G.I. Tract: A True Digestive Hero

Much like G.I. Joe, your gastrointestinal (G.I.) system is a hero - it allows your body to absorb nutrients and maintain health. While the intestines are a well-known part of the G.I. tract, the microbiome is an equally important component of digestion that is often overlooked and sometimes neglected.

Approximately 40 trillion microorganisms are present in the intestines, affecting the way that you store fat, how you balance levels of glucose in your blood, and how you respond to hormones that make you feel hungry or satiated. Go through the twists and turns of the intestines to learn how to keep your gut microbiome happy and healthy.

Probiotics
Probiotics are live microorganisms that, when administered in adequate amounts, confer a health benefit on the host. Probiotics can be found in fermented foods such as yogurt, sauerkraut, and miso.

Prebiotics
Prebiotics are non-digestible carbohydrates that fuel beneficial bacteria in the colon. Prebiotics such as inulin and oligosaccharides can be found in foods such as asparagus, garlic, onion, and oats.

Nature vs Nurture
Multiple factors like DNA, your mother’s microbiome at birth, and environment can influence early development of your microbiome; however, diet is a key contributor to the long-term maintenance of your gut microbiota.

Dietary Fiber
The most central prebiotic of all is fiber. A 25-gram daily intake of dietary fiber is recommended for a 2,000 calorie diet. Good sources of dietary fiber include fruits, vegetables, beans, and whole grains.

Go with your gut!