

“If you want to balance and heal your gut naturally, treat it as you would any garden. There is a microscopic garden in your gut. Caring for it requires you to clear, plant, fertilise and protect it.”

LET'S TALK ABOUT HAPPINESS



FRANCES FLANNERY
Ireland's Natural Gut Health Expert



THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO FUNCTIONAL GUT HEALTH

*To my mother, Elizabeth,
'The Gut Master'*

Introduction

Happiness is intrinsically linked to your gut. World Health Organisation figures show that 1.8 million people are affected by colorectal cancer per year, making it the second most common form of cancer. In 2018, scientific research proved that a toxin found in the bowel called Alpha Synuclein is a major cause of Parkinson's Disease. Cleansing the bowel has never been so important but there is more to it than that.

Natural functional gut health has four distinct stages which include taking probiotics but which are not limited to that. The first is to clear away toxins in the bowel, the second is to introduce the new gut flora, the third is to remove the cause of triggers with correctional nutrition, and the fourth is to minimise parabens and toxins in skin products and lifestyle. As a second generation gut health practitioner and founder of Vitality Centre, I have observed improvements in the wellbeing of many people who follow the four steps outlined. I have written this book to share my experiences with those who wish to empower and educate themselves about natural functional gut health practices.

It is the improvements in people that I have witnessed first-hand over the past 10 years that have inspired me to keep going and to stay fascinated and determined to profile natural functional gut health. It is or should be a major part of any natural wellness programme. In 2014 researchers at UCC took stool sample microbiomes from professional rugby players and found that they contained a richer diversity of gut microbes and a strain of bacteria linked to lower rates of obesity when compared

to healthy but non athletic men. (Perlmutter, 2011) That is just one incredible finding which demonstrates what a powerful role the microbiome in your bowel play in your life. The gut is becoming recognised as the new star of the holistic wellbeing show. It is wonderful to see so much research being put into preventative wellness relating to gut health and microbiome analysis. It would appear that there has been a shift at last and that some large pharmaceutical companies are now investing in natural wellbeing products like probiotics helping to profile the importance of gut health of which probiotics have always been a part. Natural functional gut health is not new. I myself am a second generation wellbeing practitioner of gut health.

With so much marketing investment into probiotics right now though, it is easy to lose sight of how they fit into a natural functional gut health plan. Natural functional gut health has been around for decades and probiotics have always been recommended by those of us whose aim it is to balance the source of what we have always believed, to be the root of all ill health; the gut and more specifically, the bowel.

This book introduces *the gut garden concept*, an easy to understand natural gut health plan. Take ownership of that which is rightfully yours. Take back your health and your vitality by learning to unlock the secrets of your gut naturally.

Yours in health

Frances Flannery,

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"I believe that all nutritional & dietary changes should be accompanied by natural functional gut health protocols to harness the incredible potential that balanced microbiome and a toxin free gut can create." Frances Flannery

Richard Burton
CEO of the Irish Institute of Nutrition & Health

‘All disease begins in the gut’

Anyone who has explored the root causes of their illness will, at some point, have encountered these wise words of Hippocrates, widely regarded as the Father of Medicine.

I help to train Nutritional Therapists to work with clients who present with a range of persistent health problems. Investigation of background factors very often uncovers a history of chronic constipation or unstable bowel habits. And during recovery - from disorders of most types - improvement of bowel symptoms is regarded as a priority focus.

Just a few decades back, the colon, or lower bowel, was still regarded as essentially a receptacle for indigestible matter, functioning to absorb water and eliminate waste. The huge bacterial population there flourished on undigested dietary fibre, forming the bulk required to create a healthy, daily bowel habit. A fibre-rich diet was regarded as the general solution to most colon health problems.

But already in the 21st century, breakthrough gene technologies and big data have expanded scientific knowledge of the vital role of the colon and

its microbial population light-years beyond the horizons of traditional understanding.

Accordingly, the world of health is now awash with novel terms - Probiotics, Prebiotics, Microbiome, Nutrigenomics, among many others. We are still in the early stages of a completely new conception of how diet interfaces with health and wellbeing – the notion of food as *information*, no longer simply as fuel, building materials, vitamins, and minerals.

What is becoming clear is that the trillions of microorganisms harboured by a healthy colon are - somehow - continually acting to provide information from the surrounding environment, via food, to our internal systems for adaptation and homeostasis. This ‘intelligent interface’ between bugs and body seems to be the immune system, which is doubtless why around 70% of the body’s immune system is found located in and around the colon. Beyond that, there is convincing evidence of a ‘gut-brain axis’, which would help explain, among other things, the often-seen link between chronic digestive problems and mental health issues.

There is also evidence that many chronic metabolic diseases originate in the gut. This relates to the different mix and overall diversity of gut bacteria residing in our colon, and also to the integrity of the gut lining. Studies have

repeatedly shown that endotoxins - undesirable bacterial products - can leak through a damaged gut wall and enter the bloodstream. The immune system will then detect and attack these foreign substances, resulting in a chronic inflammatory response. This persistent, diet-derived inflammation is believed to contribute to insulin resistance (underlying type 2 diabetes), and has also been strongly linked to other serious physical and mental health disorders.

From personal experience and the feedback of many clients I refer to colonic hydrotherapy, I know its potential as a powerful adjunct to healing – even a game changer – in many cases of chronic ill-health where colonic function is not optimal. The standard of colonic hydrotherapy in Ireland is second to none, and I am delighted that Frances and her team at the Dublin Vitality Centre continue to offer such an important service, along with vital practical information that her clients need to help restore and maintain their bowel health.

Richard Burton is CEO of the Irish Institute of Nutrition & Health. Founded in 2002, the Institute provides fully accredited part-time training programmes in Nutrition & Health Coaching, and Nutritional Therapy. Attendance, online and blended learning study options. (iinh.net)

What one thing could make you happier?

We all want to be happy, right? 95% of "The Feel Good Hormone" serotonin is produced in your gut, a scientific fact that directly links gut health to mood and happiness. *Brain World. (2018)* But so far removed are we, from this knowledge, that most people find it hard to believe that their gut health could have even the slightest influence on their overall levels of happiness, whatsoever. Ask people the question "*What One Thing Could Make You Happier*" and you are bound to receive a varied reply, none of which will have any connection to the physical body. The answers you will receive, will inevitably include at least one, if not more, of the following; a great job, more money, amazing sex, better friends, more free time, to be looking better, to be more intelligent (or more educated) or finding 'the one' to merge with for that ultimate soul mate union and perfect relationship. Art in the form of poetry, music, literature and contemporary psychology points to the longing and human pre-occupation with soul connection as the highest and most sought after prize for ultimate happiness which is why I have devoted the first chapter of this book to it and

other aspects of the material external realm which most of us believe have the potential to make us happy.

Since the pursuit of love and the perfect relationship lists highly among the beliefs that society at large, holds about the key to establishing its lifelong happiness, let us examine some statistics and studies that link relationships to happiness and personal 'joi de vivre' before we move onto the fascinating area of functional gut health and how it fits into the happiness paradigm.

The marriage factor

The effect of a wedding, with its pomp and ceremony, lasts for approximately two years during which time; there is an increase in overall happiness, according to the great John Gottman of The University of Washington, a world leading researcher on the subject of marriage. But work is required on those relationships. Maureen Gaffney, Ireland's best known, and most trusted psychologist, in her book *Flourishing* says that there is a magic ration of 5:1 for a marriage to work. (Gaffney, 2011). It means you have to make up for any negativity

with five portions worth of positivity to patch things up and correct the balance of happiness in the relationship.

Less depression is reported within couples who are married. (Gaffney, 2011). So to some degree, marriage can elevate your levels of happiness, somewhat and temporarily. But like most things in life, it's not that simple. If you get married and then become divorced, your levels of happiness will dip below that which they were before you were married in the first place. Hopeless romantics don't lose heart - in time you will restore and your happiness level will ultimately return to what it was before you were married. Non romantics, however, might conclude that the pursuit of a perfect relationship, to fulfil ultimate happiness, is at best, a risky business.

The single factor

The good news for women in their thirties and forties is that the struggle to deal with romantic relationships and the pressure of society to conform by finding a suitable partner and having children, all but disappears. A sense of contentment and happiness prevails, as the luxury of discovering the true self and recognising personal needs,

for the first time perhaps, comes into graspable view. Overall, in both males and females, happiness increases with age whether attached or not. In marriage, the mental health of males improves overall.

However, men deteriorate emotionally and physically with notable increased levels of depression as a result of a separation or divorce, compared to women. I believe this could be that men project their feminine emotions onto women and need us to express that side of themselves in some cases. It's hard for a man to express his feminine side in our topsy turvy imbalanced society. For those considering a long term relationship which excludes the certificate of marriage, the news is not good either - those who live together are less happy and have a higher chance of breaking-up than those who marry.

The child factor

A number of studies conclude that the arrival of children into a marriage causes happiness levels within the relationship to decline also. But it gets worse when those offspring hatch into teenagers during which time, happiness levels dip to a record low point, within the marriage. In her highly acclaimed book *Flourishing* by Maureen Gaffney, we learn that the happiness levels experienced by mothers

when taking care of their children is lower than that which they experience preparing meals or doing shopping. (Gaffney, 2011)

The image factor

During the age of cosmetic surgery and digitally altered social media images, it is tempting to believe that a beautiful body and a perfect face would greatly increase our levels of happiness. Oh to be younger, slimmer, more attractive, to rid ourselves of that extra ten pounds, increase bust or butt size, harvest more hair follicles, remove wrinkles, turn back the clock, a nip and a tuck , some suction there, a syringe here. What would be the harm? Surely then, true happiness would cease to evade so cruelly. Not so. Whilst there is a slight link between a more pleasing appearance and higher happiness levels, the root of this link, is found to correlate to how well the bearer of those good looks is received by society and thereby attracts partners and friends.

The friend's factor

There is one area of life that is guaranteed to increase happiness, without exception. People who have five or more close friends are 60% happier than those who don't. Friendships can bring more happiness than family because they are free from the duty, obligation, and expectations that many family bonds involve. The factors that make it easier to form new friendships fast such as; ease at making friends, getting involved in social activities, team sports and generally being socially active, all contribute.

But again, it's not that simple. Unsupportive friendships can cause the opposite result. Choose wisely. Your friendships have a major influence on your levels of happiness so be open to new ones. Cut out old ties that no longer serve your emotional needs. Leave behind friendships that are unreliable, destructive, or negative. Notice how you feel around the people you consider friends. If the answer is positive, you are on to a winner. Cherish and nurture these relationships because they have the potential to bring a major increase in happiness into your life, bigger than any other external factor, aside maybe from something less well known about - that is

the role that gut health contributes to your overall wellness, health and happiness.

The GUT factor

An uncompromising and little known fact about happiness and the raison d'être for this natural functional gut health book is to introduce an emerging wellbeing philosophy which focuses on four key areas to achieve optimal gut health. This includes restoration of the bowel and rebalancing of the many intricate floras that reside within it to create an increase in overall wellbeing and mood. During my years as a natural functional gut health therapist, I have noticed first hand the improvements in mood that result when the gut is cleansed, restored, and balanced. And it is instant in many cases. Clients who have arrived angry, frustrated and irritated have left relieved, relaxed, and apologising for their former state of mind. But when you understand the bowel and its connection to serotonin, it makes perfect sense that someone who is suffering from chronic gut health issues such as constipation or IBS is likely to be moody, depressed, and irritable. *"Given the two brains' commonalities, other depression treatments that target the mind can unintentionally impact the gut. The enteric nervous system uses more than 30 neurotransmitters, just like the brain, and in fact 95 percent of the body's serotonin is found in the bowels."* (Brain World, 2018)



"Advanced nutritionists and leading gut health doctors now recognise the importance of bowel health. It is time for everyone to clear and replant their gut flora garden." Frances Flannery

Health and mood have a definite effect on our overall levels of happiness. And what is more, these two things are profoundly linked physically within your body, in your bowel, to be more precise,

through one very important hormone. That hormone is called serotonin. It is often referred to as "The Feel Good Hormone" because it is directly related to how happy we feel or not. During times of depression it drops.

As stated by Dr. Michael Garson, the first to prove the link between serotonin and the bowel, 95% of serotonin is produced in your bowel. That is why anti-depressants are used to treat IBS. These drugs boost serotonin production not in your brain but in your bowel where the resulting effect is an increase in mood. But many of us want to avoid taking drugs if possible especially since we now know that they can lead to imbalances in other areas of the body. After all, drugs and namely anti-biotics are the cause of the plight of imbalanced gut flora that is now found to be underlying in so many health problems today. Surely it is time to recognise that we must work with nature in all its untold complexity as much as possible.

"Natural functional gut health has four distinct stages. The first is to clear the bowel and the second is to introduce new gut flora just as you would clear a real garden before you would replant."
Frances Flannery

95% of Serotonin is produced in your gut. (Gershon, 2008)

At last IBS, a syndrome made up of a number of symptoms related to the bowel is recognised by the pharmaceutical community. This was not the case in 2008 when I began training as a gut health therapist. Very often it was written off as a psychosomatic response to stress. As a natural health practitioner, the recommended wellness protocol was then and is now to remove impaction from the bowel and increase strength in the peristaltic action of the muscular action of the bowel combined with probiotics, reduced stress and the removal of sugar from the diet. Increasing peristalsis means to retrain or strengthen the muscles in the gut. Consider this to be similar to physiotherapy for the muscles of the gut. In the past decade and based on the scientific findings of Dr. Gershons research relating to the gut brain connection, anti-depressants have been developed and are now offered for the treatment of IBS. The fact that anti-depressants can offer relief from problems in the bowel is most likely because an increase or decrease in serotonin in your bowel caused by impaction, bloating or other gut related issues seems to cause a decrease in your mood and vice versa. For those who are interested in working naturally with the body it is worth noting that many of my

clients have reported that colonics which boost the peristaltic action of the bowel, seems also to instantly boost mood for many people.

A game changing monument of research arrived on bookshelves in 1999 relating to the connection between the gut and the brain. The book is called ***The Second Brain*** and is written by a medical doctor called Michael Gershon, who devoted his career to understanding the human bowel (the stomach, oesophagus, small intestine, and colon) collectively known today as, the gut.

The gut refers to two parts of the digestive tract - they are the large intestine and the small intestine. And within that most of Dr. Gershons findings relate to that five foot tube of bowel which many prefer not to ponder on for too long. The bowel has four names; the large intestine, the gut, the colon and the bowel. This area of the body has been extensively overlooked and ignored by both the medical profession and society in general for many years. As stated, IBS (irritable bowel syndrome) was considered to be "all in the head" up until about 2010 by the pharmaceutical community. When I first began posting the fascinating and emerging science about the gut brain connection from articles published in the Harvard Medical Journal in 2010, I never imagined that so much interest would emerge about the gut. I am delighted to find that so many people are as fascinated as I am by the mysterious and intelligent organ that has been underestimated and disregarded for centuries. One thing has

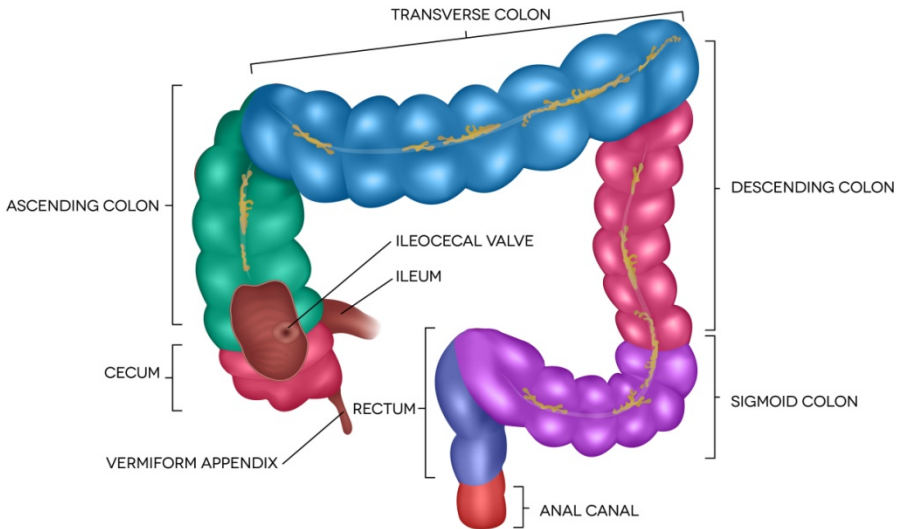
been firmly established in the past ten years. The *bowel* is our second *brain* and its relevance to our mental health is substantial.

"Trendelenburg had demonstrated that the intrinsic nervous system of the gut actually has properties that are like those of the brain and subservient appendage, the spinal cord. To a neurologist, this is like saying that the bowel is close to God." (Gershon. M, 1998)

Secondly, the bowel is so much more than just an organ of elimination as was up until recent times its established category. Up until recent years it was seen as merely a waste management organ and nothing more. But it turns out that there is a Cinderella story waiting to be told. The gut has been grossly underestimated by science for centuries. It turns out that the bowel is very different indeed from every other organ of the body. It is the only organ that can function autonomously of the cognitive brain in our head. What that means is that if the nerves to the brain are cut off, it can exist independently and still perform its own function. No other organ can do this. Why has nature afforded such a privilege to the bowel? That is still a mystery. But emerging science has demonstrated that the bowel holds a complex microbiome made up of trillions of micro organisms known commonly as *good gut flora* which ultimately form the majority of our immune system. For those who do not know what our immune system does let me explain it in very simple terms. Our immune system is the thing that keeps disease out. It is our natural defence against invading pathogens.

If you are a visual person which I am (I began my career as a designer), imagine the immune system as a defensive territory guarded fiercely by soldiers who are under strict instruction not to allow the enemy to come in.

