, antibiotics and other drugs all can damage your gut health.

Prebiotics are non-digestible foods that act as an energy source (carbohydrate fibers called oligosaccharides) and support the good gut flora (probiotics) living in the large intestines. Inulin is a prebiotic in over 36,000 plants including fruits and sweet veggies. Microflora loves sugars, however eat healthy ones instead of the candy bar!

Probiotics are the beneficial bacteria found in fermented foods, yogurt or even added to certain products. Lactobacillis and Bifidobacterium are the more common types. Both prebiotics and probiotics can be enhanced by either improving your diet or supplementation.

Another thing we don’t like to talk about is parasites! More than 95% of people have them. My colon hydrotherapist, Melanee Higgins (www.coloradosbestcolonics.com) says that number in her experience is low. As much as I hate to admit it, I’ve seen tapeworms, hookworms, little fish, fuzzballs, spiders, liver flukes, nests, tiny gallstones and more during a colonic. Parasites can cause a multitude of health problems by impacting tissues and organs in the body, plus the immune and digestive system. Parasites have been linked with arthritis, Multiple Sclerosis, appendicitis, weight problems, cancer and epilepsy.

So how do we get parasites? You can ingest them via water or the food you eat (undercooked meats or sushi). Walking barefoot, feces, insects and animals are other sources. While it is unlikely that you will ever be completely parasite free you can decrease them via herbs, minimize medications (antibiotics and steroids), wear shoes when outside, take shoes off in house, don’t sleep with pets, avoid animal “kisses” and mosquitoes, ingest more fiber, take digestive enzymes, drink ½ your body weight in good quality bioavailable water, do regular colonics, and eat a better diet (less processed foods and sugars).

One final important tip is to keep your body more alkaline than acidic. You can alter your alkalinity by what you eat, drink and think. Back in the 1930’s, a Nobel prize was given to a man who discovered cancer and disease loves acidity and cannot thrive in an alkaline and oxygenated environment. Soda is very acidic. It takes 30+ glasses of water to counteract the acidity in the soda (pH of 2.3 and your body likes around 7!). You can buy pH test strips and monitor your pH (salvia and urine).

Respect your digestive system and it will repay you with better health now and in the future.