

Leyla weighs in: Less than optimal immune system this winter? Take care of your gut!

written by Leyla Muedin MS, RD, CDN | February 14, 2014

You've probably heard it said that good health begins in the gut. It's true.

Approximately 80% of the immune system is in the gut in the Peyer's Patches, which are part of the gut-associated-lymphoid-tissue (GALT).



So what does our immune system (a.k.a. gut) need?

- Good nutrition in the form of pesticide-free, nutrient-dense foods, antioxidants and fiber. Grass-fed and organic meats, organic produce, nuts and seeds, and occasional whole grains as tolerated.
- Probiotics to help reinoculate the gut with good bacteria—crowding out the bad, such as candida.
- The amino acid L-Glutamine is good for healing the gut epithelium (surface cells—lining). In fact, it's the preferred fuel for the gut.

What's not good for the gut? Added sugars, their first cousin, white flour, and processed foods containing man-made trans fats. Indeed, sugars suppress the immune system. Ever feel like you have a cold coming on one day and the next day—voilà—you've got a full-blown head cold?

It may have been avoided by skipping that rich dessert last night.