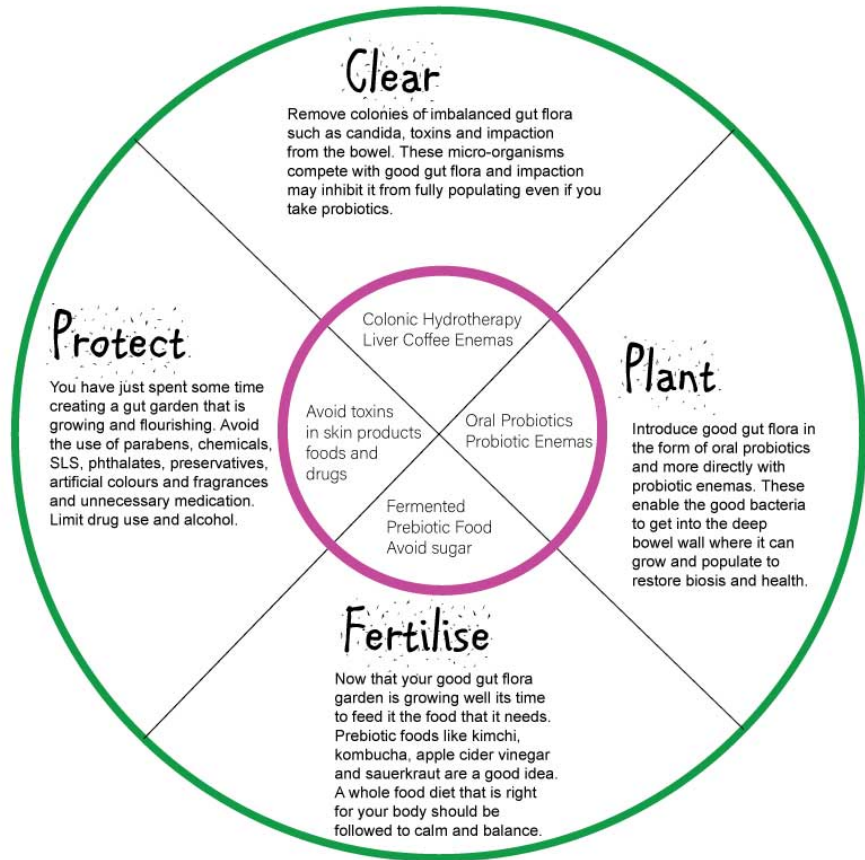
LARGE INTESTINE



"Keep it clean naturally because the gut itself has a major influence on mood. 95% of serotonin is produced in the bowel."
Frances Flannery

The wonderful thing about working with people directly and speaking to them face to face every day for ten years about their gut health is that you have to know your stuff. People ask you questions that require a complex answer and you must be able to help them understand something in two minutes that a scientist could study for ten years to fully grasp. People expect short snappy answers to very complicated questions. That is why you will find throughout this book analogies that help to simplify complex biological and scientific concepts. If you want to read the science behind it, check out the bibliography at the back.

The Gut Garden Concept



There are so many questions that people have about gut health and how it relates to the rest of their body, their skin, their brain and so on. As a therapist my position is not just to know the answer but to help my client to understand things in a simple and easy way. Whilst many people seek to improve gut health, they are unsure about where to start. Some people now believe that taking probiotics is all that they need to do to overhaul their bowel and gut health and this is not helped by the massive budgets that some leading manufacturing companies are using to cement this idea. The full story must be told. It would be great if we could pop a super probiotic pill and everything would be fixed. Some people are parting with huge sums of money in the belief that if they get a more sophisticated product it will do a better job. It is true that some products are better than others. Huge amounts of research is going on. But probiotics are just one part of the programme from my experience. The Gut Garden Concept outlined above and in the following pages aims to deliver a natural plan and put all of the areas of what is often called gut health into their respective place. A natural functional gut health plan might include some or all of these steps with the aim of going from mediocre wellness to optimal wellness.

Your gut flora is a garden. It makes no sense to water the plants before you sow the seeds. Ask any Chelsea garden show winner. There is no short-cut to cultivating a prize winning garden. It takes months and you must abide by the laws of nature. If a gardener wants to make a beautiful garden, I am sure he begins by clearing away the weeds and making the soil receptive to the new seeds that he intends to plant. (I would love to speak to him about it someday). I am sure he finds good quality seeds too. Likely, he spends some weeks preparing the soil and getting the conditions right in advance of bringing in the shrubs that he has selected. He probably hydrates the soil if it is too dry. He certainly does not begin by throwing new seeds straight on top of the soil and hoping it all turns out wonderfully by competition time. If he did, I doubt he would have the success that he has had. And the same goes for gut health. Imagine that your gut is a garden, albeit a microscopic one and you will understand why there are some clear stages that you need to follow.

Step 1. Clear With Colonic Hydrotherapy

Your bowel has its own microscopic garden. It grows deep inside the mucosal layer of the bowel walls. The bowel is five feet long and it has small round chamber-like areas known as haustra along it. I imagine the plant life and gut flora inside it to look something like a coral reef alive with varied and rich bio diverse organisms. All of the plants are adhered to the coral reef and they make use of it. They are perfectly suited to their environment because they have evolved with the reef itself over millions of years. Your gut flora has evolved with your bowel over millions of years too. The gut flora has developed an advanced technique of attaching themselves and staying in place as water and the natural pendulum and peristaltic movements of the bowel go on all the time. These tiny microscopic plants feed on nutrients in the water. In the coral reef, sea storms cause only mild fluxuations to their positions as most are anchored tightly in place. Heavy loose overgrowths might detach from the main coral if they are already heavily overgrown but in general all things live together and are perfectly suited to each other and to their watery home and its changing conditions.

Understanding why it is so important to clear away overgrown bad gut flora is fundamental. Let's go back to the image of the reef again. What if the coral reef had become imbalanced because one very strong and resilient fungal plant began to dominate the biosphere? Soon it begins to take over. It chokes the other plant life and competes greedily with them for food. And since it is much stronger, eventually all the other plants on the reef die and it gets even bigger and spreads more.

To stop this monster, it would not be enough just to throw new plant seeds at it and onto the reef. It would be a waste of time to do this and hope that some of the seeds would attach by magic. To imagine that a seed could grow up strong and overcome the enemy that has gotten so strong sounds like a fantasy. But some companies are selling products which promise to do a similar thing in your gut. There are many obstacles for the little seed in the form of a probiotic that enters an imbalanced gut. To create a realistic gut health plan it must be considered that the bowel is often lined with faecal matter, Candida and mucoid plaque. To win the battle means that these little seeds must penetrate the bowel wall to root deep inside it. This is the action needed to take home the prize of optimised health. So a winning plan requires a little more strategy than what is currently thought of as conclusive. Action must be taken to physically tackle the weed and remove it so the seeds can get in. If only there was a way to loosen it and pull it out at the root so that some space could be cleared up on the surface of the reef long enough for the new seeds to attach and germinate. Otherwise, the new seeds stand little chance to bloom and flourish and the battle would surely be lost to the greedy monster plant who is now dominating the reef.

It might sound like a story from a child's book but there is a plant just like this that colonises in your gut. It is called Candida. When we talk about imbalanced gut flora we are often referring to Candida among other unhelpful micro-organisms. Since imbalanced gut flora has been shown to apply to almost everyone in the western world, we need to start taking its existence into account when undertaking or recommending a restorative gut health programme. We must also naturally clear the bowel of excess mucoid plaque and toxic impaction.

Let me also just say that I seen Candida almost everyday for the past ten years of my life. During colonic hydrotherapy, it can clearly be seen coming always in chunks that range in size. It is white and fluffy. It looks very much like cotton wool. You will only see it coming off after a few colonic hydrotherapy treatments when the bowel is clear of faecal matter. Some people might notice a layer of it on their tongue in the morning. If you do, you can be sure that the root of the Candida is in your bowel. And you should consider clearing it away as a priority.

If you take anti-biotics or anti-fungals to kill the Candida, this will further imbalance some other micro-organism elsewhere. We are talking about a bio diverse environment with trillions of interdependent plant life living on it. All of them work together to create our immune system and our immune system keeps us healthy.

Consider water as your primary weapon against Candida because none of the other microbiome gut flora plant life in your bowel are threatened by it. Water cannot do them any harm since they are designed to live in a watery environment. The action in introducing and releasing water will help to loosen and remove *the low hanging fruit*, so to speak - that is - the biggest colonies of Candida overgrowths will be soaked and washed away eventually. Failure to prepare the bowel wall by removal of Candida in this way means that the chances of good gut flora having an opportunity to flourish will be reduced greatly if Candida has already set in. If Candida is present in the bowel, it should be removed *before* and in tandem with oral probiotics and probiotic enemas. As stated Candida is extremely common in Ireland and most people do not know that they have it.

If you have Candida, you might notice a white tongue in the morning. But the root of the problem is in your bowel. Your mouth is just one end of the same tube that your bowel is attached to. During the night you are not swallowing enough saliva and so the Candida appears as a layer on your tongue. A simple age old Candida test is to spit into a glass of water. If the spittle appears white and stays in a clump, you may have Candida. You might also notice itchy eyes, a flaky scalp, mood swings, cravings for sugar, fungal toes, and skin problems. These are all common signs of underlying Candida. Starve it by avoiding sugar. Cut sugar out of your diet completely. Increase your intake of good fats like salmon and avocados. Nourish your body with healthy whole foods and water.

Candida and the removal of imbalanced gut flora is one reason why I recommend to my clients to begin a gut health plan with colonic hydrotherapy. The second reason I recommend that you begin a gut health programme with colonics is that many people live with a bowel that is layered with impacted faecal matter. Most people are utterly unaware of it and I will discuss this later in more detail. This type of toxic matter is a breeding ground for unhealthy bacteria and of course it impedes the ability of good gut flora to penetrate the bowel wall and adhere so that it can populate and grow. Remember the reason why you are taking probiotics in the first place? It is so that the "seeds" of the new microbiome or good gut flora can reach the bowel and penetrate it, attach themselves to it and grow there. If you are investing in a good quality gut flora in the form of an oral probiotics make sure that they have the best opportunity to work. Clear the way for them.

I often wonder if the scientists who grow the gut flora cultures found in probiotics in laboratories have the opportunity to get up close and personal with thousands of real people and to see the contents of their bowel. I have spoken to many of the companies who produce probiotics as part of my own research to find the very best ones for my own programmes. I have never asked them this question but I doubt that they do. If they did, I believe they would agree with what I am telling you. My life has given me a unique perspective and I consider myself very privileged to have met many thousands of people and had the most candid of discussions with them about their gut health. On top of that I have seen first hand what ordinary people have inside their bowels. I can only say that it is shocking at times and again I will discuss this later. The point is that I am very aware of the value of these observations and it is because of them that I strongly recommend the above course of action to anyone who wishes to achieve a conclusive gut restoration plan.

Consider undergoing three treatments of colonic hydrotherapy to hydrate, soak and clear away the excess overgrowths of gut flora known as Candida that often line the entire bowel wall of many people. If you wish to boost your main immune organ, consider adding a liver coffee enema to your last treatment of colonic hydrotherapy. Candida is found to be a cause of inflammation in the body. As inflammation is an underlying cause of disease, give yourself the best opportunity to be well by making your liver stronger. Clean it out once in a while. It serves you well so give it back some tender loving care. If you notice dark circles under your eyes or you have acne, psoriasis or spots clearing the source of the issue makes common sense.

There is one more reason why I recommend you begin your gut health plan with colonic hydrotherapy. That is due to the fact that in 2018 scientists found that a toxin known as Alpha Synuclein was present inside the bowels of those who later developed Parkinson's Disease. This toxin sits in the appendix of the bowel and travels up the vagus nerve entering the brain. Alpha Synuclein is a toxin in your bowel that we now know to be harmful. Do not wait for science to find other ones. A few years ago they told us there were no toxins in the bowel and that cleaning it was a waste of time. When my mother began doing colonics many years ago, very few pharmacists had ever heard of probiotics and when she recommended them to clients, she was often told that their doctor said it was a load of nonsense. IBS was considered "all in your head too". Luckily science has caught up and many people are beginning to take responsibility for their own gut health and lifestyle choices. Cleanse your bowel today.

Now is the time to take steps to remove Candida, impacted faecal matter and toxins from the bowel with colonic hydrotherapy. If you are not suffering from a prohibitive gut problem like a hernia, colitis or Crohns disease and if you have not had recent surgery on your abdominal area, you should consider this treatment. Correct your diet in tandem with this and you are really doing yourself a great favour. Candida feeds on sugar. Candida creates the right conditions for an unhealthy body and the formation of disease. Cleansing your bowel with colonic hydrotherapy is a wise decision for anyone who is serious about gut health and wellness now and in the future.

2. Plant with Probiotics and Prebiotics

Science agrees that microbiome or probiotic research is the most progressive and exciting area of medicine right now says the Harvard Medical Journal. *"If you ask most medical experts about the hottest trends in health research, chances are they'll mention the microbiome. The term refers to the trillions of microbes living inside our bodies, known as the human microbiota. The vast majority of these bacteria, viruses, and fungi dwell deep within our intestines. These microbes help with digestion, make certain nutrients, and release substances that have wide-ranging health effects.*

"There's a complex interplay between the microbes in our intestines and most of the systems in our bodies, including the vascular, nervous, endocrine, and immune systems. All of these relationships are highly relevant to cardiovascular health," says Dr. Joanne Manson, professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School and chief of preventive medicine at Brigham and Women's Hospital. (2018).

What all of the above means is that the pharmaceutical community is putting a huge amount of investment in the research and marketing of oral probiotics. But some studies have emerged recently demonstrating that taking probiotics orally may not be the best way to get the probiotic into the bowel. That's because the probiotic taken orally must travel through the complex and lengthy digestive tract to reach the bowel, which is located at the other end of it. Oral probiotics therefore depend on *some* of the good gut flora surviving this journey and actually getting into the large intestine. We face a

pharmaceutical response to a wellness issue. Make them stronger, more powerful. But the focus should be on creating balance not over saturating the body. Too much of a good thing can be a bad thing.

"We often don't know if the probiotics are actually getting to the right place and changing microbial flora." (Manson .MD, 2018)

In a study carried out by Scientists at the University of London where they tested 8 well known probiotic drinks found in supermarkets and health shops to see whether products contained as many live bacteria as claimed on their labels and whether the bacteria survived in the stomach and if it then flourished in the gut, only one passed the test. (2018). The reason why oral probiotics sometimes don't reach the bowel intact is that they are digested and broken down by stomach acids.

Leading gut health doctors like Dr. Perlmutter already realise that the best way to harness the benefits of introducing microbiomes is by undergoing probiotic enemas in combination with taking oral probiotics. Probiotics and prebiotic foods which we ingest such as kefir, kombucha, sauerkraut, yogurt, kimchi and other cultures are excellent for helping to maintain a healthy gut but to balance gut flora in the first place, you need to take out the weeds, the old stuff, the imbalanced gut flora that lives in our bowel. To get your gut balanced after extreme medication or ongoing exposure to antibiotics, consider removing the physical overgrowth first. Introduce a course of probiotic enemas in tandem with the consumption of prebiotic foods and oral probiotics.

Dr. David Perlmutter a medical doctor who has devoted his life to researching and writing about microbiomes recommends probiotic enemas because they have benefitted so many of his patients. He says that probiotic enemas *"are the best way to introduce probiotic bacteria directly into the bowel"*. (Perlmutter, 2015)

3. Fertilise With the Food You Eat

A fundamental part of natural functional gut health is to correct the diet. It is not enough to remove years of toxic build up from the bowel wall and repopulate the colon with a fresh harvest of good gut flora if you are eating an unhealthy diet. Probiotics and bowel cleansing are just the start. For the results of a natural functional gut health programme to benefit the body, it is essential to bring the right foods into the body and avoid those that are not working or causing triggers in bowel and skin issues. For many people who suffer bouts of constipation, IBS and skin conditions, this is easier said than done.

There has never been so much awareness of food as there is now. The availability of gluten free, dairy free and allergy free foods should make it easier to look after the gut, in theory. The simple fact is that

not all foods affect all people in the same way. In general, it is advisable to choose a diet that is high in fresh fruit, vegetables, beans and grains because many of these foods are "prebiotic" foods which means they feed the probiotic good gut flora in the bowel. We should introduce some fermented foods too such as apple cider vinegar and kefir. We all know that. But many whole foods contain natural sugars (FODMAPS) which, strange as it might seem, can actually irritate the bowel for some people. That is why a food intolerance test is recommended. A food intolerance is not an allergy. It is a food that may cause subtle issues that have a cumulative deteriorating effect over time. It may not lead to hospitalisation or anaphylaxis but it can be the underlying cause of gut health issues and skin problems.

A food intolerance test will establish what foods are not working for you. Sometimes those foods will be perfectly healthy foods that you would never suspect. One of the most common food intolerants that comes up in tests at my clinic is lettuce. When I first began to practice, I found it hard to believe that so many Irish people had a problem with this healthy natural food but they have. And when they gave it up, many gut health issues seemed to resolve indicating that it has been causing a problem. It is experiences like this that make the

case for having a food intolerance test and the reason why I recommend it at my clinic. Never think that just because a food is good, it is good for you. Fruits and nuts can cause skin and gut health issues for some people just as much as gluten and dairy can.

For those who are not celiac but who have strong intolerance to gluten, a food intolerance test can be highly beneficial as it shows the level of intolerance needed to register a problem is lower than a medical diagnosis of celiac. If you suffer from leaky gut syndrome or Crohn's disease, it is wise to undergo allergy testing for celiac. But just because you are not a celiac, it does not mean that you do not have intolerance to gluten.

One reason why we think that gluten has become such a common intolerance is due to the fact that gluten is now genetically modified to make it a more resilient plant. This is done to protect wheat harvests against weather damage in countries where high quotas must be met to meet demand. The gluten becomes so tough that the body's digestive system cannot break it down. In years gone by wheat was different. That is why it is a wise idea to eat ancient grains instead of wheat where possible as part of a gut health plan.

We know that many fruits are now genetically modified to taste sweeter. And so fructose levels (especially in tropical fruits) can be relatively high compared to what they used to be in years gone by. Perhaps this is a reason why the sugars in some fruit for some people can aggravate the gut. The very best way to determine what is causing the problem is to undergo a food intolerance test which includes a test for fructose as well as the individual fruit. At Vitality Centre, we use FDA certified MED II equipment to carry out food intolerance testing.

