

Improving Your Gut Sense in Pregnancy

By Steve Marini, D.C. PhD
Pathways #40, page 50



Talking Points

- ❖ Before becoming a chiropractor, Steve Marini was a microbiologist and immunologist. He explains that the microorganisms we once feared – “the ones that we needed antibiotics and vaccines for” – can be “crowded out” by the good bacteria, which can “displace the 1 percent that can cause us trouble.” (50)
- ❖ He defines “microbiome” as “the normal bacterial flora... that live in our bodies.” His focus is on the role of the microbiome during pregnancy and the neonate (newborn baby). The intent of this article is to explain the factors “leading to optimum neuroimmune development.” (50)
- ❖ Things that can disrupt the balance within our nervous and immune systems: antibiotics, lack of breastmilk as a baby, lack of introduction to birth canal flora during birth (through c-section).
- ❖ “The Terrible Triad” – birth control pills, mothers not being breastfed, grandmothers not being breastfed = leads to bowel dysbiosis (The condition that results when the natural flora of the gut are thrown out of balance) and vaginosis. But the “capacity for good bacteria can also be passed from generation to generation.” (51)
- ❖ Marini recommends Natasha McBride’s *Gut and Psychology Syndrome*.
- ❖ “If the bowel is not established properly, especially in terms of the right bacteria, your immune system won’t work properly.” (51) Things women can do that are essential to develop a healthy, optimum immune system for their child:
 1. Have birth canal flora checked throughout pregnancy through a vaginal flora assessment, especially during third trimester to check for vaginosis, strep or yeast. If strep or yeast can be eliminated early in pregnancy, invasive antibiotic treatments can be avoided. “Neuroscience, Genova, Metamatrix and U.S. Biotech provide holistic practitioners with user-friendly kits that assess the gut and birth canal microbiome... These assessments provide practitioners with baseline levels in which to evaluate imbalances and monitor the rebalancing outcomes.” (53)

2. Have a natural birth, whenever possible. Exposure to the birth canal gets good bacteria into the baby's GI tract, which "helps the baby neutralize any environmental toxins and optimizes the digestion of any foods that come into the GI tract from Mom." (51) If Mom "winds up having a c-section, a swab of the birth canal flora could be put on the baby's lips or even applied to the areola of Mom's breasts, so when the baby goes to take the first milk, it's also getting a first meal from the birth canal." (51)
3. Maintain a healthy balance of vaginal flora in the birth canal even before getting pregnant. Eat fermented foods daily.
4. Breastfeed. "The colostrum, and thereafter the breast milk, has prebiotics and probiotics." Marini explains the chemical makeup of breast milk in more detail on pg 53. (Also see resources below). The colostrum and breast milk is good for baby's gut, but the production of breast milk also "naturally gets rid of dysbiosis in Mom's birth canal, without her even knowing it." Smells coming from baby's diapers can also "trigger Mom to provide synbiotics in her breast milk" (53)
5. If switching to cow's milk, get organic, grass-fed, raw milk and convert it to yogurt. References *Pathways* 28, "The Raw Truth: Common Sense About Raw Milk From a Raw Milk Farmer" <http://pathwaystofamilywellness.org/Nutrition/the-raw-truth-common-sense-about-raw-milk-from-a-raw-milk-dairy-farmer.html>
6. Don't vaccinate if baby's GI tract is dysbiotic, because their immune system will be out of balance. "A compromised immune system is a contraindication to vaccination." Marini refers to Dr. Natasha McBrides' research in *Gut and Psychology Syndrome* that "vaccinating children with dysbiosis explains the phenomenal rise in the autism rates in the past 20 to 30 years, as well as the dramatic increase in other psychological problems." (53)

Resources

Full references for each article are available at <http://pathwaystofamilywellness.org/references.html>

University of Illinois College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences. "Breastfeeding benefits: Human breast milk ingredient adjusts to optimize for beneficial gut bacteria over time." *ScienceDaily*, 14 May 2012. www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/05/120514122836.htm

Rob Stein. "Gut Bacteria Might Guide The Workings Of Our Minds." NPR.org. November 18, 2013. www.npr.org/blogs/health/2013/11/18/244526773/gut-bacteria-might-guide-the-workings-of-our-minds

Kate Prengaman. "Infant immune systems set on low to encourage microbiome growth." *ArsTechnica.com*. November 10, 2013. <http://arstechnica.com/science/2013/11/infant-immune-systems-set-on-low-to-encourage-microbiome-growth/>

Jennifer Tow. "Gut Microbes and Poop." *Pathways* 36. Winter 2012. pathwaystofamilywellness.org/The-Outer-Womb/the-gut-microbes-and-poop.html

Edwin Shank. "Fence Rows and Gut Health: A Macro Look at Micro Flora." *Pathways* 31. Fall 2011. pathwaystofamilywellness.org/Sustainable-Community/fence-rows-and-gut-health-a-macro-look-at-microflora.html

Jeanne Ohm. "Nourishing the Terrain: Exploring the Connection Between Nutrition and Immunity." *Pathways* 36. Winter 2012. pathwaystofamilywellness.org/Nutrition/nourishing-the-terrain-exploring-the-connection-between-nutrition-and-immunity.html