**Reflection on Taking Care of Gut Health**

This video stood out to me as I had recently studied about gut microbiome in the 3rd semester of my Graduate degree. It was interesting to listen to Registered dietitian, Elena Zidaru, discuss the role one’s gut plays in their physical and mental health, how it works, and the types of food that boost its health. The complex interplay of gut physiology, gut microbiota, and the environment keep the gut healthy and functioning. Something that I found incredibly interesting was that microbes comprise around 1-3% of your body weight which is between 2-6 lbs.! Another interesting thing the dietitian pointed out was that by the age of 3, the gut composition you have will basically stick with you for the rest of your life. That is, at 3 years of age, the gut composition begins to resembles that of an adult.1

Gut microbiome was something I hadn’t paid much attention to until I studied it and this lecture does a very good job on highlighting the importance of the gut and the probiotic and prebiotic foods which promote its health. I really appreciated the advice that was given on what to look out for when purchasing these foods.

**Reflection on “What is Emotional Eating?”**

I have always been interested in observing how our emotions and behaviors are tied to food. This lecture does an exceptional job at explaining emotional vs physical hunger, the triggers that lead to emotional consumption that are associated with mental health and lifestyle, and the various coping strategies you can adopt to deal with it. Stephanie Amir, Dietetics and Nutrition Science Student at San Francisco State University, defines emotional eating as the consumption of food in response to feelings other than hunger. One of my favourite parts of this video was when she explained “The Comfort Eating Carousel” and how it’s similar to substance abuse behaviors which starts off as providing momentary relief from stress but ultimately leads to guilt, which perpetuates the cycle.2

I learned many coping methods to deal with emotional eating that I wasn’t aware of. The STOP method particularly stood out to me and it’s something I will definitely try once the food cravings hit. Stephanie was very engaging throughout the lecture and spoke with clarity and conciseness which made the information easy to comprehend.

**Reflection on “Nutritional Supplements: What’s Hype and What’s Hope?”**

Nutritional supplements are an area I don’t have much knowledge in which is why this lecture caught my eye. Dr. Ricki Pollycove does a fantastic job bringing to light the importance of appreciating the human body and its innate functions of self-maintenance and healing. She points out that micronutrients do a lot for your body, from maintaining normal cell and tissue function to assisting in metabolism. She discusses particular supplements that are often advertised for enhancing our health and performance while debunking many popular claims.

The nutritional supplements industry is out of control and one of the things that shocked me was the amount of money spent on supplements marketed for weight loss, muscle-building and sexual function. That’s likely be due to all the marketing strategies and the hopes of people that these supplements will “help me lose weight more easily” or “make me more attractive” etc. when according to research, dietary supplements for weight loss, muscle-building, and sexual function isn’t medically recommended.3 I really appreciate the emphasis Dr. Ricki gave on how we can solve all these problems we’re having simply by eating healthy.

**Reference**

1. Community Health Resource Center Community Health Lectures | Community Health Resource Center. chrcsf.org. Accessed June 10, 2024. https://chrcsf.org/videos/community-health-lectures/#gut2021

‌2, Community Health Resource Center Community Health Lectures | Community Health Resource Center. chrcsf.org. Accessed June 10, 2024. https://chrcsf.org/videos/community-health-lectures/#whatisee

‌3. Community Health Resource Center Community Health Lectures | Community Health Resource Center. chrcsf.org. Accessed June 10, 2024. https://chrcsf.org/videos/community-health-lectures/#nutrisupp

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