When we eat processed foods, the body often cannot recognise the food as food. That is why fresh whole foods such as vegetables and grains are by far the best choice you can make for your overall health. They are naturally filling. They contain higher levels of water and phytonutrients and free radicals that have a whole host of gut health, skin and overall wellness benefits.

In the book of Essene, a book found in Israel in the 1940s and believed to be part of the original bible, there is a line that says. "Eat of your mother, if you wish to know your father." This means "Eat food that comes from mother earth if you wish to increase your

spiritual awareness and inner peace." Incidentally, the same book outlines an ancient form of colonic irrigation which again was undertaken by the Essenes for spiritual purity and enlightenment. You can find out what it says about colonics by searching for it online if you are interested. Essene means peace and it is quite true that when we eat a diet rich in fresh plant based whole foods that are free of hormones, additives, preservatives and animal protein, we induce a feeling of peace and bring nutrients that the body recognises as food into every living cell of the body.

Whole foods are live foods. They contain the enzymes that our body needs to break down and digest the food itself. They are prebiotic and they ferment within the gut to feed good gut flora. There are a million reasons to choose a diet that is plant based but now science is beginning to understand that whole foods form a key role in gut health because they are the foods that our good gut flora needs to flourish and grow. They make us feel full and they make us feel happy. But best of all, they make us healthier stronger and more peaceful right down to the cells that make up our bodies building blocks.

Gut health matters. Natural functional gut health is a revolutionary way of taking care of ourselves that can change our health and wellbeing futures. But the irony is that many of the principles that make up a Natural functional gut health plan are thousands of years old. The only new addition is that of probiotics and the only reason that we need them now is that we have imbalanced our own bodies through the use of anti-biotics. Needless to say, the time to start a Natural functional gut health programme is now because everybody lives in the same toxic world and everyone has been exposed to anti-biotics at one time or another. Whether we are involved in the medical community, the pharmaceutical community or whether we are wellbeing practitioners whose job it is to optimise health with the aim of preventing sickness later in life, we need to bring balance back to our bodies and our mind. It is time to work together. Sadly, some pharmaceutical marketing strategies are based on outdated thinking patterns that seek to "destroy the competition". Recently somebody has taken great time to spread press releases to newspaper that food intolerance testing is bad unless it is done by a doctor. But many doctors do not study nutrition. They are trained and prefer to help people who are already sick. Wellbeing practitioners are there to provide services to people who wish to optimise their wellness with

the aim of avoiding sickness. The fact is that everybody needs to restore, retrain, hydrate, replenish, replant and rebalance the bowel and gut naturally for lifelong optimal wellness and happiness.



"Fresh food is a gift from the gods. Why choose anything else to feed your body. Your body is also a gift from the gods." Frances Flannery

Make your own fermented food

Fermented foods are an excellent way to *maintain* good gut health over the course of a lifetime. As stated, if you already suffer from IBS, constipation, bloating, gas, mood swings, skin issues and Candida, taking fermented food should form just one part of a Natural functional gut health plan designed to cleanse, restore and replant your bowel first. Be very clear that the jars of pickles you can buy off the shelf at the supermarket are sometimes pickled using vinegar and not the natural fermentation process using live organisms, which means they don't contain probiotics. Start with small amounts of prebiotic food and let gut flora build up gradually or you might experience cramps and tummy aches as your bowel gets used to all this new life.

Below is a recipe from the book *Always Delicious* by Dr. Ludwig and Dawn Ludwig that can help get you started.

Spicy pickled vegetables (escabeche)

These spicy pickles are reminiscent of the Mediterranean and Latin American culinary technique known as escabeche. This recipe leaves out the sugar. Traditionally, the larger vegetables would be lightly cooked before pickling, but we prefer to use a quick fermentation method and leave the vegetables a bit crisp instead.

- 2 cups filtered water
- 1 to 1-1/4 tablespoons sea salt
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar

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- 1 jalapeño or a few small hot chills (or to taste), sliced
 - 1 large carrot cut into 1/4-inch-thick rounds or diagonal slices
 - 1 to 2 cups chopped cauliflower or small cauliflower florets
 - 3 small stalks celery (use only small inner stalks from the heart), cut into 1-inch-long sticks
 - 1 bay leaf
 - 1 cabbage leaf, rinsed

Warm the water (no need to boil). Stir in the sea salt until it dissolves completely. Set aside to cool (use this time to cut the vegetables). Add the vinegar just before using. The brine can be made ahead of time and stored in a sealed glass jar on the counter to use when ready to pickle.

Set a quart-size canning jar in the sink and fill it with boiling water to sterilize. Empty the jar and tightly pack the vegetables and bay leaf inside to within 1 to 2 inches from the top of the jar. Pour the brine over the vegetables to fill the jar to within 1 inch from the top. Wedge the cabbage leaf over the top of the vegetables and tuck it around the edges to hold the vegetables beneath the liquid.

Set jar on the counter and cover with a fermentation lid.

(Alternatively, use a standard lid and loosen it a bit each day for the first few days, then every other day, to allow gasses to escape.) Let pickle for three to five days, depending on the indoor temperature. Check the taste after a couple of days, using clean utensils.

Vegetables will pickle faster in warmer climates. Make sure the vegetables stay packed beneath the level of the liquid and add salted water (2 teaspoons sea salt dissolved in 1 cup warm filtered water) as needed.

When the vegetables are pickled to your liking, seal the jar with a regular lid and refrigerate. Vegetables will continue to slowly pickle in the refrigerator. They will keep for about one month. Taste for saltiness before serving and, if desired, rinse gently to remove excess salt.

Calories: 1 (per 1 tablespoon)

Carbohydrate: 0 g

Protein: 0 g

Fat: 0 g (Ludwig, 2018)

"Nothing will benefit human health and increase chances of survival for life on earth as much as the evolution to a vegetarian diet."

Albert Einstein

4. Protect By Reducing Toxic Load

In everyday life we are all faced with toxins. They are in the air we breathe and they are in the food we eat. Minimising our consumption of them should be everyone's concern. As a holistic skin practitioner, I work with clients to create better skin naturally. The skin is a fascinating organ. It is a reflection of our inner body. If it is dry our entire body is dry. If it is dull, we are probably stressed and tired or have been eating a poor diet. When there are excess toxins circulating within the bowel and liver and not getting out, the skin attempts to rid the body of them. The result is spots, acne, rosacea and other skin problems. After all the skin is our biggest organ and it is just a mirror of our other organs.

The analogy that I use for why the gut is implicated in skin problems is that of a house. Imagine that you have a beautiful house and that your house is your body. In your house there is a bathroom. Imagine this to be your skin. Normally your bathroom is clean and fresh and smells of lavender and essential oils. But one day you notice that there is some revolting matter accumulating in the toilet. It won't flush away no matter what product you put into the toilet. It is making a pong and is ruining your enjoyment of your home. Everyone who visits your home is confronted with this unpleasant thing. The problem is embarrassing and distressing. You begin to get very upset and feel down about this problem.

There are so many products that promise to clear the problem. Some are cheap and some are expensive. You begin to believe that if you buy the most expensive ones that they will work better. There are great reviews online after all. So you spend some time and get an impressive demonstration from the product company. But the result is not much better.

After trying every product that promises to clear the problem, you are disappointed and you have wasted more money than you intended to spend. (Anyone who has spots on their skin that is caused by toxicity and imbalances in their gut will be familiar with the links between this situation and your experiences with skin products.)

So how do you get the results you want? What is the answer? By now you are willing to try anything. So you pick up the phone and call a professional plumber. Surprisingly, he is not interested in putting more products into your toilet at all or selling you products. Instead, he goes to the source of the problem. He clears out the drains where the real problem is. Soon your bathroom is a haven of paradise again. It smells delightful and sparkles with pristine cleanliness. The professional plumber tells you that you should clear out your drains every few years because it was the build up from the septic tank at the bottom of your garden that was the real cause of the problem. You would never have thought of that yourself. He laughs when you tell him how much you spent on products in an attempt to clear the problem by putting chemicals down your toilet.

Sometimes I use this story to describe to my clients why spots on their face are ultimately caused by imbalances and toxicity in their bowel and liver. When clients tell me how much money they have spent on product to clear their skin, I sometimes cannot believe it. If you have spots on your skin that are caused by toxins and imbalances in your bowel and liver no topical product will remove it. You need to cleanse the source of the issue. You need to introduce and rebalance gut flora in the form of oral probiotics and probiotic enemas and you need to identify the triggers in the foods you are eating.

When this is done in combination with good quality skincare the results can be exceptional. In my opinion, it is wise to invest in a clean body and avoid excessively expensive skin creams if they are not working for you. In my early career I worked for Brown Thomas as part of the marketing team. It is fascinating to see skin products arrive in a raw state before the marketing magic is applied to them. This experience has always stayed with me and I refuse to believe that there is a miracle cream on the market that can achieve what a clean body and a good diet combined with a clean skincare routine can do for skin.

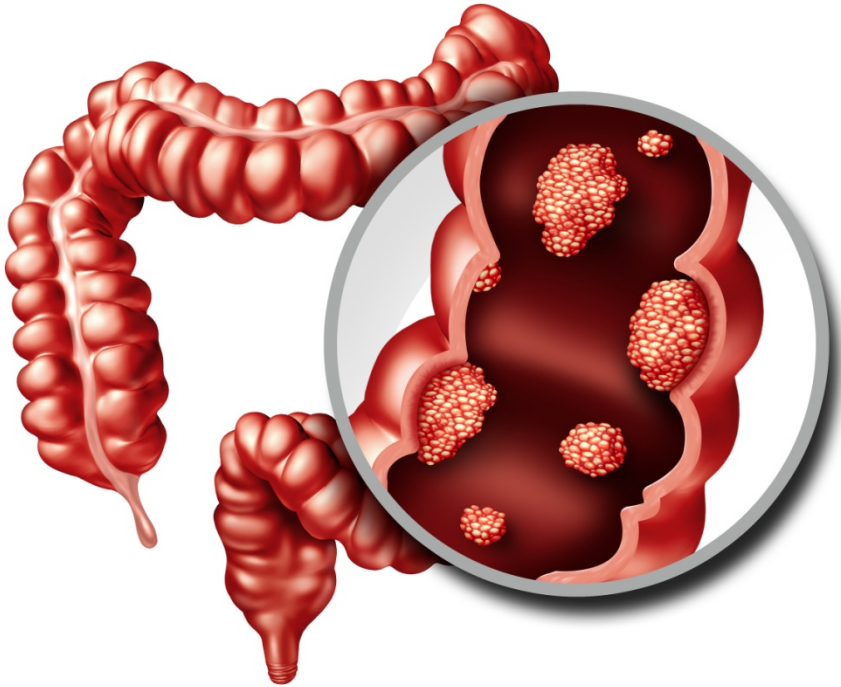
That is not to say that what you put on your skin does not matter. It certainly does. That is why I travel all over Europe to source holistic products for Vitality Centres holistic facial treatments. I truly believe that a clean skincare routine that minimises the use of parabens, is free of toxic chemicals, SLS, phthalates, artificial colours, fragrances and that is made of good quality natural ingredients is the best thing you can apply to your skin.

What you put on your skin really does matter. And when it comes to gut health, it is a major part of protecting your body from parabens and toxins. This is due to the skin's ability to take in the products that are applied to it, a process known as transdermal absorption. When you apply a product topically, some of it gets into your bloodstream. When you have a treatment that opens the dermis such as microdermabrasion, facials and peels, transdermal absorption is increased by up to 1000%. You can make good use of this by seeking out ingredients that are balancing to your body and to your skin. But if you use toxic skin products those can contribute to further toxicity and imbalance in your gut flora eventually.

Right now there are a number of skin companies providing "probiotic" skincare. What this means is that the ingredients are "gut friendly". It is not so easy to find vegan and organic skin products which is why I source most of the ones that I sell in my clinic from Switzerland where there is and has been for decades a high level of awareness about the fundamentals of natural detoxification and its relationship to health and wellbeing. For years Swiss doctors have been creating skincare that aims to work in harmony with the body and take into account the transdermal absorption of products. When you achieve a balanced body and good health, protect it by being mindful about what product you apply to your skin. If you have skin problems that are not going away think of the analogy of the bathroom and clear the source first. When my skin is clean and healthy, I certainly feel happier and judging by what women now spend on products I believe that goes for many other people out there too.

Your Gut Is Like a Garden

To understand why probiotic enemas and oral probiotics play such a key role in Natural functional gut health, it is useful to use the analogy of *your gut as a garden*. This image will help you to immediately understand the basics of probiotics and how they relate to the bowel. So for a moment just imagine that inside your bowel there is a microscopic garden. Within the garden, there are microscopic plants of many varieties. Each plant has a different function. Everything in the garden grows well.



"Gut flora is like a garden that grows inside your bowel. That is why "De-weeding" the gut garden by cleansing before planting new seeds in the form of probiotics, makes sense." Frances Flannery

Natures plan is that each plant balances the other so that no one single plant can take over. This is a called symbiosis in biology and it refers to all plant life including the microscopic microbiome in your bowel and the plants that grow in your garden. According to Dr. David

Perlmutter, a medical doctor who has dedicated his life to the study of gut health and microbes in the fight against neurological disorders such as ADHD, anxiety, depression, dementia, Parkinson's, autism and Alzheimer's disease, a high percentage of babies already have imbalanced gut flora at birth.

Just how could that be you might ask? It is due to the fact that imbalanced gut flora is directly linked to the use of anti-biotics to fight disease over the last century. *"In the last century, it seems we've tried to shut nature out in a lot of ways, believing it harbours germs and deadly pathogens. After Alexander Fleming discovered penicillin, we as a society got stuck on the germ theory of disease."* (Perlmutter, D. 2011)

I hope that we do not try to "shut nature out" again by ignoring the value that fresh purified water can bring to our overall gut health and wellbeing. Let me create a picture in your mind to help you to understand the concept of how anti-biotics and probiotic affect your gut and what goes on in your bowel when you take them. Imagine a beautiful farm with rich crops growing in the fields. One day the farmer notices that there is a weed infestation spreading rapidly all over the farm his crop. So what does he do? Well he has two options.

He could weed the entire farm to remove just the plants that are overgrowing and causing the issues. That would require doing some unpleasant manual labour and would take a really long time. He would need to don some gloves and get a wheel barrow out of the shed. After he was finished, he would need to rake up the soil and he could then plant new seeds to restore natural balance of plant biosis within the fields. That is how things were done for thousands of years. But in recent times new options have come to his attention. There appears to be a short cut. He could hire a plane and spray weed killer on the entire farm, aware that it won't just kill the plant that is causing the problem but it will kill all the plants. In our modern world, we often prefer short cuts too when it comes to our health but just like the farmer who spray his farm the chemical in the medications that we put into our bodies are creating just as many problems as they are curing. Anti-biotics are used in the body to fight infections caused by various strains of bacteria somewhere in the body. They work in a similar way to the weed killer just mentioned that is sprayed on the entire farm to kill just one plant that has become problematic. As mentioned anti-biotics do not discriminate. Just like weed killer kills all the plants in the garden, anti-biotics kill all of the gut flora bacteria in your body, good and bad.

Because of this, it is estimated that almost everyone has imbalanced gut flora. Almost everyone has been exposed to anti-biotics or other gut flora disturbing medication, at least once in their lives. As stated many babies are now born with imbalanced gut flora. So if everyone has imbalanced gut flora and because imbalanced gut flora can be linked to inflammation which is implicated in conditions as diverse as obesity, diabetes, cancer, depression, autism, asthma, arthritis, coronary artery disease, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's disease, it is time that clearing away bad unhealthy gut flora (like Candida) and replanting good gut flora became everyone priority. It is time that we recognised this to be as fundamental to people's daily health care as brushing their teeth and visiting the dentist regularly.

Probiotics and Prebiotics : Can Colonics Wash Away Good Gut Flora?

It might be hard to believe today with all that modern science has learned about gut flora and the bowel that just two decades ago, an attempt was made to pin the epidemic of global imbalanced gut flora on colonic irrigation. Wow, that would mean that everyone in the

western world (including new born babies) somehow managed to find the opportunity to have colonic irrigation. "*Unfortunately, we as a society have reached a place where we reflexively seek culprits to blame for our health challenges.*" (Perlmutter, 2011) So let us clear this matter up once and for all. The trillions of microbiomes and good gut flora that live in your bowel have developed over millions of years to exist perfectly in a watery environment such as your bowel and that is the habitat that suits them best. That is where they thrive and where they flourish.

But where in the bowel does gut flora *actually* live. Gut flora lives in deep pockets of the mucosal layer of the bowel wall called lumen which means it lives deep inside the bowel wall and is perfectly adapted to staying put in a constantly moving and changing environment. After all, the bowel is just that. The bowel is designed to keep gut flora there in place despite its constant movement and churning waste matter along. It has a variety of muscular actions for achieving this. One motion of the bowel wall moves the matter forward and is called peristalsis. One moves it back and that is called anti-peristalsis. One creates a movement like a pendulum. If a colonic could wash gut flora away, this really would be a problem since the main function of the bowel is to drain water from faecal matter so that it can become solid and ready for excretion. The suggestion that water could disturb gut flora tells a lot more about the education level of the person who suggested it than it does about anything else. It is a little bit like suggesting that watering your flowers and plants should be avoided for fear of washing them away. It is now estimated

that 90% of people have imbalanced gut flora and many are born that way. Dr. Michael Gershon is the doctor who discovered the revolutionary gut brain connection which sparked off the ground breaking microbiome revolution and interest in the gut, says that gut flora live in "the array of defensive cells that reside in the loose connective tissue under the lining of the colon". (Gershon, 1998)

So gut flora live under the bowel wall. If gut flora can survive bouts of diarrhoea, it can certainly survive a colonic. Have you ever seen those self cleaning bathrooms on some streets in large cities? There is an urban legend which tells the story of someone getting trapped inside one of those things and getting an impromptu shower as the entire toilet washes itself from the inside out after every use. Diarrhoea happens in much the same way. When the bowel identifies a potentially harmful bacteria trying to "get under its skin", it creates an inner flush. Any germ that is sufficiently attached to the bowel wall is washed away as the bowel wall cleanses itself from the inside out to ensure this happens. Diarrhoea is the bowels way of ejecting unwanted bacterial visitors who try to penetrate the deep mucosal layer where good gut flora lives. In essence, the body is trying to give itself a flush. So if gut flora can survive this, it can certainly survive the introduction of fresh clean filtered water as is the case during colonics. Colonics help the bowel to remove away toxins (like the one that causes Parkinson's Disease) and bad gut bacteria like Candida. Long before the pharmaceutical industry turned its eyes to the marketing and manufacture of probiotics (forecasted to reach about 64.02 billion dollars by 2022), Natural functional gut health

practitioners and colon hydrotherapist have been recommending the use of probiotics during and after treatments to heal, restore and balance the bowel.



