



Healthy New Year!

NUTRITION NEWS

Abilene ISD

STUDENT NUTRITION DEPARTMENT

January 2024

IN THIS ISSUE:

NEW YEAR, BETTER MINDSET

“So much precious energy can be lost in trying to understand why something has happened. You may never get those answers. They are outside of you. But what is within you is the ability to accept that you experienced it, embrace what it taught you, and instead focus on what you want to create... Within each of us lies an incredible capacity to learn, grow, and envision something better up ahead.”

As you continue to take on this brand-new year, my hope is that you leave all the old ways that no longer serve you (whether that be the obstructive self-talk, the ruminating thoughts, the negative energy, the hamster wheel of bad habits, the “why me” attitude, etc.) behind. And instead focus on the new growth and experiences you wish to see take place. Life expands in the direction of your awareness. What will be your primary focus in the coming months? Are you willing to lift your anchor rooted in an irrelevant past and set sail for a direction filled with unlimited potential and purpose? The choice is yours.



- New Year, Better Mindset
- Let’s Talk Thyroid Gut Connection
- Gut Healing Anti-Inflammatory Foods and Supplements



- Common vs. Normal
- Recipe of the Month
- Motivational Quote of the Month

The Thyroid Gut Connection and Health

In honor of thyroid awareness month, let's talk thyroid and gut connection. First, let's get a little familiar with the thyroid.

The thyroid is a little butterfly shaped gland located in the neck, right in front of your windpipes. It is responsible for producing hormones that help regulate the body's metabolism. Hashimoto's thyroiditis, or autoimmune thyroid, and Graves disease (overactive thyroid) are the most common autoimmune thyroid diseases in the U.S., with Hashimoto's being the number one cause of hypothyroidism (underactive thyroid). Now, if you suffer from an autoimmune disease then it typically means your immune system is not functioning as it should. And did you know that about 70-80% of your immune system is comprised in your gut? This should highlight the important connection between thyroid and gut.

Your gut takes on the crucial job of digesting and absorbing nutrients. It is also responsible for converting thyroid hormones, like inactive T4 into active T3, so you can have energy, a healthy metabolism, sustained body temperature, and much more.

You have a semi-permeable, yet protective, gut lining that regulates what passes through and what needs to stay out of your body. When that gut lining is compromised and not functioning as it should, you can be met with a myriad of health issues. The job of your intestinal lining is to allow nutrients to pass through for absorption in the body. If your gut lining increases in permeability then you may suffer from "leaky gut," which puts your body at risk for allowing harmful proteins to pass through and trigger an inflammatory response. This condition is what can cause your immune system to attack the foreign invaders that were never meant to pass through your gut lining and into your blood stream in the first place. Over time, with repeat exposure to these harmful proteins/invaders, the body will respond accordingly, but unfortunately this protective mechanism can lead to immune system destruction, leading to autoimmune diseases. And for some individuals, the diagnosis of an autoimmune disease is the first sign that there's even something wrong with the gut.

The thyroid gut connection is a comprehensive topic, but what are some things you can do to combat a healthy gut and help balance hormones you may ask? See next page for suggestions.

DID YOU KNOW?

publichealthmaps.org



1 in 10 people suffer from a Thyroid disorder



1 in 8 women will develop a thyroid disorder during her lifetime



JANUARY IS
THYROID AWARENESS
MONTH



Nutrients for a Happy Thyroid



More than half of the people in America that suffer from a Thyroid disorder are undiagnosed

Some Anti-Inflammatory Foods to Add to Your Diet:

- Turmeric (active form- Curcumin)
- Wild caught salmon
- Flaxseeds
- Mushrooms
- Artichoke hearts
- Garlic
- Beets
- Avocado and avocado oil
- Broccoli and broccoli sprouts
- Leafy greens like spinach, collards, or chard
- Omega-3 EPA-DHA fish oils
- Blueberries
- Olives and olive oil
- Dark chocolate
- Matcha green tea
- Kimchi and sauerkraut

