

The Critters in Your Gut

By Toni Eatros, MS, Dipl Ac, AP

Have you ever thought about what type of microscopic critters might be lurking in your digestive tract? Most of us know that we have a wide variety of what we call healthy flora or healthy bacteria in our gut that are very important for proper functioning of the body. Sometimes, however, these bacteria can get killed, especially with the use of antibiotics. When the numbers of these "good" bacteria are too low, the pathogenic, or "bad" bacteria and parasites can take this opportunity to multiply and take over the balance in the digestive tract.

Prolonged periods of stress in someone's life leads to adrenal issues, which I have written about in previous articles, which diminishes the secretory IgA in the digestive tract. The secretory IgA is a big part of the immune system of the gut and when there is not enough, conditions are prime for opportunistic bacteria to take over.

I will admit, when I first learned about functional medicine testing for the digestive tract I assumed that this testing would only show issues in those people who have done a lot of traveling or camping. I thought that positive tests would be rare and that most of my patients would get negative results, showing no issues. To my amazement, this absolutely has not been the case. 100% of my patients that have tested have had opportunistic pathogenic bacterial infections and parasites present. 100%!

These infections are the main cause of what we call in functional medicine, "hidden inflammation". If these critters are present in your digestive tract, part of your body resources have to go to fighting them constantly, which leads to immune system issues, sometimes auto-immune conditions, chronic disease, and systemic inflammation in the body as a whole.

The test I am talking about is called the GI Map Test, otherwise known as the Gastrointestinal Microbial Assay Plus. This test is one of the most sought after medical tests today. The GI-MAP includes the first comprehensive pathogens assay that is FDA approved. This test does something called PCR assays that test for the DNA of these different organisms. It is a very advanced test that does not rely on culturing and growing of the organisms to see if they are present. With these less technical culture based tests it is not possible to measure strict anaerobes, viruses or virulence factors. They also lack the ability to deliver true quantitation of any of the reported organisms.

The GI-Map tests for GI pathogens, opportunistic organisms, normal flora, and markers of GI health including:

- Bacterial Pathogens
- Viruses
- Opportunistic Bacteria
- Normal Bacteria Flora
- H Pylori
- Parasitic Pathogens
- Viral Pathogens
- Fungi / Yeast
- Inflammation
- Immune function
- Pancreatic function
- GI metabolic activity

DNA/PCR techniques also allow for the measurement of antibiotic resistance genes and virulence factors that contribute to pathogenicity. Both are used to help determine clinical significance and the most effective treatments.

People with the Following Illnesses Should Test:

- Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)
- Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD)
- Chron's Disease
- Ulcerative Colitis
- Chronic Diarrhea
- Chronic Constipation
- Gas/Bloating
- Reflux/Heartburn
- Auto-Immune Disease of Any Type
- Cardiovascular Disease
- Thyroid Issues
- Hormone Imbalance
- Anyone Wanting Optimal Health

The test is easy and involves taking only one stool sample in the privacy of your home. The test is then mailed to the lab and results are reported to your functional medicine practitioner within 2-3 weeks.

If your test comes back showing the presence of any of the above critters, treatment will be recommended. There are a few parasites that do require the use of specific anti-parasitic pharmaceuticals to treat, but most can be addressed naturally through a two month natural medicine protocol that uses a variety of herbs to kill the pathogenic organisms and probiotics to balance the good bacterial population.

If you are interested in getting this testing done, please phone my office at 239-260-4566 or go to <https://acupunctureresolutionsonline.com/> to schedule a functional medicine new patient consult. My views have changed dramatically since I have implemented this testing in my office, and I now highly recommend this test for anyone who has chronic illness or who wants to achieve optimal health.

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Presented by passionate speaker, author, and leading wellness expert,
Toni Eatros, Acupuncture Physician and Functional Medicine Specialist
Please RSVP to (239) 260-4566

Feel free to bring a guest! Call now! Seating is limited! Free Meal!