"Water is life. If water could disturb the bowel, we really would be in trouble, since the removal and management of water is the bowels main function." Frances Flannery

Candida: the thistle of the guts garden

Because Candida is so important, I am going to tell you a bit more about it. Within your bowel, there are a variety of microscopic gut flora plants growing in harmony. Each one has a different but very specialised function within the eco-system of your gut. One of these gut flora plants is called Candida. It is not a bad thing although it has a bad name for a good reason. In its balanced state, it is perfectly harmless and has a very important role to play in gut and bowel health.

Its function is to remove heavy metal toxins from the body and to carry them to the bowel for elimination. Heavy metal toxins are found in tinned food and in water. They are also present in mercury dental fillings. These heavy metals are not to be confused with essential trace minerals such as zinc, copper, magnesium, calcium and iron which have very important *and* complex enzymatic reactions that protect our cells from invasions by free radicals and have various other roles to play in the health of the gut and bowel.



"Candida can be seen leaving the bowel in the form of white matter that resembles cotton wool. Itchy eyes and a white tongue are signs of Candida." Frances Flannery

When amalgam dental fillings containing mercury are present, it is often found that increased levels of Candida overgrowths in the gut are also present. If you notice a taste of metal in your mouth, you might also notice a white tongue in the morning or experience the signs of Candida overgrowth i.e. brain fog, mood swings, decreased immunity, gut health issues, skin rashes and itchy eyes.

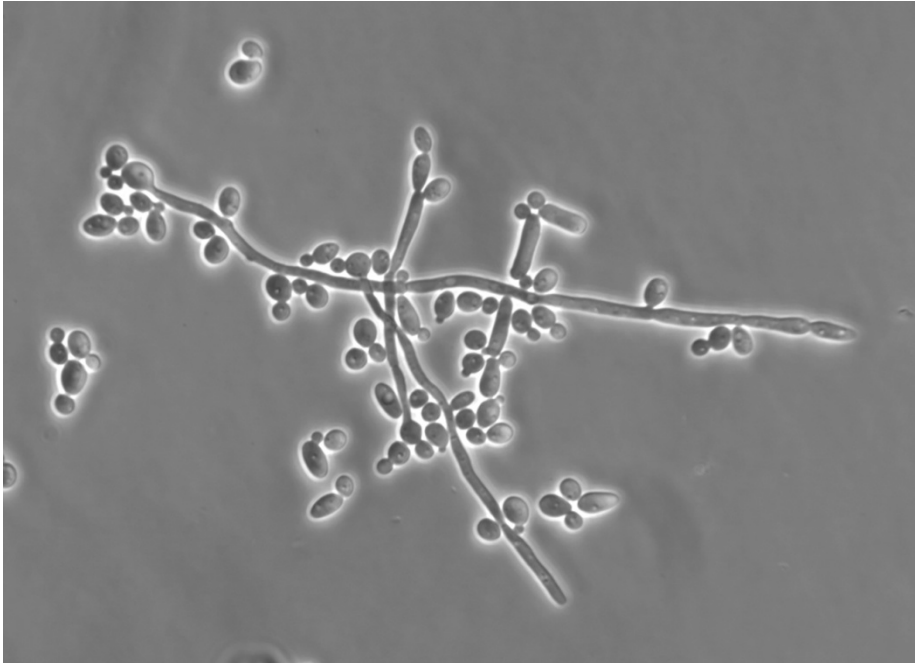
The increase in Candida is said to be an attempt by the body to carry the extra metals from being released by mercury fillings to your bowel for excretion. But since the metals leak constantly more and more Candida is stimulated. That is just one reason why it is optimal to choose non mercury fillings. These are now standard practice in many countries including Japan and Australia, where the use of mercury in fillings is no longer legal. Mercury fillings continuously release mercury vapour, the most poisonous, naturally occurring, non-radioactive substance on earth. Mercury contributes to over 100 health issues, including heart disease, chronic fatigue, depression, memory loss and autism. Having completed a post graduate degree in business and ebusiness in 2010 I decided to undertake some medical training. Dental nursing seemed to me a valuable choice since the practice of running a dental surgery offers similarities to running the type of holistic clinic that I envisaged. During my studies I came across information about mercury fillings that is truly perplexing. When a mercury filling is in your mouth it is not considered toxic. But before it goes into your mouth, it is considered toxic and if the tooth containing the mercury filling is extracted both the tooth and the filling it contains are considered toxic. Have your mercury fillings replaced if you have not already done so.

Since the job of the colon is to absorb water, gut flora must be suited to thriving within a watery environment. Imagine how coral reef grows on rocks deep under the ocean by attaching itself and you get a basic understand of how gut flora grows and adheres to the deepest parts of underneath the bowel walls mucosal layer.

As stated, during colonic hydrotherapy, excess Candida can be seen leaving the bowel in the form of white matter which resembles small pieces of cotton wool. This is thought to be the excess of the overgrown Candida colonies that break away. Remember that Candida is or should be a microscopic organism like all gut flora. Therefore you would not expect it to be clearly visible to the naked eye, never mind to see big chunks of it coming off the bowel wall. If you see *any* Candida, you know that it is heavily overgrown in the first place. Large pieces of Candida are regularly and clearly seen leaving the bowel during colonic hydrotherapy. This means that many Irish people are walking around with abnormally high levels of Candida in their bowel, an advanced sign of imbalanced gut flora. I repeat Candida leads to inflammation and inflammation is found to be underlying in all sorts of diseases.

Candida is resilient and strong because its function is to deal with the removal of heavy metal toxins from the body as discussed. No lightweights need apply for the role of escorting heavy metal toxins such as copper, mercury and other mineral metals out of the body.

If Candida was a person, I think he would be a tough guy who works on an oil rig in the north sea. He has no fear and he gets on with his job no matter what is happening around him. Do not get into his way. So tough is Candida that when Candida comes into contact with an anti-biotic (unlike all the other micro flora in the bowel) it does not die. For a while it lies dormant. But eventually it starts to grow again. Only this time, there are no other microbiomes to compete with it because they have been killed off by the anti-bacterial. With no other organisms to compete with it very quickly flourishes. And this is when it becomes a problem. Remove Candida by cleansing the bowel and starving it of sugar. Introduce probiotics to create competition and natural symbiosis in the gut. That is the most natural way to address Candida overgrowths in your body. Candida is a fungus and soon it lines the entire bowel. From there it spreads into the intestines and then on to every part of the digestive tract.



"Those who have Candida will notice a white tongue in the morning, itchy eyes and skin, brain fog, cravings for sugar, fatigue and mood swings. Balance your gut garden by removing Candida just like de-weeding outdoors." Frances Flannery

"The problem with Candida is that it causes inflammation in the body and inflammation is found to be underlying in a wide variety of diseases. Colonics are needed to cleanse it away." Frances Flannery

The problem with Candida is that it causes inflammation in the body and inflammation is found to be underlying in many diseases including cancer. That is why balancing Candida is so important. Imbalanced Candida causes mood swings, brain fog, depression, itchy eyes and scalp. If you have ongoing fungal infections on toes or a white tongue in the morning, then Candida is very likely the underlying cause and your focus should be on correcting this. Candida feeds on sugar. It will make you crave sugar constantly.

That is why it is valuable to reduce sugar consumption or in some extreme cases, to put the body into ketosis by introducing a healthy plant based low sugar diet. But there are other approaches that can assist in the elimination of Candida. Let's go back to the analogy of the gardener who spots a weed taking over his garden. What should he do? Put on gloves and manually pull out the overgrown weed out by its roots. This is the equivalent of removing Candida with colonic hydrotherapy. Of course does not leave the job at that. Next he will

introduce new seeds into the garden so that he can cultivate the flowers and plants that he wants to grow. My grandmother was an avid gardener. She often won prizes for the natural havens of paradise that she created outdoors. Like any gardener of her era, she used the principles of natural symbiosis, which means balancing one plant or microbiome with another to create a garden that regulates itself against weeds and infestations naturally. The principle of creating symbiosis within the gut works in a similar way. It means more than just taking oral probiotics though which are important and have a place. I am going to say it once again. Consider removing the colonies of imbalanced gut flora physically with colonic hydrotherapy. Do this along side a low sugar diet and you will help to starve the food supply of bad gut flora. Introduce far infra red treatments and you make the temperature wrong for bad gut flora because fungal growths prefer your body temperature to stay at 37 degrees Celsius or less. So if you raise core body temperature though the use of a Biomat which radiates far infra red heat, you the conditions wrong for Candida to thrive. Cardiovascular exercise does this naturally. Try to increase your heart rate regularly with exercise. Think of your body as a garden and make the conditions wrong for disease and inflammation to thrive.

The gut brain connection

In the past number of decades, science has come to understand and recognise that the bowel produces a large proportion of the body's main happiness hormone known as serotonin. Serotonin is the hormone which is responsible for how happy we feel. It is often called "The Feel Good Hormone". When depression is present, low serotonin levels are present.

Serotonin is a stimulant. It is thought that the reason why the bowel produces so much serotonin is to stimulate the muscular action of this large organ to move faecal matter along its five foot tube. Faecal matter moves along the bowel by rolling against the absorbent mucosal wall repeatedly.

Regardless of the reason why the bowel produces serotonin, one thing has become very clear. When the bowel is impacted, mood is affected. When constipation is present, low mood is present. It has been suggested that the dilated bowel which is fully compacted with hardened faecal matter cannot or does not produce as much serotonin as normal.

It has certainly been reported by those who undergo colonic hydrotherapy that feeling of relief and happiness increases post treatment. Many people walk around with massive amounts of impacted faecal matter in their colon feeling angry and irritated at the world with no idea why. They certainly do not connect their rage to their constipation. Why would they? Who would think that these two things are connected? But they appear to be.

When you understand the link between the bowel, depression and serotonin you may not be surprised to find that a person who has not gone the bathroom for a few days can be extremely irritated and emotional. I have experienced this first hand. The very first question that should come into the mind of someone who suffers from gut health issues and suddenly feels the onset of "rage" should be "*When was the last time my bowel moved? Do I feel bloated?*" Look for these links and you may very well find them. Do you know people who abuse their bodies with alcohol and drugs for days at festivals and then wonder why they feel suicidal afterwards? I have attended mental health seminars where people have talked about friends who took their own lives after binging on drugs. Perhaps the downer was just too much to bear. Newsflash. If you take recreational drugs you

need to be aware that they cause major depletions in serotonin in your body and that will make you feel very depressed. If you have just spent a weekend at a music festival it is likely that you will have used up all your serotonin by taking drugs, ingested mega amounts of toxins, eaten nothing but junk food, drank plenty of alcohol, eaten sugar because you were hung-over and struggling with blood sugar imbalances the next day, hardly slept, you will be depressed. If you intend to do this to your body, be sure to account for the fact that you are creating a perfect recipe for bad mental health, serotonin depletion and imbalanced blood sugars.

How Hard Do You Party?

Do you take recreational drugs like cocaine, ketamine or mdma? Do you smoke or take prescription medication like Valium regularly? Do you drink alcohol excessively? Why do I ask? Oh no reason other than the fact that Ireland has an insanely high number of alcohol and drug abuser according the Global Drugs Survey 2016.

Among the key findings were:

- 9.3% of respondents reported ever buying drugs off the ‘dark net’; this represents an increase on previous years.
- MDMA, cannabis, new or novel substances and LSD were the drugs most commonly bought.

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- Synthetic cannabinoids (SCs) were more likely to lead to emergency medical treatment than any other drug.
 - One in eight of those using weekly or more often reported seeking emergency medical treatment.
 - The overall risk of seeking emergency medical treatment when using SCs was found to be 30 times greater than when using 'natural cannabis'.
 - In terms of acute harms caused by alcohol, at 2.2% each, Ireland and Norway came in joint second to Scotland, where 2.4% of drinkers reported seeking emergency medical treatment following drinking alcohol.
 - Globally, Ireland had the second highest proportion of people who would like to drink less alcohol (43.4%).
 - While globally the mean price for high potency herbal cannabis was €12.48, in Ireland it was €23. (2016)

If you know that it is time to take your alcohol and drug use in hand, then consider doing a full body cleanse such as *The Party Lifestyle Detox*. This programme is a physical detox designed to remove the cellular toxins that cause ongoing drug, alcohol and even sugar cravings long after you have stopped consuming the substance in question. This cleanse is designed to rejuvenate and revive party people both mentally and physically after a period of exposure to chemical toxins by clearing the main detoxification organs, the liver,

colon and the lymphatic system. Let me be clear that I am not an addiction councillor. If you need to visit a therapist in tandem with a physical detox, that is recommended. What this programme does is remove physical toxins like the ones described above.

An essential step in restoring one's ability to enjoy life after a heavy period of recreational drug or alcohol use is physical detoxification of the main eliminatory organs, the liver, colon, and lymphatic system. If you have finished treatment, have been burning the candle at both ends for a while or if you just struggle with cravings and wish to remove these harmful behaviours from your life, begin by ridding your cells of the built up chemicals that reside there. It is a fact that taking chemicals like drugs and drinking alcohol lead to deep levels of built up toxicity in your body. Your liver needs a break. It needs time to heal and recover. This programme can be a valuable addition to an overall drug or alcohol rehab program as it guides you through a physical detoxification of the liver, lymph and colon and flushes out historic built up drug and alcohol toxins. But most of the people who chose to undergo this programme are what I call ordinary *everyday party people*. Please note you must be drug or alcohol free for at least 48 hours before this programme can be undertaken.

Drug and alcohol toxins residues lodge themselves inside the fatty tissues of the body where they can be involved in the triggering of more cravings. This can keep you wanting to go back on drugs even years after drug abuse or alcohol consumption has stopped. The deep body cellular toxins can also fog up and slow down thinking causing confusion, insomnia, fatigue, depression and anxiety. When the toxins are fully flushed out you will experience a brighter outlook, better sense of taste and smell, more energy, increased mood, relaxation, peace and less cravings. There is a physical scientific link between mood and the gut. *Depression and anxiety are caused by a variety of factors that most definitely include the state and function of the gut and its inhabitants*, according to Dr. David Perlmutter in his best-selling book, 'Brain Maker'. When the gut is impacted and microbiomes are imbalanced and out of sync, hormonal, immunological and neuronal functions are not right either. And that means that the brains ability to handle emotions is affected.

I have met the most beautiful, creative and gifted people who take drugs regularly. There does not seem to be any reason for it. I admit that it does not make sense to me. But they will tell you straight up that they have no intention of giving up taking recreational drugs for

one simple reason and that is that they just love using drugs. These people are often highly successful intelligent and wonderful in many ways. Some have children and are pillars of society in many ways. They can afford to take drugs. They are not living on the street or in drug outreach programmes. It is with those people in mind that I have developed the "Party Lifestyle Cleanse" protocol. I hope that someday they will see that drugs create experiences that are not real. Life might appear to move more intensely and be more exciting for a period of time. People might seem more glamorous, more interesting, more impressive. You might feel more confident too and more connected to others. You might not have the same inhibitions that you normally have the same heartbreaking fear of opening up to others. People speak more confidently and are more self assured. Reality is altered. But reality is reality. And in the end we all have to come back down to reality. It might not be pretty but at least it is real. There is a reason why you have feelings. They are there to guide you on your journey through life. They are *your* feelings. Why on earth would you want to change them to make yourself into someone that *other people* can accept? The only person that needs to accept you is *you*. That is just my opinion for all it is worth. I am not a drug councillor. Therefore, one thing that you will not hear when you

come into my clinic is me preaching at you about your lifestyle choices. But I will say this. If you willingly ingest toxins in the form of drugs or excessive levels of alcohol and you know what they are doing to you body, then that is your choice. Nobody can stop you only you. If you have decided to expose your body to these toxins then the least you can do is to remove those toxins from your main eliminatory organs by detoxing physically regularly. Abstain from those substances for long enough for your body to recover. Your liver is the organ that needs the most support if this information is relevant to you. I am talking to the festival go-ers, the electronic music fans, the musicians, the ravers and the mums who mean to have a glass but end up having a bottle of wine or two when the kids have gone to bed. Make yourself a promise to give your body a break for a while. Do a detox. Look at yourself in the mirror and say "*I like me and I am going to do this for me*". Cleanse your liver and clear your head. It will be the best thing you will ever do for yourself. Mindfulness will follow if you choose to meditate but in order to get from toxic to Zen; you must create a clean body.

If you wish to really improve your mental health, follow this cleanse up with regular cardiovascular exercise and try some gentle and kind

self affirmations. Include any activity that increases your heart rate to about 75% - 85% of your maximum heart rate. You can determine your MHR by a simple equation. Just subtract your age from the number 220. If you are 50 years old, subtract 50 from 220 and your MHR is 170. This is the maximum number of times that you should aim for your heart to beat per minute during exercise. Find 75% of this number then use a heart rate monitor to keep track of it during your exercise time.

