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Innate Choice Healthy News Volume 11 - The Role of Probiotics in Brain Health, Cognitive Functioning and Emotional Wellness

In previous issues of the Innate Choice® Healthy News we have reported on the link between Omega-3 fish oil and improved brain function. This link is supported by the fact that Omega-3 fatty acids are vital building blocks of the brain and nervous system. We have also described in previous newsletters the role of beneficial bacteria (probiotics) in improving and maintaining immune system function, digestive system function and vitamin production. This role is supported by the fact that probiotic bacteria are necessary, essential requirements for digestive and immune function as well as the production of nutrients such as vitamins and short chain fatty acids. In fact over 90% of the cells in the human body consist of bacteria located in the digestive tract.

This month we are going to reveal a STARTLING FACT - that being sufficient in probiotics is also critical for proper brain function and emotional wellness! While this connection may be difficult to comprehend, it is well supported by current scientific research. It is well accepted that probiotics play a significant role in immune function, digestive health and overall wellness and prevention. Research tells us that the intake of probiotics has been associated with beneficial effects on the immune system, such as improved disease resistance and diminished risk of allergies (Ezendam, Nutr Rev, 2006, Jan;64(1):1-14). Therefore being deficient in probiotics would make one more susceptible to infections. How does this affect brain function and emotional wellness? Read on for the answer!

Evidence has accumulated demonstrating the link between serious psychiatric problems and microbial infections. A recent article in Scientific American (April 17, 2008) states that "studies have repeatedly linked schizophrenia to prenatal infections". It says that "the strongest evidence pertains to schizophrenia, but autism, bipolar disorder and obsessive-compulsive disorder have also been linked to bacterial, viral or parasitic infections in utero, in childhood or in maturity." This has been supported by more scholarly research entitled "Are some cases of psychosis caused by microbial agents: A review of the evidence" (Yolken and Torrey, Molecular Psychiatry, 2008:13).

More significantly, clinical experience has demonstrated that some of these same psychiatric conditions can be improved with the re-establishment of the normal intestinal flora (probiotics). One British researcher, Dr. Natasha Campbell-McBride, MD, MMedSci (neurology), MMedSci (nutrition), states that "an autistic child needs a very special nutritional management, a major part of it being putting his gut flora right...in order to rebalance the gut flora it is essential to use a strong multi-strain probiotic" (Campbell-McBride, CAM journal, 2003). She continues to say "probiotics are the absolute foundation but they must be the right sort and that means a multi-strain product containing soil bacteria". Innate Choice™ Probiotic Sufficiency™ is the world's premier multi-strain probiotic formula, containing nine of the most essential species of beneficial bacteria!

More research suggests that probiotics have the potential to lower systemic inflammation, decrease oxidative stress, improve nutritional status and correct bacterial overgrowth in the small intestine (Logan and Katzman, *Medical Hypotheses*, 2005:64). These positive changes have been linked to increased brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF), a protein that supports the survival of existing neurons (nerve cells) and encourages the growth of new neurons and synapses (connections between neurons). These same researchers suggest that, since patients suffering from depression have been shown to have altered gastrointestinal (GI) function and lowered omega-3 fatty acid status, supplementation with probiotics and omega-3's might be an important addition to standard care (Logan and Katzman, *Medical Hypotheses*, 2005:64). Further, research also indicates that probiotic bacteria require sufficient omega 3 fatty acids and sufficient raw fruit and vegetable intake (fiber) to survive (Bengmark, *S. Nutrition*, 1998:14) Clearly the most logical approach is to be sufficient in these ESSENTIAL nutrients to PROMOTE health and wellness and PREVENT illness!

We trust that this month's issue has provided you with more evidence that focusing on wellness and prevention is the only logical solution! When you are sufficient in what your body needs and avoid those things that are toxic, you will naturally gravitate towards health and vitality and away from illness - it's that simple. Until next time, live innately and GET and STAY WELL!