Some supplements that can help repair the gut:

- 1) **Probiotics:** beneficial effects have been seen on gut health and immune system function when on a good quality probiotic.
- 2) **L-glutamine:** is known to help with gut and immune function, especially in times of stress when your body uses this amino acid more.
- 3) **Aloe Vera:** aloe is an anti-inflammatory and has been known to aid in irritable bowel disease.
- 4) **Ginger Root:** another anti-inflammatory that contains healing properties to reduce irritation/inflammation.
- 5) **Marshmallow Root:** is known to help heal the intestinal lining and aid in constipation and diarrhea.
- 6) **Digestive Enzymes:** these are important in helping your body digest and absorb the nutrients from the food you eat. As you age, important digestive enzymes can become depleted so it may be beneficial to take specific digestive enzymes when trying to heal the gut.
- 7) **Betaine HCl:** if you have low stomach acid (crucial in food digestion) then adding this to your daily plan may be just what you need to help you feel good after eating your meals.

**With any supplement, refer to your doctor and get blood work done to check hormones and biomarkers.



Dr. Jolene Brighten
@drjolenebrighten

Bacterial overgrowth can lead to leaky gut syndrome, which increases the risk of autoimmune thyroid disease.

Patients with autoimmune thyroid disease have altered gut microbes.

NEW YEAR ENERGY

“Imagine the person you want to become. Think of his/her habits, routines, mornings, and evenings, start showing up as him/her. You don’t need to change this overnight. Start with one small step at a time to build the life, body, and mind that you envision.”

Let's Talk "Common" Versus "Normal"

Just because something is common doesn't mean it's normal.

Chronic every day bloating is common.

Depression is common.

Constant fatigue and sluggishness is common.

Brain fog is common.

But none of these are actually normal.

Feeling and looking six months pregnant at the end of every day is not normal, and in fact, is a sign of an underlying issue/imbalance, like SIBO, leaky gut, food intolerances, or deficiency in enzymes/stomach acid. Again, something that is common doesn't make it normal and it would be worth it to seek out the root cause of symptoms that have sadly become such a prevalent state so many people think they have to live in.

Japanese-Style Steak

Tacos

Serves two

Prep and cook time: About 25 min

Equipment needed: 1 large pan



Ingredients:

- 10 oz. steak strips
- 6 small flour or corn tortillas
- 4 oz. slaw mix
- 1 lime
- 1 shallot
- 1 ½ fl. oz. teriyaki glaze
- 1 ½ oz. mayonnaise
- 1 tsp. sriracha
- pepper
- 2 tsp. olive oil

Instructions:

1) Prepare the ingredients. Halve lime. Cut one half into wedges and juice the other half. Peel and halve shallot. Slice halves into thin strips. Pat steak strips dry. Coarsely chop, then separate pieces. Season all over with a pinch of pepper.

2) Quick-pickle shallots and prepare slaw. In a mixing bowl, combine shallots, 1 Tbsp. lime juice (reserve remaining for slaw), and 1 Tbsp. water. Set aside to quick-pickle, at least 10 minutes. In another mixing bowl, combine slaw mix, mayo, half the sriracha, and 1 tsp. remaining lime juice. Set aside. While shallots quick-pickle, continue recipe.

3) Cook steak strips and heat tortillas. Place a large non-stick pan over medium-high heat and add 2 tsp. olive oil. Add steak strips to hot pan and stir occasionally until no pink remains and steak strips reach a minimum internal temperature of 145 degrees, 4-6 minutes. Remove from burner. Stir in teriyaki glaze and remaining sriracha (to taste). Rest, 3 minutes. While steak strips cook, wrap tortillas in a damp paper towel and microwave until warm, 30-60 seconds.

4) Finish the dish. Fill tortillas with steak strips and top with slaw and quick-pickled shallots. Squeeze lime wedges over to taste. Enjoy!

"In two months you will have two months of progress or another two months of excuses... The choice is yours."

"This institute is an equal opportunity provider."