Exercise is a fantastic way to help your body to detox as it increases your ability to sweat. It also increases circulation and blood flow to remove toxins. All that jumping around makes your bowel muscles work too and so it keep things moving. Making time to do cardiovascular activity keeps your respiratory system healthy. Begin gently if you are unfit and do a body cleanse with liver coffee enemas to kick start weight loss, hydrate your organs, clear your liver and to get you off alcohol and nicotine. You can improve your wellbeing with the addition of moderate exercise. Even twenty minutes a day makes a huge difference. Start slow and increase the load incrementally as you improve. Remember you will be more motivated to keep to your exercise programme and have better energy if you clear away the old

toxins in your body before you start. When a person hits a weight loss brick wall, they often undergo a cleanse with colonics. This seems to "reset" their metabolism and many clients have reported that they lose inches and drop pounds in the days and weeks afterwards.

Professional body builders and athletes often undergo a full body cleanse to remove the build up of cortisol and protein that results from eating a meat based diet, reducing fibre, increasing exercise in preparation for body building tournaments. Those body builders and athletes who fail to remove toxins will suffer from constipation, acne, fatigue and mood swings as the circulating chemicals try to exit the body through other channels. They will experience the signs of premature aging as free radicals and anti-oxidants build up in the body and eat away at the skin causing fine lines and wrinkles. Cortisol is a stress hormone that is produced when physical exertion is put on the body. High levels of cortisol inhibit the production of testosterone and human growth hormone in the body. This means that all your hard work in the gym may be wasted if you are creating too much stress and it is being stored in your body. A second reason why cleansing the liver of cortisol is essential for body builders or gym goers is that collagen is needed for muscle and good skin. Cortisol does

not help collagen production. If too much cortisol is produced, excess weight gain will result and losing this weight will be almost impossible. A number of years back I gained my exercise certification. It took a year and during that time I pushed myself very hard in the gym. For a while I had the body of my dreams but cortisol soon began to build up and burn out soon followed. I was fascinated by the links between hormonal build up in the body, exercise and liver cleansing. In short, if you are seeking long term results be sure to switch up your exercise programme once in a while. Alternate HIIT with what I like to call "Anti-cortisol Resistance Training". This is a technique that I recommend to body builders during off season training. It is designed to help keep your body free of cortisol but enable you to continue exercising and lifting. When you do this you are giving your body a chance to let go of cortisol. Firstly, change your music to something "Zen". Slow down your lifting so that you go through and feel every part of the exercise. Do your work out in slow motion and aim to achieve twice or three times slower than you normally would. Breathe and do no more than eight to twelve repetitions. In between movements, sit still and breathe (in a lotus position. Go on try it.) and monitor your heart rate. Rest until you feel your heart rate coming back to a stable even pace. This will limit the amount of cortisol

produced during lifting sessions. In between each set, introduce a sun salutation to stretch out muscles and let the body calm down. In tandem with this, consider doing three colonics with a liver coffee enema. Change your diet for a while to include lots of prebiotic wholefood fiber like vegetables, fruits and oily fish. When you restrict carbohydrates your bowel is starved of the food that feeds the gut flora and microbiome who live there. Wholefoods feed gut flora. As discussed earlier, these are known as prebiotic foods. They include fermented foods like kefir and kimchi. In this book you will find a recipe to make your own fermented recipe. Try it. Take a good quality probiotic orally and do a probiotic enema to restore gut flora directly into the bowel. Word to the wise, if you have been restricting fiber you need to start by eating a small amount of prebiotic food at a time. Start gently or you will experience belly and gut aches as the good gut flora multiplies. Less is more especially when starting out. Take some fish oils too for your skin. Drink three litres of water a day. Stretch your muscles so that that they can repair and renew. Yoga is great and Pilates helps to strengthen the small muscle groups that support your bigger muscles. Are you suffering from mood swings? If so, it is likely that your gut is not happy. If you have been eating a high protein diet that consists of eating lean protein like chicken up to

four times a day and nothing else for a few weeks, don't be surprised if your bowel is completely compacted with dried up faecal matter. This is not OK. If you think it is then you have been poorly informed. Any trainer who is recommended this type of diet to their clients and who is not aware of the impact that it has on their gut health needs to go back to college and start over. Have a cleanse immediately. Vitamin C is good for your bowel function but it is not enough. You need colonics because the stuff that is inside you now is hardened up and adhered to the bowel wall. If you want to see what it looks like, do a search for mucoid plaque. It is a hard plaque that develops on the bowel wall over time. If left in place it inhibits the movement of the bowel, causes auto-intoxification and is a breeding ground for bad gut flora like Candida. It is toxic and it needs to come out. If you think that a solution you take orally will remove it, think again. I have seen people who didn't think they were impacted release so much on their first colonic that they are convinced to do another one only to find that more comes out on the next treatment. And on the third one, even more comes away. The reason for this is that the matter that is hard and dry inside the bowel becomes soaked and moistened on the first treatment. Now it is loose. On the next treatment some more hardened matter that was on the bowel wall breaks off. And on

the third treatment, even more. These are the people whose lives are changed by a total body cleanse. When they see what is inside their body, they vow never again to let things get so clogged up. Restrictive diets that body builders sometimes undergo can have devastating effects on long-term health. Urinary infections are common when the bowel is backed up due to toxins trying to escape via the kidneys. World leading coaches, winning athletes and bodybuilders always recommend liver coffee enemas and colonic cleansing programmes to return their bodies to homeostasis after a period of competitions and shows. If your body is your business, you need to invest in its long term performance, not just its performance for the next competition. Most body builders become trainers themselves or sell health products when they give up competitions. So practice what you preach now and start looking after your body for the long term by keeping it clean and healthy on the inside. If you push your body to the extreme make sure to get it clean afterwards so that you can have a long and health career.

"An essential step after a period of drug, alcohol or a restrictive high protein diet is to physically detox the liver, colon and lymphatic system." Frances Flannery

When the gut is impacted and gut flora is imbalanced and out of sync, hormonal, immunological and neuronal functions are not right either. And that means that the brains ability to handle emotions is affected. Very often people who suffer from IBS or constipation can, if they make a conscious effort to do so, link the onset of feeling negative to the onset of constipation, bloating and IBS episodes. If you are suffering from anxiety and you have gut health issues like constipation or IBS, consider keeping a notebook of your bowel movements or better still consider undergoing a course of natural functional gut health treatments such as colonic hydrotherapy, probiotic implants and food intolerance testing.

And if you find a link between the two things, do yourself a favour. Whether or not you decide to undergo cognitive behavioural therapy or some other form of counselling, invest in a Natural functional gut health programme to compliment this treatment. Look for a programme that uses a combination of food intolerance testing, colonics, liver coffee enemas and probiotics to restore, retrain,

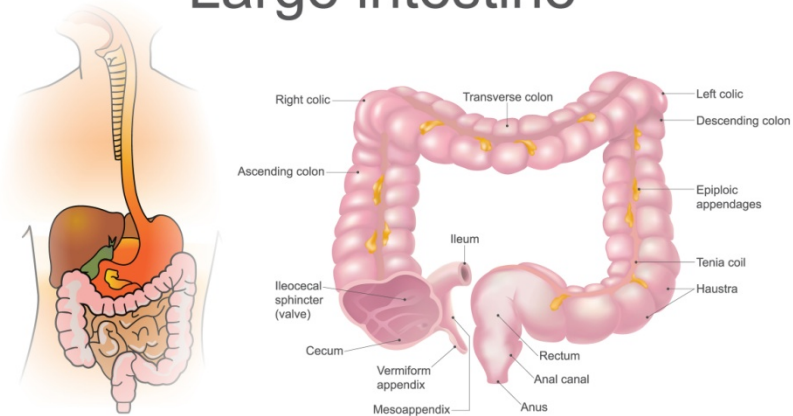
hydrate, replenish, replant and rebalance the bowel and gut. My mother worked for many years as a psychotherapist. She had great success and helped a lot of people. But what she noticed was that body toxicity and mental health issues seemed to go hand in hand. She became interested in colonic hydrotherapy, raw food, NLP and guided meditation decades before these things became mainstream. Back then very few people knew about them or the value they could bring. The point is that when you combine mind body health treatments or therapy with detox and body cleansing you may get better results. A clean body equals a clean mind.

Perhaps the use of prescription drugs or anti-depressants will never become necessary for you. Perhaps on the other hand you will need to take them. And if recommended by your doctor, you should do so. A high percentage of the problems which we perceive as our own emotions may be related to disturbances and imbalances in the complex gut microbiome in our bowel. We now know gut problems and imbalanced gut flora along with constipation cause emotional responses of anxiety and depression in the brain. This is commonly referred to as The Gut Brain Connection.

Years of toxic build up

Many people walk around with pounds and pounds of toxic matter in their colon. They have no idea that it is there nor do they prefer to think about it very often. But sometimes they cannot ignore it any more and are confronted with their own body in the most unusual and shocking of circumstances. On at least a dozen occasions over the past 10 years of working with Natural functional gut health therapies, I have spoken to clients who have informed me that their constipated bowel was identified by X-rays of the abdominal. An X-ray is designed to detect hard matter like bone. This indicates how chronic the impacted material inside the bowels of many ordinary and so called *healthy*, people are. This sort of impaction of the bowel occurs over many years, perhaps over the course of a lifetime. It becomes more and more dry and is a breathing ground for colonies of unhealthy gut flora. In my experience people who suffer from bowel problems like IBS start to notice symptoms by their mid twenties or thirties. The relief and improvements experienced by those who take steps to cleanse their bodies and to kick-start their gut health is extraordinary and often life changing.

Human Large intestine



"On at least a dozen occasions, I have been told by clients that their bowel impaction was so hardened that it was identified by an X-ray when in hospital for something else entirely." Frances Flannery

To see a person who is depressed and anxious, has acne on their face and back, suffers from unexplained and embarrassing halitosis, weight gain, fatigue and insomnia and who holds out little hope in finding a solution improve is one of the reasons I am inspired to write

this book. There is no greater joy than that of seeing real improvements in a person who has tried everything else. It re-affirms to me the value of educating people about natural functional gut health protocols because this can provide real wellbeing value for many people who simply do not know about it. Sadly many people are poorly informed about what gut health is. For the many people who have seen improvements and turned to me afterwards to say "Why on earth did nobody tell me about this before now?" I dedicate this book. Such people inspire me to write down all that I have learned and seen over ten years. For the doctors who seek to educate themselves about holistic wellness practices like natural functional gut health therapies, I commend you. You have been done your patients a great service by recommending them to cleanse their bowel and liver and in sending them to me. It is quite astounding how many people still suffer in silence because they are not aware that there is something that could help them. And when they ask a trusted medical professional they sometimes are not given the information and reassurance that they need to in order proceed. Being a doctor is a very responsible position. It is understandable that they are conservative about recommending treatments and clinics that they know little about. What are the qualifications of these therapists? Are

they using the right equipment? Is it disposable and clean? I hope this book offers reassurances if you have found yourself wondering these things. In the USA colonic hydrotherapy is regulated by law. The qualification required to practice there is I-ACT level 1. Right now, I am the only I-ACT certified tutor in Ireland. This means doing four levels of training and being examined by a board in the USA who include gastro intestinal medical doctors among others.

Many people spend their lives taking laxatives which ultimately cause dependence. But it is tempting to take a pill and believe you never need to think about the bowel again. If you want to care for your gut health naturally, avoid taking laxatives unless you really need to. If you take them everyday, over time your bowel will become weak. How they work is by relaxing (laxative) the bowel so that it expands. But if you keep taking a muscle relaxer (think of a laxative as a muscle relaxer for the bowel) eventually the muscle will become weak and it will not work by itself. In the end your bowel problems will get worst and the laxative may not work as well as before. I believe that many people ignore gut health issues for two simple reasons. One is embarrassment and the other is fear. I truly believe global bowel cancer instances are so high because of embarrassment, fear and

ignorance of the gut and dealing with it. But if natural functional gut health treatments such as colonic hydrotherapy, probiotic implants, coffee enemas, oral probiotics, prebiotic foods, removal of sugar, increased cardiovascular activity, non toxic skincare and the consumption of prebiotic fibre rich food became the standard, I truly believe that bowel cancer would become much less common in the first place. Sadly nobody can promise to cure cancer nor should they. And natural functional gut health is not about curing illness, it is about aiming to prevent it.

Fear and embarrassment accompany all associations with the bowel and they are not limited to ordinary everyday people. Incredibly, they exist within the medical profession too. Such is the belief of Dr. Guilia Enders (MD) whose international best seller "GUT" states that the bowel is the least studied human organ medically because it is seen as a less prestigious specialisation by doctors and medical students seeking to make their mark on the world of medical science. How ironic this is. As a student doctor who wants to help improve health, consider the bowel as the best place to start. The doctor who studies the colon should not be any less proud of his subject than, say for example, than the brain surgeon or the doctor who specialises in

cancer research. In fact, the doctor who studies the bowel should be more proud because he is studying the one organ that is fundamental to every aspect of our health, something fascinating, an organ that has its own brain completely autonomous of the cognitive brain. No other organ in the body (even the heart) can boast such a privilege. The bowel is special. Currently there is a huge amount of research going on into the microbiomes which occupy the bowel. But what of the bowel itself and the toxins that studies have proven, reside there and cause diseases like Parkinson's?

Only recently scientists have demonstrated that the toxin Alpha Sinuclein found in the bowel has a direct link to Parkinson's Disease. It travels up the vagus nerve from the large intestine and enters the brain.

Let me put an idea forward here. We know that gum disease is caused by invading germs in the mouth which is why we brush our teeth and keep our mouth clean. Since we now know that diseases like Parkinson's are caused by a toxin in the bowel, is it not time to make cleansing of the bowel a priority too? Why on earth do we ignore this option? Is it because of fear of the bowel? I believe so.

Ironically, there is a strong relationship between the emotion known as *fear* and our gut. We call it our *gut feeling*.

Why it comes about is that the bowel is 100% independent of the body's main nervous system. It can operate autonomously without any connection to the brain in our heads. It somehow senses emotions and responds. Fear is one of the main emotions that will trigger a "feeling" in your gut. Is it any wonder then that many people find the idea of having a colonic utterly terrifying?

Most people do not even consider it long enough to do research on it. But there are treatment options that involve minimal contact and absolute privacy. Not all colonics are the same. All are wonderful and highly effective when done using FDA approved equipment with disposable tubes and by a qualified person as is the recommended standard in the USA where the treatment is now regulated by law.

Years of toxic build up adhered to the bowel wall is what many ordinary people are carrying around everyday. That is really not OK". Frances Flannery

Finding Deep Happiness - My story

I believe that every person who finds themselves working with the humble gut has a personal story to tell. It seems to me that nobody chooses this path for reasons of prestige. That was certainly the case for the events leading up to my arrival here. Too many coincidences brought about my career in natural functional gut health. So many things seemed to align. I never chose it. It chose me. I had very different plans. I envisaged a high flying career in design which seemed to be on the cards for me. By the age of 23, I had already climbed the lofty heights of the design world to win the coveted position of in-house graphic designer at Brown Thomas. I could not believe my luck. There were many privileges that came with the role. For example, I got fifty percent off all clothes, bags shoes. When the sales rolled around, we had the pick of the crop of all the designer goodies, the evening before the doors opened

to the general public. There were so many parties. I met Liz Hurley, Kylie Minogue, and Bono. I held the world cup trophy in my mortal hands. I drank fine champagne every Friday in the boardroom along with some of the most talented, esteemed, self disciplined and motivated creative minds. It was an incredible honour to find myself among them. And I worked very hard at that job. I took myself very seriously as a designer. But something happened somewhere along the line and I realised that I was not happy. It turned out that having access to a tonne of designer stuff and meeting some famous people (who would never remember my name again) did not mean as much to me as I thought it might. It took me a long time to realise that for all my hard work, as fun as it might appear, I was not *really* making a difference to peoples lives on a deeper more meaningful level. Believe me, happiness will never be found in a boutique or retail store or at the end of a credit card no matter what its limit is. I speak of this from personal experience. Like many Irish people, I have encountered both sides of the financial coin not just once (like most people my age) but at least twice. The first hit was due to my father's tragic death, when I was only seven. Let me just

say this, it is not a fun thing for a kid to be part of the richest family on the road and then not to be overnight. Or to be part of a large well connected family and then lose that connection due to legal battles related to money. But it does things to your perception of the material world and of the stupidity of adults. It helps you to recognise the futile pursuit of "stuff" and the lengths that people will go to, to acquire all that they do not need (or as Bono more eloquently put it for, *all that you can't leave behind*). When you come face to face with the unpredictable hand of fate at a young age and are forced to confront and attempt to rationalise such heady topics as mortality, it definitely changes your view of the world and of people. Looking back, I feel very lucky to have had this vantage point in my formative years. What I have learned is that it is surprising how happy you can be with very little stuff and how unhappy you can become with lots of it. At the time I worked for Brown Thomas, I did not know much about colonic hydrotherapy, probiotics, liver cleansing, exercise or holistic skin care but I had already discovered the joys of a plant based diet and experimented with lots of other nutritional programmes and ways of eating. Most of this action and

learning was done for a less than philosophical end goal. Back then, it was all about keeping my size 8 - 10 figure in step so that I could continue to wear the aforementioned designer items afforded to me by my fortunate position. Not exactly the most expansive thinking I admit. Like most people, if you had asked me what a colonic was, I would have visualised a treatment where a therapist holds a tube which is about an inch in diameter into the rectum. Then water comes in and the client releases the contents of the bowel back into the tube. It is true that this is the most common method of colonic hydrotherapy used in clinics. It is called a 'closed method'. I know o many great therapists from all corners of the globe who use this method. It is highly regarded and even preferred by some. It brings much relief to thousands of people with gut health issues.

But there are some people who are so "switched off" and revolted by their own bowel that such a treatment is emotionally and physically prohibitive for them. These are the types of people who cannot bear to use a bathroom if there is someone in earshot, never mind someone holding a tube into their rectum and expecting them to

release. When it comes to colonic hydrotherapy, different methods suit different people. I believe I am one of those people that have a better result and can relax my mind more in privacy. After all, we now recognise that the bowel is the second brain. It is not a brain that we can tell what to do.

