Wellness *focus*

The 4 "R's" of Healthy Digestion

1. REMOVE:

This step is all about removing the stressors that negatively affect the environment of your GI tract. This includes all allergenic foods and chemical irritants. If you're unsure of which foods you may be sensitive to it can be helpful to remove the most common ones such as: Wheat, Cow's milk, Soy, peanuts/legumes, Corn, Eggs and all grains. Other irritants can include chemicals found in processed foods (i.e. artificial colors, sweeteners, and preservatives), alcohol, and coffee.

This step also involves eradicating pathogenic bugs such as bacteria, yeasts, or parasites that may be hanging out in your gut (more on this in step 3). And depending on your symptoms it may make sense to eliminate all sugar for a period of time (even natural ones like raw honey and fruit), which is the food source for these organisms. One type of yeast called Candida Albicans can be particularly problematic, and when out of control can manifest as any number of symptoms including bloating, abdominal discomfort, bladder infections, depression, headaches, mental fog, and vaginal infections. In addition to starving these organisms by removing their food source, you can also fight them with certain anti-fungal herbs and supplements as prescribed by Lori. Emotional stress can also have devastating effects on your GI tract and can't be overlooked!

2. REPLACE:

This step refers to adding back or replacing all those factors that may be missing or lacking in the body and diet. In order to digest our food properly we need sufficient amounts of enzymes, Hydrochloric Acid (HCL), and bile acids medications, various diseases, aging, and other factors. You can think of this step as doing everything you can to support your digestion – and it will vary from person to person.

3. REINOCULATE:

Our intestinal tracts are host to over 500 different types of bacteria. In fact you might be surprised to know that you have more bacteria in your gut than cells in your body! In a healthy gut there should be a ratio of about 80:20 "good bacteria to bad bacteria", but due to poor diets, overuse of antibiotics and medications, environmental stress, diminished soil integrity, among other factors, most people have the opposite ratio with the " good guys" being outnumbered by the "bad guys" mentioned in step 1.This step involves replenishing the gut with healthy flora through the use of supplemental probiotics Supplementing with a good quality probiotic is especially important during and after antibiotic treatment.

4. REPAIR:

Once your diet is in check and stressors eliminated (or at least limited), you can begin to repair the damage done and work at regenerating the mucosal lining of the digestive tract with specific nutrients. Overtime, the lining of the intestinal tract becomes damaged due to all the irritants and stressors mentioned in step 1. As the integrity of the lining is lost, a condition called Leaky Gut Syndrome can ensue where the intestinal lining becomes permeable allowing substances such as large undigested food particles, pathogenic organisms and other chemicals to pass or "leak" through the barrier and into the blood stream at large. These substances are recognized as "foreign invaders" to the body and can end up triggering an autoimmune response causing inflammation, which can manifest as a myriad of symptoms throughout the body and trigger or worsen a number of health conditions such as Crohn's disease, IBS, chronic fatigue syndrome and eczema to name just a few.

Nightshades:

Should people who suffer with arthritis avoid them?

Nightshade Foods:

- Tomatoes
- Potatoes
- Sweet, hot or cayenne peppers
- Eggplant
- Tomatillos
- Tamarios
- Pepinos
- Pimentos
- Paprika
- Tobacco
- Goji berries
- Ground cherries
- Garden huckleberries

Most individuals have never heard the term "nightshades," much less make the connection to a food group that ignites pain and inflammation.

The connection of nightshades and arthritis-type disorders was brought to the forefront largely by the efforts of Dr. Norman F. Childers, former Professor of Horticulture at Rutgers University. Dr. Childers knew first-hand the affects of severe joint pain and stiffness. He discovered that after consuming a meal containing any tomatoes, he experienced severe pain. As his interest in the inflammatory responses to nightshades grew, he observed livestock kneeling in pain from inflamed joints – the livestock had consumed weeds containing the substance called solanine.

An enzyme present in the body called Cholinesterase originates in the brain where its responsible for flexibility of muscle movement. Solanine, present in nightshades, is a powerful inhibitor of cholinesterase.

In other words, its presence can interfere with muscle function – the cause of stiffness experienced after consuming nightshades. All people are not sensitive to nightshades in the same degree. Research has proved that when an inflammatory condition exists, consuming nightshades is like adding "fuel to the fire". That said, there is no scientific evidence that for those not afflicted with inflammation that nightshades will cause it.

Dr. Childers, through his research, proved that 74-90% of people who ache and hurt, regardless of their diagnostic 'label' have a sensitivity to nightshades

Potatoes, one of the nightshades, especially those stored improperly or aged, have been known to cause toxic symptoms severe enough to require hospitalization – symptoms range from gastrointestinal and general inflammation, nausea, diarrhea, and dizziness to migraines. It is believed the reason for the toxicity in potatoes is the presence of solanine in and around the green patches and the eyes that have sprouted.

Who Should Avoid Nightshades?

People who a history of:

- Gerd
- Intestinal disorders
- Morning stiffness
- Muscle pain and tightness
- Poor healing
- Arthritis
- Insomnia
- Gall bladder problems