

The gut is another name for the gastrointestinal (GI) tract, which is comprised of your mouth, stomach, small and large intestine, liver, pancreas, rectum and anus. These are all key players in digestion. Health of the gut is determined by the levels and diversity of the bacteria it contains. This can be changed by the types and variety of food we eat.

We all have trillions of bacteria living in our guts which collectively make up our 'microbiome'. The microbiome is crucial for our overall health and affects lots of aspects such as our mood and immunity.

Research suggests that we should aim to consume at least 30 different plant foods per week, these are referred to as 'plant points'. 1 point is gained from every plant consumed within that week

30 points may seem difficult to reach at first, however its not just fruit and veg that count. nuts and seeds count, and so do herbs and spices – but they are only 1/4 of a point each.



What Counts?

Vegetables (1)

carrots, onions,
lettuce, mushrooms,
sweet potato,
tomatoes

Fruit (1)

bananas, oranges,
avocados,
strawberries

Wholegrains (1)

oats, brown rice,
whole-wheat
bread, quinoa

Nuts & seeds (1)

almonds,
pistachios, sesame
seeds, peanuts

Beans & legumes (1)

kidney beans, peas,
lentils, chickpeas

Herbs & spices (¼)

basil, ginger,
paprika, black
pepper

Top tips for maximizing your plant points:

- Buy bags of mixed nuts & seeds – sprinkle them on porridge, salads, etc...
- Buy bags of mixed salad leaves rather than one type.
- Homemade soups and smoothies – you can pack in as much fruit and veg as you like.
- Instead of buying 2 red peppers, buy 1 red and 1 yellow as they count as one point each.
- Try different pastas – lots of supermarkets sell pasta made of lentils or peas.
- Use mixed herbs and spices – making a curry with garam masala can add an extra 2 points to your weekly total.



Suggested links for
further information:

gutmicrobiotaforhealth.com

theguthealthdoctor.com

thegutstuff.com

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The gut cannot be spoken about without mentioning fibre! Fibre is found in foods such as wholegrains, fruits and vegetables.

A fibre rich diet helps maintain good digestion of food and helps keep us feeling fuller for longer

Fibre also feeds the good bacteria in our gut.

Fermented foods are great for gut health! these include kefir, sauerkraut, kimchi and kombucha.

This is because they contain probiotics (The good bacteria your gut needs!)



Why is gut health important?

Gut health and the microbiome is fast growing topic with more and more emerging research being produced. Research suggests that maintaining a healthy gut microbiome can have many health benefits. These include;

- immune function
- digestion
- maintaining a healthy body weight
- brain health

as well as a whole host of other positive effects.

Gut health is influenced by many factors, some of which cannot be altered such as; age, genetics, birth route and infant feeding. However some factors can be influenced by the individual, such as exercise, stress, drug, alcohol and cigarette intake and of course dietary intake.

Gut Health & Plant Diversity

BY MAGIC MICROBES