We cannot order the bowel to do as it is told. If we could, there would be no gut health issues such as diverticulitis, Crohns, leaky gut, bloating or constipation and the bowel would not spasm as it does in IBS. Instead, it would move like clockwork so there would be no need for natural functional gut health or colonics in the first place. The gut is sensitive to our emotional conditions. When we are afraid, it is affected. That is why many people suffer from bouts of diarrhoea before important interviews or events. How do I know all this? Because I was just that person. I could not undergo the traditional 'closed method' of colonic hydrotherapy even if I wanted to. In fact, I had given up hope of ever having a colonic when I came across the 'open method' . I sensed that I needed to cleanse for a very long time before plucking up the courage to go and have it done. I believe that I am the right person to talk about the gut because I fully understand the fear and apprehension that accompany anything related to it. It is

tempting with all the new probiotic marketing around to think that taking a pill will fix all our problems. I certainly would have tried that if I thought it would mean not needing a colonic all those years ago. Just like most people I was prepared to try absolutely anything else in the hope of finding relief. But I think I knew deep down that clearing the body of toxins and impaction made common sense.

My main barrier to having the treatment was that the therapist would be present. I knew my body and mind would not be able to "let go" with an audience, so to speak. I really did not understand the mechanics of how the "open method" worked but I was intrigued to see how a colonic could be done without anyone touching you. On the day of my first treatment, I said to the therapist "Here is the payment. Please take it as I may need to leave at any time. I may not be able to do this." Such was my anxiety about what lay ahead. She laughed at me and told me I would be fine.

I wondered how anyone could be so nonchalant about an activity which I perceived to be on a par with doing a parachute jump in terms of riskiness and adrenal fuelled pursuits. Sadly, like many

people, I had found misinformed information on the internet written by people who knew little about the procedure but put themselves forward as experts. Most people who write about colonics are talking about the closed method and most of the videos on YouTube that you will find are on that method too. If you want to see the open method you will need to type in Harley Street Colonic.

What I have found over the years is that many people who dismiss natural functional gut health treatments like colonic hydrotherapy, have never had it, know little about it but take affront to the idea of it. There is something taboo about the rectum in the human psyche. Even little children laugh when you say the word "bum". But that's not very helpful or practical for those, like I did, who fall between the cracks of health and wellness and therefore need to confront their bowel or live in discomfort. And so despite my fear, I went ahead with what I perceived to be a huge undertaking and had my first colonic. I could not believe that it was so easy and so private.

The tube was the size of the tip of a pen. It was self-inserted just 1 inch into the body and warm purified water was brought into the bowel and pushed out quite naturally. Dare I say pleasantly, as relaxing music played and the air was scented with essential oils and

lavender. "How could I have not heard of this before?" I thought as I remembered the years of misery and confusion that my own gut health struggles had caused me. I was strangely proud of myself and felt happier than I had in months. My eyes sparkled and I remember a colleague saying to me the next day "Whatever you are doing, keep doing it". I guess I took his advice. Here I am writing a book on the subject over a decade later.

I had not heard of this method before because this method of colonic hydrotherapy, 'the open method' is less commonly available than the 'closed method.' The 'open method' I feel, is for people who find the idea of having a colonic hydrotherapy session beneficial and see the potential health gains of hydrating, retraining, replenishing, restoring and replanting the gut, but who are absolutely sure they could not go through with it when a larger tube is being held in their rectum and there must be somebody in the room with them. I have spoken to people who would *only* feel comfortable with the therapist present and holding the tube in place. That is why it is important to note that there are two distinct ways of undergoing colonic hydrotherapy. Each one is perfectly wonderful and suits different people.

In the 'open method', the therapist can offer the client privacy in the room. The therapist is accessible via a bell at all times. When the treatment begins, warm pure filtered water - the water is purified twice, one with a UV light and a second time with a carbon filter - is gently introduced into the bowel. It causes built up faecal matter to be hydrated and broken down. Eventually there is a gentle feeling that one wants to release the water. The treatment is intuitive in that you release at any time that you want to. There is no pressure gauge on the wall. You decide what feels good for you.

There is no odour in the room because it is extracted away by the system. Nothing could be more private and dare I say more pleasant. In the 'closed method', an equally wonderful treatment, the therapist stays with the client and holds the tube. They check a pressure gauge on the wall and ensure the client releases matter. Many people find it comforting to have someone there. Others do not.

If you have given up on colonics because the idea seems appalling to you, please do open your mind to the options of two distinct natural functional gut health methods that are available to you and that can

improve your wellbeing in untold ways. Try both methods and see which one feels right to you. Whatever you do though, do not let the words of someone who knows absolutely nothing about a perfectly wonderful health treatment block your opportunity to achieve wellness, to cleanse your bowel of toxins that are dangerous, to clear away imbalanced gut flora, to kick-start weight loss and hydration, to clear up your skin and to boost your mood.

Look to the global icons of health such as Patrick Holford and Tony Robbins who both insist that colonic hydrotherapy is a keystone foundation to restorative vitality. Patrick Holford has his own colonic hydrotherapy training institute. And Tony Robbins, the world leading health guru and mentor who commands \$30K for his life changing seminars, insists on colonic hydrotherapy as part of his delegate's total body and mind transformation. Tony uses the 'open method' during his seminars. That is the one exact same system you will find at my clinic. Incidentally, Patrick Holford uses the 'closed method'. Both are health leaders. Both methods are equally wonderful.

My passion for gut health is something that people, I suspect, find rather odd initially. Just how did a designer for Brown Thomas

become a spokesperson and internationally certified trainer for humble gut of all things?

When questioned about why I am so taken with gut health and profiling natural functional gut health treatments, I explain that it is due to the positive changes and experiences of relief from long term misery that I myself and that my clients have reported to me first hand, time and time again over many years. It is this that has prompted me to hone natural functional gut health practices as a therapeutic holistic wellbeing protocol and to provide them in the most dignified and enjoyable manner possible. In my clinic we celebrate gut health. We do not shy away from it. We also celebrate the skin and nutrition. I never saw a reason for me to write a book about the bowel and gut health before now because I presumed that someone else would tell the story of the gut. But when I listened to people speak about the bowel, I still sensed a note of embarrassment in their tone. They did not fully understand this beautiful organ or if they did, they certainly did not love it in the way that I do. What is not to love about your own body?

It is the humbling experience of meeting so many real people and seeing improvements in their health over ten years that has kept me

intrigued, focused and determined to help educate others over the course of my adult life on the subject of natural functional gut health and its importance and to put in place treatments that are accessible and offer the assurance of internationally regulated training standards and equipment.

For these are the assurances that I myself would have sought when I nervously resorted to what was for me, my last resort, but ultimately became a life changing wellbeing choice that I never would have taken if I had not been so desperately in need.



Clear The Weeds

Before Planting New Seeds



Step 1

The Gut Garden Concept

Why we get gut problems

I am going to share with you a story that I have heard many times over the past 10 years, a story that makes me wonder why gut health education is not a compulsory part of the national school curriculum in Ireland. If it was, I truly believe our health service would save a fortune on bowel cancer care in the long run. I believe that I can pinpoint the exact day that my gut health issues began - that was the day that I started national school (age 5). My family had moved from London to Meath. I attended a small rural school where the toilets can only be described as an after-thought, at best.

They were located in a prefabricated outhouse which had no locks on the doors and whose walls I dare not think about to this day for they were filthy. The light rarely worked and toilet paper was a luxury that was seldom to be found anywhere in sight. There was a ghastly hand towel which hung from a railing and was never changed. There was a bar of soap sitting in what looked like gunge at the side of the sink in a dish. And when I think of the smell of that toilet, I can hardly

breathe to this day. I have never smelled anything like it since. In winter the door swung open and frost lined the floor.

I entered the toilet on the first day of school, needing to alleviate my bladder and I swore there and then that whilst necessity may require that I use of it for such things, I would never ever use it for anything more than I had to. I refused to enter that bathroom long enough for my bowels to open. And so with pure Celtic will and stubbornness, I ignored the call of nature and trained my bowel to switch off.

By ignoring the call to go to the bathroom for all of my school years, I had switched off the neurotransmitters whose message tells the sigmoid colon to tell the brain that it's time to visit the bathroom. I never discussed this decision with anyone and I thought for many years that I was the only person in the world who did this. Don't we all have weird habits that we think are unique to us? At the age of 25, chronic constipation had caused impaction in my bowel and resulted in body toxicity. This resulted in ongoing UTIs which almost killed me when I had an anaphylactic shock to a drug called Ipral, which is an anti-biotic for UTIs. I believe that my body was so full of toxins at this time and my poor bowel so overloaded with years of built up faecal matter, that my liver simply could not process the drug. Like many

reactions it was my bodies cry for help. It needed a cleanse desperately but I had no idea what my body was trying to tell me. Like most people I only knew how to follow the advice I was given which was to take more medication. At last I took a stand. I got such a fright that I said no more.

According to the Harvard Medical Journal, anaphylaxis is a severe and sometimes life-threatening reaction that can develop within an hour — and sometimes within minutes or even seconds — after exposure to an allergen, a substance to which an individual's immune system has become sensitised.

Many allergens can touch off anaphylaxis, including foods, medications, and insect stings. But the strange thing about the whole experience, in my case, was that not one health practitioner, at the time, thought to ask me what I now consider to be a primary wellbeing indicator. "How often does your bowel move?"

Years later when I set up my clinic, I began to notice that so many of my clients reported the same thing. "I never use the bathroom unless I am at home." The same story presented itself over and over again with clients who were suffering from gut related issues. It is too much

of a coincidence that thousands and thousands of Irish people with bowel problems like IBS and constipation all reported the same thing. So I began to ask each and every person who attended my clinic who reported this common behaviour when exactly this pattern started and very soon I discovered the answer. "I didn't like the bathrooms at school and so I always waited until I got home". I could, of course, identify with this myself.

I believe that every school should run natural functional gut health talks and every parent should ask their child about the bathrooms in schools and if they find that the child is not comfortable using the bathroom in the school, consider and be aware of the long term effects of this behaviour on the child's health. Nobody wants their child to suffer from gut health issues in adult life if they can be avoided by just a little conversation and awareness. It is time to bring bathroom discussions with children into the open, just as one might train a child to take care of their teeth and gums, how to brush and floss and to ask them and check-up that they are complying with this training, one must ask their child if they are using the bathroom every day. Does the teacher allow you to use the bathroom?

Do not ask children or adults if they suffer from constipation because they will invariably say no. Ask the same person when was the last time their bowel moved and they will often reply "Three days ago". In other words, people do not know what constipation is. Children certainly do not know. They do not know that their bowel is supposed to move three times a day because nobody tells them this. One movement a day and you are lucky. A twice weekly visit to the bathroom is very common in Ireland. If that is you, please do make an appointment to have colonic hydrotherapy and change your diet. Drink more water because I am about to give you a newsflash. You *are* constipated. And I bet it gets worse on holidays and when you eat a poor diet, like for example, at Christmas time? I bet you have unexplained mood swings and are bloated most of the time. Right? If you are a woman your PMT might be accompanied by constipation for up to seven days?

As I said, in my early career, I worked for Brown Thomas as a designer. At that time, I believed that my life's career was to be within the creative arts. So dedicated was I that I would often go into work on a Sunday. But that was just to keep on top of the work load. I kept it to myself and fought hard against it with self discipline and

pure grit but all through my time at BTs I suffered with debilitating fatigue, bloating, constipation and UTIs. Sometimes I just could not get out of bed on time and I would arrive ten minutes late to the glaring disapproval of my boss. I had no idea that the root of the problem was in my bowel. I did not want to talk about it or face it. It was only when I was convinced, by my sister, to undergo colonic hydrotherapy that I knew that I had been feeling less than wonderful for years. I believe that people get used to mediocre health and because they do not know how it feels to feel great, they accept it as normal. I called my clinic Vitality Centre because I believe that is what natural functional gut health can bring - a feeling of vitality that many people have never felt before. Combine a cleanse with food intolerance testing, liver cleansing, oral probiotics, probiotic enemas, prebiotic foods, exercise, positive affirmation and you may just experience life changing improvements in mood, health, energy, sleep, clarity of thought, inspiration and brain function that you never knew were achievable.

What ever you do, do not do what I did; ignore your gut health until it becomes a major problem and results in you leaving a perfectly good job due to extreme undiagnosed fatigue, insomnia, constipation

and the worst of all ignorance of natural functional gut health . If you have tried probiotics and they did not make the differences you had hoped for, maybe it's because you need to clear away old matter in your bowel first. At the time that I left my job, there was no natural functional gut health. Nobody talked about the gut or probiotics.

When I visited my doctor, he said I was fine so I wound up believing that I was physically inadequate in some way. Other people were able to *just get on with it*. I later learned that is exactly how so many other people think about themselves until they discover and undergo natural functional gut health treatments, and they feel better at last. I am writing this book for my former self and all the people who think just like I did about their bowel and gut health - Ignore it and hope it goes away. It won't

People sometimes feel dismissed by their doctor when they pluck up the courage to talk about their bowel and don't find a resolution.

Some people feel upset when the doctor recommends anti-depressants to them. If you have read this book full you will understand now that anti-depressants are the pharmaceutical answer for IBS because they boost serotonin in the bowel and they have been found to stimulate the bowel too. This is due to the gut brain

connection and it is a scientific fact. If you prefer not to take anti-depressants for bowel and gut health issues like IBS, constipation and diarrhoea, consider colonic hydrotherapy combined with oral probiotics and probiotic enemas. Remember that your doctor is there to ensure that you not are sick. He is highly skilled and trained for many years in the study of pathology. But if you are not sick but have problems like constipation and IBS that are resulting in anxiety and skin problems, you might be what I call "pre-sick". It means you are not sick by medical standards but you are not perfectly well either. I am not a doctor. My interest is in wellness. I am a wellness practitioner. I work with people who are at the mediocre wellness but want to achieve optimal wellness.

If you want to learn more about how wellness treatments differ from medical surgical treatments, you can look up The Wellness Continuum by John Travis. This is a scale that helps you to establish just how well or how sick you are. Being neutral in the wellness zone means that you do not have any symptoms of sickness. It does not mean that have reached your optimal or potential level of wellness. Irritable bowel syndrome is a bunch of symptoms which include constipation, diarrhoea or alternation of both. Not surprisingly it is

often accompanied by anxiety. It is not an illness by definition. If you are worried about your bowel health, please do ask your doctor to send you for a colonoscopy. This is a medical procedure where your bowel is checked for any pathology there. As I have found out, most people settle for mediocre wellness. I was one of them. Natural functional gut health and all wellness treatments aim to bring you from OK to fantastic. When you are sick, you must attend your doctor. Wellness treatments are for well people who want to get further along the wellness continuum towards exceptional wellness and further away the wellness continuum from sickness. If you have any of the following conditions you will not be suitable to undergo colonic hydrotherapy hernias, recent surgery on your abdominal, colitis, pain or bleeding of the rectum, fissures, fistulas, cancer of the bowel, current pregnancy or recent pregnancy.

I gained so much energy the first year that I underwent full body cleansing treatments and probiotics that I was able to take on a post graduate degree in business and e-business, achieve first class honours, set up a clinic in the worst recession in living history, make that business successful, exercise regularly and develop a full and diverse social life, lose weight, achieve the fitness goals that I had

only ever dreamed of in the past and improve my life and wellbeing in countless ways. I was lucky. I had my mother, a trained nurse, psychotherapist, NLP master, hypnotherapist and a highly intelligent and experienced colonic hydro therapist with me. If I am your gut friend. She is the gut master. She is the only therapist in Ireland who is trained in both the open and closed method of colonic hydrotherapy.

Ask anyone who knew me in my twenties; I was not afraid to have a good time. But now I go for an 80/20 approach to life. When I eventually began to operate as a natural functional gut health therapist, I made drastic dietary changes in my own life. I wanted to see just how good I could feel. I took on macrobiotic diet. That means no wheat, no dairy, no sugar, no meat, no alcohol, and no stimulants. I felt great and I looked fantastic. Everything was going fine until one day a friend arrived home from abroad and asked me to join her for something to eat in the city centre. I had not been into the city for months. It seemed noisy and polluted. I arrived at the Indian restaurant and we began to chat about the old times. I took a sip of bar and a mouthful of the spicy meat dish full of god knows what, that arrived in front of me. By halfway through the meal, I felt faint

and weak. I had not been exposed to so many toxins in months. My body could not handle it. I realised that living in the world is a consequence of life and that unless I was going to cut myself off from life, I would have to allow some toxins into my life. That is why I recommend to my clients an 80/20 approach. Aim to be clean, eat clean and live clean 80% of your life. If you can achieve that you are doing great.



"Educating children about using the toilet should be as important as teaching them to brush their teeth."

Frances Flannery

5000 Years of Gut Health

Gut health is not a new concept. Since Egyptian times, enemas were used to clear and heal the body. In the palace of Versailles, the French royals had enemas regularly for vitality. Hippocrates, the father of all medicine said “All disease starts in the colon”. Edgar Casey, America’s famous sleeping prophet, recommended colonics when he channeled healing remedies from the spirit world, even though he knew nothing about them in his waking state. In modern times, Lady Diana made colonics famous with the Harley Street visits that she talked about openly. Incidentally, the same clinics still operate and are just as popular as ever. It seems that the secrets of cleansing and clearing have always been known by royals and celebrities. But that is changing.

Today Tony Robbins uses colonics as part of his transformational seminars. The type of private colonic method he uses is the one available in Ireland exclusively at Vitality Centre clinics. This new method of colonic hydrotherapy is different as it offers zero physical contact or body exposure. Tubes are considerably smaller (only the size of a tip a pen) and can be self-inserted. It is now recognised that the gut (aka bowel, colon, large intestine) is a sensitive organ with its own brain. That is why approaches to gut health treatments like colonic hydrotherapy have changed. Leading gut health doctors now recommend probiotic enemas as the best way to restore gut flora at source. Its time to give natural gut health the focus and respect it deserves.

Colonics have been around since the Egyptian and Mayans times. It seems that we instinctively know that a clean body means a healthy body. As a society, we generally accept that we must clean our teeth. But as a culture we have convinced ourselves to believe that the other end of the tube, the gut, can look after itself. But attitudes towards the bowel and gut health are

changing as science begins to discover the relevance of the gut and established it as the foundation of all health and wellness.

1998: Around about 1998, a medical doctor called Dr. Michael Gershon wrote a best selling book called "The Second Brain" which proved that 95% of serotonin is produced in the bowel. This sparked off mass production of anti-depressants being used to treat IBS.

2014: In 2014 researchers at UCC in Ireland took stool sample microbiomes from professional rugby players and found that they contained a richer diversity of gut microbes and a strain of bacteria linked to lower rates of obesity when compared to healthy but non athletic men. Microbiome in the bowel became an area of intense laboratory based study.

2015: Dr. David Perlmutter a medical doctor wrote "Brain Wave" which brought together a monumental amount of evidence based research and recommended probiotic enema implants as the best way to replant gut flora.

2015: In 2015, a young medical scientist Giulia Enders wrote the book GUT which became an unexpected New York Times best seller and verified the importance of bowel health and suggested that the bowel has been grossly overlooked as the source of illness due to the simple fact that all humans are innately embarrassed by their bowel including the medical profession. It takes us on a fascinating tour of our insides.

2018: Richard Burton ,CEO of the Irish Institute of Nutrition &Health recommends colonics as part of advanced nutritional programmes.

"From personal experience and the feedback of many clients I refer to colonic hydrotherapy, I know its potential as a powerful adjunct to healing – even a game changer – in many cases of chronic ill-health where colonic function is not optimal."

2018: Scientists discover that a toxin known as Alpha Synuclein is found in the bowel of those who develop Parkinson's Disease. The toxin is shown to travel up the vagus nerve from the bowel to the brain and results in developments of the disease.

Imagine If We Knew What Causes Cancer

World Health Organisation figures show that 1.8 million people are affected by colorectal cancer per year, making it the second most common form of cancer. Natural functional gut health protocols such as colonics, balancing gut flora and correcting diet aim to reduce inflammation, one of the underlying causes of disease and cancer. There are a few key points about cancer that every person should know. Nobody can claim to cure cancer once it is present. That is unethical and incorrect. But everyone should make it their business to educate themselves about the conditions within the body that allow and encourage cancer to

thrive. All people should do everything in their power to remove and negate those conditions through lifestyle changes which aim to optimise wellness and move away from sickness.

When we take on board lifestyle, diet and natural functional gut health protocols, exercise more and use products that are not adding extra toxins to our skin, what we are talking about is prevention. Unfortunately, nobody can claim to cure cancer or even to offer a fool proof preventative strategy. When cancer is present, the patient is recommended to follow the medical programme offered to them by their doctor. Cancer is complex and insidious and although the exact conditions are not known, a lot of the conditions are known. Naturally, everyone would prefer to avoid contracting cancer in the first place. Along with exercise and correct diet, keeping your bowel healthy can absolutely help in creating a body where the conditions for cancer are unsuitable. The first thing recommended to anyone who wants to create a body that is uncomfortable for cancer to survive is to reduce inflammation. You can do this in a number of ways.

Cancer Loves Sugar

But more than that. Cancer cannot live without sugar. During a PET scan, a standard medical test to monitor cancer tumours, radioactive sugar is injected into the patient. This sugar is absorbed by the cancer tumour in seconds. The tumours instantly become active and show up on the PET scan which enables the cancer to be identified. Why does the cancer tumour

suddenly light up when it comes in contact with sugar? Because the tumour begins to feed on the sugar.

Nobel Prize Winning Cancer Research

Imagine if we knew what conditions cancer needed in order to survive in our bodies. Then we would simply avoid those conditions and hey presto, problem solved. Right? No more cancer. If only it were that simple. But you might be surprised to learn that we already know some serious things about cancer, things which most of us never put into action. Why? Because nobody tells us to. Prepare yourself for this information as it might seem shocking. Are you ready? Dr. Otto Warburg discovered a major root cause of cancer in 1923 and he received the Nobel Prize for doing so in 1931. What his studies tell us is that there are two things that cancer needs in order to survive.

Acidosis

Acidosis is created in the body when we consume sugar. A diet high in sugar, processed salt, chemicals, preservatives, alcohol and pesticides causes acidosis. So too do toxins from the environment and from parabens and other chemicals. If you wish to create a body where cancer is uncomfortable you should completely remove sugar, salt, chemicals, preservatives and pesticides from your diet and from your skincare. That is why it is so important that you aim to cook your foods yourself where possible. But that is only one part. When you stop taking harmful toxic foods into your body, the fatty tissue in the cells where toxins reside begin to unload themselves. The toxins become

mobile and can move towards your eliminatory organs. That is why it is essential that the pathways are clear for the loosened toxins to exit. Cleanse your body's main eliminatory organs, the liver and bowel to free up the path so that loosened toxins can exit the body. Colonic hydrotherapy hydrates and alkalises your body creating a state which is the opposite of acidosis. By ensuring your liver and bowel receive a fresh flush of pure filtered clean water, you will help to switch your body from acidosis to an alkaline state. In doing so you will be taking on the findings described by the genius physician and Nobel Peace Prize Winner, Dr. Otto Warburg whose incredible research on cancer is only now being realised thanks to the free flow of information on the World Wide Web. All of the toxins that your body takes in **MUST** be eliminated via your liver and colon, in the end. If not, they will try to exit other ways, like through the skin. That is why many people who have tried every topical potion or lotion for long term psoriasis never recover until they cleanse their liver. Acidosis is caused by toxic build up in your body. That happens when toxins cannot exit via the main eliminatory organs due to back log in your liver and bowel. It is also a result of eating acidic foods such as sugar.

"All toxins that your body takes in MUST exit via your liver and colon. If not, they will try to exit other ways, like through the skin. That is why many people who have tried every topical potion or lotion for long term psoriasis or acne may never recover until they cleanse their liver and stop adding more chemicals and parabens to their skin and sugar to their diet." Frances Flannery

Lack of Cellular Oxygen (Hypoxia)

Hypoxia as described by Dr. Otto Warburg, is a state in which a reduced supply of oxygen reaches the bodies organs. *"Deprive a cell 35% of its oxygen for 48 hours and it may become cancerous."* he tells us. Cancer cells are anaerobic (do not breathe oxygen) and cannot survive in the presence of high levels of oxygen. In other words, the more oxygen your cells get the less comfortable cancer will be there. Typical situations where your body receives a less than adequate supply of oxygen are as follows:

1. Inhaling fumes and environmental pollutants including smoking
2. Reducing cardiovascular and respiratory capacity
3. Blood flow restriction to the heart by clogged arteries.

So cancer hates oxygen eh? Wouldn't it be great if you could blast it with the very thing it hates, like those fumigation systems that get rid of unwanted pests in the home? But how? Increase

cardiovascular and respiratory capacity of the lungs. Yes folks, it is time stop smoking and to start exercising. Preferably outdoors in the park, where the CO2 levels are low and oxygen is high. So if you are in a gym and working with a trainer already, well done. You are doing great. Try running or hiking outdoors sometimes. Your lungs will love you for it. And if you are not doing any exercise, then you have no excuse. Just put on your trainers and run to the shop everyday. A little makes a lot of difference. As you exercise, bear in mind that excess sugar and carbs, not physical inactivity, are behind the surge in obesity, say experts in the British Journal of Sports Medicine recently. What this means is that YOU MUST remove sugar AND YOU MUST exercise together. Give you body more oxygen by undertaking cardiovascular activity. Breathe fresh clean air into your lungs everyday. Do it for the extra oxygen and the weight loss will follow.

Creating a body that disease does not like

Reduce Fumes. That is pretty self explanatory. It's time to stop smoking. Just stop. NOW. It's also time to cleanse your body of the accumulated environmental pollutants and fumes that have already clogged up your body, notably your liver. Detoxing your liver with coffee enemas is recommended to remove the toxic burden which your main "detoxer", your liver, has to cope with when you breathe in poisonous fumes through your lungs. Don't

you think that your body has enough toxins to cope with without paying good money for cigarettes so that you can purposefully provide it with more? Sorry if this sounds preachy but anyone who smokes needs to hear it. I have found that no matter I say to people about smoking there is one thing that really motivates them to give it up. If they are visual people or are results orientated, they will find it easier to strive towards a goal that they can see. I mean they need to have a tangible end goal. I went to work in a dental surgery and studied dental nursing when I was almost thirty years old even though I hold a first class honours post graduate in ebusiness because I wanted to learn how to manage a clinical space from a medical point of view and in those days, that was the best way of doing it. I figured that in order to set up the type of high level gut health and holistic clinic that I visualised, this type of medical background would come in pretty handy. Long story short, I have honed a type of teeth whitening that does not damage teeth. I call it *Naturally White* teeth whitening. When people have this treatment, they are amazed at the colour of their own natural teeth. The treatment does not bleach teeth. It merely cleanses them using natural substances. The fact is that people who see the colour of their teeth before and after are more motivated to quit smoking than for any other reason I have seen. I believe it is because they can see how *yellowing* nicotine stains are on enamel of the teeth and how much fresher and cleaner their mouth looks without them. "Imagine how much cleaner your lungs will be without the smoking", I always say and I have been told it works to keep people off the fags.

"Angina in the intestines mirrors what happens in the heart."
(2012). Intestinal angina is a condition where plaque develops on

the walls of the gut in much the same way as cholesterol blocks the arteries of the heart. The digestive system ordinarily gets 20% to 25% of the oxygenated blood pumped out by the heart. After eating, though, blood flow to the stomach and intestines almost doubles. In a healthy person, the heart, the digestive system, and the rest of the body handle this without missing a beat. It's a different story when plaque causes severe narrowing in one or more of the major arteries supplying the gut. The different story referred to is that when your bowel is blocked up with plaque, it is highly likely that all of your intestines will shortly become blocked up with plaque too and when that happens, the extra blood flow needed for digestion to occur (blood from the heart of course) will not get through and this creates pressure on your heart. And such pressure on your heart is not good for you. Think of the pump in your home trying to pump the water into pipes that are blocked up. You might hear a strange unsettling sound from the pump and if left unchecked, it might eventually shut down. Your heart is just one big pump. Do not make its job difficult by having blocked up pipes in your bowel.

Cancer does not happen overnight. It takes years to develop. It usually shows symptoms by age 50. That is why everyone should undergo regular bowel cancer screening. Bowel screening for people over a certain age is free. That is a huge expense on our health system. It is also a necessary one because this cancer is very common indeed. That is why bowel screening has been deemed absolutely imperative. If you have cancer, you cannot have colonics. One symptom of colon cancer is a feeling of incompleteness when you go to the bathroom. If this is definitely

not due to constipation, it must be checked out medically to rule out cancer. Book in for a colonoscopy with your doctor.

When it comes to bowel cancer, the conditions must be right in order for it to thrive. That is why prevention should be everyone's main priority. Colon cancer is the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths and the third most common cancer in men. Take on natural functional gut health protocols like cleansing the body, introducing alkalising foods and increasing exercise when you are healthy. Do not wait until you are sick. That is why these activities are called wellness treatments. By doing so, aim to create a body where the conditions are wrong for cancer. Make it unwelcome in your body as best you can. "The colon and the rectum—the two parts of the large intestine—are common places for cancer to occur. It is often a hidden cancer because it doesn't usually cause symptoms in its early stages." (2018)

That's right. It is a hidden cancer. It hides in your bowel for years. You can't see what goes on inside your bowel. But since the latest studies from the esteemed Harvard Medical Journal tell us that our intestines accumulate plaque and we know that plaque is a breathing ground for colonies of nasty bacteria to populate, it makes absolute sense to rid the body's main eliminatory organ, the large intestine of toxins and putrid filth before things get out of hand.

Fat is not the enemy. Sugar Is. A new study by the British Medical Journal has confirmed what many people suspected for years. At last, science has the facts to prove that *"Fat is not the enemy when it comes to cardiovascular disease, weight gain, brain health, and so many other issues. It turns out that sugar — in all*

its many guises — is the real culprit for making you fat. What it also means is that because sugar causes inflammation throughout the body, it increases your risk of cardiovascular disease — and just about everything else." (2013).

But oh how your body craves it, I hear you say. Do not despair. There is some comforting news ahead. Sugar is only a three day addiction. As your insulin levels balance out, you will no longer crave the deadly killer that is sugar any more. You will be free of it. One of the best ways to kill sugar addiction is by eating more fat. Eat good healthy fats like nuts, avocados and olive oils. Just about every progressive medical journal now agrees that sugar is the most harmful thing you can feed your body.

Go back and read Dr. Atkins diet revolution all over again. This time, read the science. Do not stuff yourself with dead meat and fats. The man never told you to do so. Many people just interpreted his books in this way. Choose natural organic good fats and plant based greens where possible. If you want to learn about blood sugars and insulin Dr. Atkins books have everything you need to know. Since they were first published many others have copied and replicated his research, sold it under different names and taken out things that are no longer trendy. Paleo, ketogenic, high protein - all this results comes from Dr. Atkins studies. In my opinion as a nutritionist, his books are some of the best and the most comprehensive nutritional books on the market because they tackle the huge problem of insulin and sugar and its influence on our entire endocrine system without the marketing blurb FODMAPS are sugars that cause irritation in the gut and bowel which is why a low blood sugar diet is often recommended to calm the digestion system when IBS and other

gut health symptoms are present. Cut out sugar before it cuts you out.

"Overall, the odds of dying from heart disease rose in tandem with the percentage of sugar in the diet—and that was true regardless of a person's age, sex, physical activity level, and body-mass index (a measure of weight)." (Corliss.J, 2014).

Plaque develops on your intestines in much the same way as cholesterol develops on the arteries of your heart. Intestinal angina is a condition where plaque develops on the walls of the gut in much the same way as cholesterol blocks the arteries of the heart. Left unchecked, this mucoid plaque coats the bowel and causes fatigue, low energy and lack of vitality. The bowel is that 5 foot organ located between the ribs and the hips. It is approximately the length of an average bathtub. I have seen mucoid plaque coming off the bowel and its pretty nasty stuff. It is pure black and rubbery in texture. And when it is gone you know that something in your body has been fixed. You feel instantly better when you are no longer carrying around a layer of toxic matter on your bowel wall.

Never expect to get rid of this stuff by taking juices alone. When the juicing trend hit Ireland, I was shocked to find that one very well known and successful juice company had copied and pasted an entire page from my website on detoxing with colonic hydrotherapy. They just replaced the words "colonic hydrotherapy" with "juicing". Clearly they had not studied the area of detoxification very well. So here is the juice on juicing. No amount of juicing will get rid of mucoid plaque on the bowel wall in the same way that colonic hydrotherapy will. Ask the juice

master, Jason Vale. He runs detox retreats all over the world and he is the person who kick started the global juicing trend. He always provides colonic irrigation to his clients who attend his detox retreats. That is how he gets the results that he does. Juicing is a great way to limit the amount of toxins entering your body. When you stop new toxins coming into your body, by juicing, you give your organs (the liver and the bowel) a chance to release *some* of their toxins because they have less work to do. Some old toxins in your cells are immobilised (that means loosened up) and have the opportunity to make their way to the bowel, kidney and liver. Remember there is only one way out of the body for toxins. Before the loosened toxins get to your eliminatory organs, they are roaming free temporarily in your body and you will feel the effects of them. This is called *a healing crisis* - headaches, fatigue and nausea. So for the guy who copied and pasted my entire page and put it on his website in an attempt to sell his juices, here is the *real* juice. Getting lasting results for your customers by educating them about full body detox is a much better idea than stealing content about other detox treatments online that does not relate to them at all. And if you really want to help your clients to avoid a healing crisis, get great results and experience the fantastic benefits that a full body detox can offer, tell them to combine juicing with cleansing of the bowel and liver. To make it easier for you (because I know you like shortcuts) you might like also to copy and paste this: *Every juice fast and detox should be accompanied by colonic hydrotherapy and liver coffee enemas if you want to avoid a healing crisis and symptoms such as headaches, nausea and insomnia during the first few days as major toxins are loosened and make their way to the main eliminatory organs, the bowel and the liver. Clear the paths before you loosen up toxins or*

expect to feel pretty rough and have results that do not last very long since you have not gotten to the root of the problem at all.

Mucoid plaque does not come off easy. Imagine lime scale on the pipes of a plumbing system. It takes a few treatments of colonic hydrotherapy for this congested, impacted matter to be gently loosened. It has been adhered to the walls of your bowel for years. You cannot scrape it off as the dentist's scraps the plaque off your teeth. And there is no way that pouring juice into your mouth for a few days is going to get it off unless you combine your juice cleanse with colonic hydrotherapy.

You need to cleanse your bowel. That is a no brainer and here is why. Your digestive system is one long tube. At one end is your mouth and at the other is your bowel. They are both lined with mucosal tissue. They both have exit points which meet the world and therefore are exposed to oxygen periodically. They are both dealing with exactly the same thing - the food you eat. Why in heavens name do you think that it is recommended to brush your teeth twice a day, see a dentist every six months, but leave the bowel to fend for itself for its entire life? Really?

When you see what I have seen in the past 10 years coming away from the gut, wild horses would not stop you from getting rid of the stuff that builds up in your bowel. Of that, you can be sure. The mouth takes in the food and other substances that you find appetising enough to raise to your face and joyfully swallow consciously and with full consent. The bowel deals with that which most people, lets face it, do not fancy getting up close and personal with. Even your body has deemed this stuff as toxic. It has decided that it wants to get it out. Which organ do you think

needs a clearing out? The answer is both. Plaque builds up on the walls of your bowel in much the same way that it builds up on your teeth. The Harvard Medical Journal tells us that plaque in the intestines mirrors that which happens in the heart. It's real and it's not going away by itself. Have you ever met a person who does not brush their teeth? It is not a pretty sight. Their gums become infested with disease and eventually their teeth fall out. Their breath smells putrid and revolting. Toxins cause this problem.

As stated before, in at least a dozen cases, I have been told by clients that it was an x-ray of the abdominal area that showed up impacted faecal matter in their bowel. This type of build up is so hard and dry that it had concreted itself to the gut wall. In such cases, laxatives or juices are not going to do the trick. During a course of three colonics, there is a good chance, that this putrid filth can be gently moistened and slowly but surely broken away. One of the reasons I am writing this book is because of these people.

Invariably, when they see what comes out of them, they ask afterwards, why on earth nobody had told them about colonics before. I can only tell them that as a wellness practice, it is for those of us who choose to learn how to look after our bowel when we are well. What's the point in waiting until we are sick? Colonics can't cure cancer as far as I know. But perhaps, combined with other lifestyle changes it can help you to create a body where the conditions are wrong for cancer to develop in the first place.

I have met so many people who fit exactly the same profile as me. When they tell me their story, I am always amazed. Very often, I am the first person who has ever asked them about their bowel movements. We talk about gut health and they cannot believe that they are not alone. Like I did for years, they suffer in silence because they find the whole matter embarrassing and they are told that cleansing the bowel is irrelevant to their overall health.

Nothing could be further from the truth. Have you heard the expression "*All Disease Starts in the Colon*"? One look at the pictures of mucoid plaque which I am sure you can find online will tell you why that expression is as true as can be. And gut health issues are not a new thing. What is new is that at last, we have realised that we must overcome our embarrassment enough to talk about them because they matter. People have been dying of embarrassment due to ignoring the bowel for too long. One of those people was The King of Rock And Roll, Elvis Presley.

Elvis Presley died from constipation

Elvis is probably the most famous person in the world who ever died from bowel health related issues. Elvis was famous for his invigorating style of dance. His infectious vitality captivated the world. So how did he end up fat and bloated and dead at 42 years of age? Poor diet, laxatives and embarrassment of anything to do with his own bowel. That's how. Elvis was found on the bathroom floor in a position that indicated that he had fallen off the loo. His bowel was found to be twice the length of normal with

an impacted stool content that was estimated to be four months old. His bowel has been completely stretched by the poop that he was carrying around. The condition is called a mega colon and it is the result of extreme constipation. According to Dr Nichopoulos, the doctor who was caring for Elvis at the time of his death, the autopsy found Elvis's colon to be five to six inches in diameter, compared to an average of two to three inches. And rather than the standard four to five feet long, Elvis's colon was eight to nine feet. It has been distended to full dilation and beyond by the faecal matter that he was carrying inside his body.

'After he died we weren't sure [of his cause of death] so I continued to do some research and I had some doctors call me from different places and different med schools that were doing research on constipation and different problems you can get into with it. I just want to get the story straight – it all made sense with the new research that was done.' Dr Nichopoulos, Elvis Presley's Doctor

Dr. Nichopoulos said that although he offered Elvis a colostomy, to remove part of his bowel, the king of rock and roll would not agree. Like so many others his pride meant he rejected the treatment. Think of the lifestyle of Elvis. He did almost all of the things that are not recommended for enhanced gut health. He ate a meat rich fatty diet and took prescription drugs. Then he pushed himself through gruelling Las Vegas stage shows. Is it any surprise that his poor heart eventually gave up under so much pressure?

It is only in recent years, however, that Elvis's doctor revealed that he believed it was the underlying impacted bowel - the contents of which were four months old at the time of his death - that killed him. My advice is not to wait until you are dead for a diagnosis. The amount of toxins that Elvis Presley's body was dealing with from his food, diet, drugs and lifestyle combined with the fact that his main eliminatory organs were backed up with four months worth of faecal matter should have been a big concern to his doctor and to himself. But it is surprising how willing people are to ignore their bowel, take laxatives and hope for the best. I know. I was one of them.

Elvis Presley is a good example of the type of problems that can develop when you ignore constipation and then take laxatives to make your bowel move. After a while the laxatives relax the muscles in your bowel so that they dilate. When this happens they hold more faecal matter. Soon the bowel wall stretches and you end up with a mega colon. I have met people who have had this problem and lived. Usually they end up with half of their bowel missing. Often they have to carry a colostomy bag around with them. This means that their bowel has been surgically removed and they must carry a plastic bag on the outside of their body instead.

Which is more embarrassing and undignified? Taking care of your bowel today by cleaning it, replanting gut flora, removing sugar, introducing wholefood or spending your latter life carrying a colostomy bag?

Luckily there are many celebrities who openly discuss their health issues, have colonics and other natural functional gut health treatments regularly. Below are some famous people who spoke out

about colonics and how they improved their health through natural functional gut health.

Lady Diana: Lady Diana was one of those. She changed the monarchy and she changed many peoples attitude towards gut health. She did so much in her short life. She demonstrated that love and heart were basic human needs. She spoke out about things that others found taboo - AIDS, land minds, a cheating royal husband and the benefits of having colonic irrigation.

Gwyneth Paltrow: This girl knows how to look after herself and it shows. She runs a lifestyle website devoted to good food and good living. Take one look at Gwyneth and you can see what good health looks like. She has regular colonic irrigation sessions and it shows.

Simon Cowell: Want to become a global music business magnet? Then you need to be in good health with a razor sharp brain. Simon Cowells has no time for idiots and no time for brain fog. No room for errors or indecision here. I wonder is the secret to his success partly thanks to his regular colonic hydrotherapy sessions.

If you are a celebrity and you are reading this, do the world a favour and speak out about your treatment. You have a big voice and a brief mention that you agree with natural functional gut health treatments like detoxing the inner body can be the catalyst that it takes for other people to follow suit.

In my clinic, I have worked with A-list celebrities from across the globe. All treatments are confidential and so I cannot tell you who exactly has attended. But let me just say this. People who are getting *the best* health advice in Ireland are getting colonic hydrotherapy.

Parkinson's may start in the bowel

According to a recent study by US based scientists and supported by Parkinson's UK, built up toxins in the bowel kill nerves that are linked to movement. Researchers at the Van Andel Research Institute in Michigan looked at 1.7 million people over half a century and found that the bowel contained a toxic protein called alpha synuclein that is found in the brains of those with Parkinson's disease. This toxic protein resides in the appendix, a small sac at the end of the colon. (Science Translational Medicine, 2018) . Scientists now believe that the bowel is a breeding ground for this toxin which travels up the vagus nerve and into the brain causing Parkinson's Disease. Since colonic irrigation cleanses the entire bowel including the appendix, keeping your bowel clean may reduce the build up of toxins like alpha synuclein and thereby reduce the risk of Parkinson's. The study published in Science Translational Medicine showed the risk of Parkinson's was 20% lower in those who have had their appendix removed.

For those who wish to follow the advice of researchers the message is clear. Take measures that prevent the build up of alpha synuclein now. The appendix is found at the far end of the bowel. It is a small appendage that one might think of as a *cul de sac*. Perhaps the reason that toxins build up there is due to constipation. Certainly constipation has been observed in Parkinson's sufferers. It makes sense when you consider the anatomy of the bowel. Whatever the reason, we now know that the appendix is a site of toxic build up and that those toxins are directly linked to Parkinson Disease. It would appear that the father of medicine, Hippocrates knew this already when he said. "All Disease Starts In The Bowel". This is a statement which appeared in the papers shortly after the discovery of the toxin in the bowel which links Parkinson's to the bowel. Below, Dr. Viviane Labrie, on the research team for Parkinson's Disease very wisely, recommends that people who are seeking to benefit from the scientific research are recommended to "tune down the overabundance or potentially to prevent the escape" of the toxin alpha synuclein in the bowel.

"We're not advocating appendectomy as a form of protecting against Parkinson's disease. It would be much wiser to control or dampen excessive formation of alpha synuclein to tune down the overabundance or potentially to prevent its escape." Dr Viviane Labrie, Parkinson's Research Team

But it does not say how one might do that. I find this statement interesting. Clearly someone asked the question, on finding that the Parkinson's causing toxin known as Alpha Synuclein, is found in the appendix of the bowel, if everyone should undergo an appendectomy to limit the chance of developing the disease. To me it is a bit like asking, should we cut out our gums because they are the source of gum disease. Just like we clean our teeth to avoid gum disease and other health problems now is the time to make cleansing our inner bowel a priority.

Gastrointestinal symptoms—especially constipation—are also common in Parkinson's patients, and can appear decades before other problems. Scientists have found that people are less likely to get Parkinson's if they've had a vagotomy, a treatment for stomach ulcers that severs the vagal nerve, which branches down from the brain into various tissues of the gut. Once again, why cut out the pipe that feeds the poison. Better to clean away the poison at source, balance the body and take care of the organism that sustains us and carries us through life.

There are so many reasons to keep your gut clean and free of toxic build up, to replant gut flora, to eat food that is alkaline and fibrous and to avoid putting heavy parabens and chemical products on your skin. The point is that cleansing the bowel and removing toxins from your lifestyle should be everybody's concern when they are well. Natural functional gut health protocols are about not waiting until you need surgery, not waiting until you have developed Parkinson's Disease or stomach ulcers and had your vagal nerve cut. Do not wait until you have spots on your skin or back. Do not wait until you have constipation. Take preventative action now for your health and for your happiness. Do it now. Cleanse your bowel; optimise the food you eat, remove toxic skin products from your life. Reset you gut. Introduce good gut flora and prebiotic fermented foods. Cut down on sugar. Introduce oral probiotics and probiotic enemas and experience the increase in your overall wellness, brain power and happiness that wellness of your gut can bring.

On the subject of brain power, I truly believe that cleansing your gut and restoring gut flora can influence your ability to retain information and study. In 2010, I undertook a post graduate degree in business and ebusiness. I did not have an undergraduate degree in any of these subjects and usually this post graduate course is open only to those who do. But I was accepted on the course. I don't think they fancied my chances of getting through the curriculum. I graduated with first class honours. I believe that was due to my brain's ability to memorise and decipher information clearly. I had already started having colonics by then. Chance? I don't think so. If you want to sharpen your brain, cleanse your bowel.

Lets Be Gut Friends

I hope that this book has been an enjoyable read. I find the bowel and gut health overall to be fascinating subjects. There is no doubt that they affect every single part of our body, our mind and I believe that they affect more people than who care to admit, consider or discuss it too. Every week new information comes out and I am always intrigued and excited to learn more. Yes, I have studied nutrition, exercise coaching, colonic hydrotherapy and holistic skin practices. Yes I went back and worked in a dental surgery when most of my friends were getting married and having babies so that I learn the fundamentals of managing a clinical space. Certainly I have attended many talks and seminars on mental health and read extensively about its connection to the gut. I own many books by world leading gut health doctors, detox gurus and nutritional experts. I have spent time in yoga retreats and practiced meditation, colour therapy and ayurvedic teachings. I have learned about fermented foods and how to prepare them, from some very impressive international health experts. I have travelled to Switzerland to find the best holistic skin products and I have spent many hours researching probiotic cultures for the gut and been recommended on what are the best ones to use for probiotic enemas. I have talked in public on the subject of gut health many times. I have studied under the regulated training programme for colonic hydrotherapy in the USA and I have gone as high as I can go in this. Why have I done all this? I have done it to ensure that I am as qualified as I can be for what I do. And now I have written a book...

But am I a world leading authority and medical expert and do I know it all? Absolutely not. I am still learning about gut health and the mind body connection of healing and so is science. Everyday I find out something new. That is what keeps me so interested in natural wellbeing. What I can promise you is that I have brought you a decades worth of experience and learning in this book. It might take you a few hours to read it.

If you are reading this and you want to train with me to integrate natural functional gut health into your own business, you can do so. I would love to see more nutritionists, skin therapists, yoga teachers, wellbeing practitioners and doctors adding the four key areas of natural functional gut health to their toolbox of wellbeing information.

I believe that anyone who comes to study yoga or colonics with me will learn some very valuable and practical natural wellbeing skills and I believe that their clients will be forever grateful to them. I can promise to support you in your endeavours and to share with you all that I know about running a natural functional gut health clinic if that is your dream. I am here to do what I can in whatever way that I can to make things better. That is why I have established The Irish Yoga Institute and The International Institute of Colonic Hydrotherapy. It is the reason why I established Vitality Centre in Ireland. It is the reason I have written this book. If someone who is appropriately qualified wants to learn from my humble experiences, I welcome you to get in touch. I can promise you that, I will endeavour to dedicate myself to learning more. And if you know something that I did not know or that has changed since I wrote this, I will amend my writing accordingly and willingly.

I never thought I would write a book on this subject because as I said, I thought that someone else would write a book that takes into account the four key areas of natural functional gut health sooner, better and more eloquently. I have waited and waited with great excitement as the wellbeing, nutrition and natural health community began to grow and emerge in Ireland. And it has. Some fantastic people post some excellent information on social media everyday. People talk about the gut more than ever now, thank goodness and many people understand the benefits of a healthy whole food diet. Marketing buzzwords like gluten free (I still giggle when I see things that could never contain gluten naturally like eggs marked 'gluten free'). Organic living is all the rage and it is everywhere. (I own vegan shoes). And many people recognise the value of gut health. But most people do not really know what their gut is. That is my experience. They do not know that it is their bowel primarily and especially when talking about good gut flora. I believe that many people are selling products that promise gut health but do not recognise that in order to get to a balanced gut you need to clear away a lot of stuff that most people would never believe they have inside them (I have seen it so I know what ordinary people carry around in their bowels everyday). I have heard people talk about every other aspect of wellbeing and completely ignore and even joke about the bowel making light of it. 'I lost weight but didn't poop for a week' one very famous celebrity joked about his health kick recently. Really? If you take one thing from this book, let it be this. That is absolutely *not* OK and anyone who thinks it is needs to be re-educated on the subject of natural wellness. I hope this book goes some way in achieving that. I have done the best I can with the information that I have to help you to understand in lay mans language, what I consider to be a fascinating and extremely

important part of wellbeing. I speak with reverence when I speak about the bowel because I believe that it has unequalled healing potential and that it is a very special organ. Why else would Mother Nature give it the ability to function independently of the brain in our heads? No other organ, even the heart, has been granted that privilege.

I have watched over the years as the health industry has blossomed and bloomed. It has made TV stars of many people. And this is a very positive thing for the overall wellbeing of the nation. I celebrate the emerging science and all others who are doing so much great work to bring this into the light. You are amazing. You are the face of wellness and you do it beautifully. These people have raised awareness of food and mindfulness and their importance in natural functional gut health.

For many years, I waited for someone to speak holistically about the gut and bowel from a functional aspect and to tell its fascinating story in a way that ordinary people could relate to. When I teach natural functional gut health, I use mind mapping and visualisation to help others to learn. So I keep my analogies simple. If I cannot explain it to a child in five minutes, then I feel I cannot explain it. Keep it simple. That is my motto. Keep it easy to understand and people might grasp the basic concept. If you make it fun, they might even get interested. If you manage to entertain them somewhat, well then they have enjoyed the experience of learning and that is the highest I could possibly hope for anyone who has been interested enough to pick up this book and read it this far.

If you are a medical, scientific or very analytical person, you might find my analogies over simplistic. Well, they are designed for everyday ordinary people to quickly grasp. My idea is that if someone wishes to know more, they will invariably ask the big G and find out everything in as much detail as their hearts desire. My aim is to in still an interest and a basic concept of how one might imagine things to be deep inside the body's most important organ, the bowel.

When I decided it was time to write down what I know and what I have observed over the years, I never thought it could be so much fun and such a challenge too. I am not a doctor. I do not promise to cure you of any disease and I will not diagnose you with any illness. I am a second generation natural functional gut health practitioner. My grandfather was Co. Meath's official water diviner back in the days when people still used the earth's natural energy to find water. He was extremely sensitive to the natural magnetic pull of the earth. He could not wear a watch because it would stop due to his unusual electro magnetic make. When my aunty, also a gifted diviner died of bowel cancer in 2017, I knew it was time to do something.

Water is life. Somehow, in spite of my own intentions, I have ended up as a *hydro therapist*. When you open clinics in cities where water is used you have to learn a lot about plumbing systems. I sometimes wonder is it just by chance that I have become something of an authority on the internal plumbing systems of the human body and the plumbing systems of buildings too. I have worked with thousands of people in a holistic context and I have seen wellness improvements in a high percentage of them. Getting wellness levels from mediocre to optimum is my area of concern. Cleansing, planting, fertilising and protecting the gut naturally is how I proclaim to do it. I am just a person who was well, but not well enough, to do the job I loved and live the life I wanted with the vitality I needed. On my way through life, I have learned some things because of that and because I have a questioning curious mind. But I am not a scientist. I am not a doctor. Some would say I am not qualified to talk about gut health now that the pharmas have started to sell probiotics en masse. To them I would say this. Tell me a better and more natural way to clear the body of toxins, replant gut flora directly and fertilise the body with natural nutrition and the avoidance of unnecessary drugs and chemicals and I will hand in my hat today and go to live in a hippie commune. Until then, I am now and will always be *your gut friend*, nothing more and nothing less.

Most of what I have learned has come from listening to my clients. So most of what you have read in this book comes from first hand observations of real people who are medically well but who suffer with gut health issues like constipation, impaction and bad skin that cause great misery in their lives. They do not want to take drugs if they can avoid it. So many people have the same experiences.

For example, as a young girl growing up, I never really understood why I would become bloated and uncomfortable whenever the summer holiday in France or Spain rolled around. For years I put it down to bad luck that I always seemed to end up feeling heavy and distended just when the holidays arrived and I was likely to wear a bikini. When I opened my first clinic, I noticed that many of the clients had written "cabin crew" as their occupation on the intake forms that we have them fill in. I began to ask them and others about their bowels response to flying. Soon enough the picture became clear. People who fly often seem to suffer more from gut health problems like IBS and constipation than those who do not.

And so I developed a strategy for them that appeared to work. Have a cleanse the day before you fly so that the bowel is empty. Avoid coffee on the day of the flight and take herbal tea on the plane along with water. On arrival, let your gut know that it is OK to get going again. Take half a natural laxative and bring a course of probiotics with you to take daily . Hey Presto! The strategy seemed to work and a bloat free holiday could be enjoyed at last.

It is really amazing what can be learned by listening to people. If I have ever met you and you have shared your story with me, I would like to thank you. Get in touch again. I hope this book has been a good choice for you and I hope you enjoyed reading it as much as I have enjoyed writing it. I would love to hear your feedback and I invite you to join me on instagram to share you own gut tips and stories.

Instagram @yourgutfriend

Frances Flannery

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