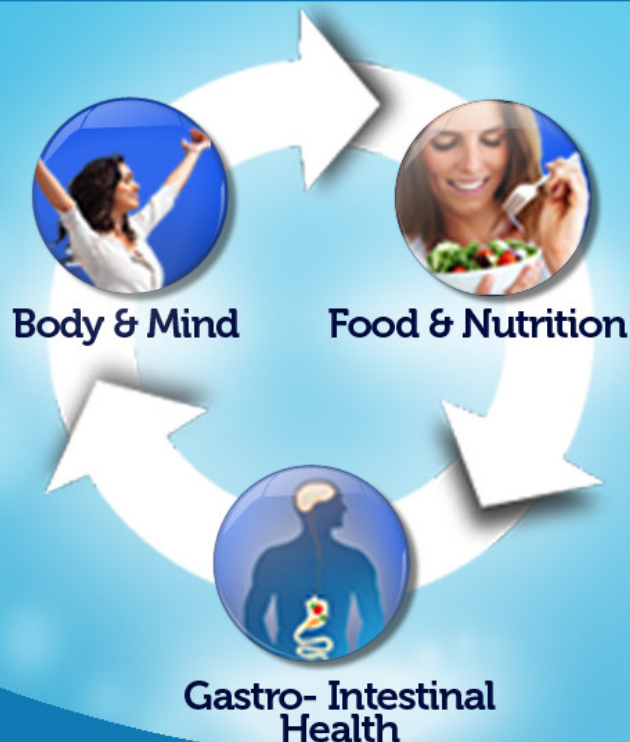


Your Gut Feelings

The Food Body Mind Connection

Body Health & Wellness



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Introduction

Your body is made up of multiple organs. The organs include the nervous system and in particular the brain; heart, lungs, stomach, intestines, liver, pancreas, kidneys and bladder, endocrine glands, such as, the pituitary, thyroid, adrenal, ovaries and testicles; the organs of the immune system e.g. the thymus, spleen and lymph glands including those that reside in the gut wall; bones; muscles and skin.

The individual organs perform different but essential functions. They also interact and are interdependent of each other. For example, your brain function (thinking, feelings and behaviour) is affected by the supply of blood from the heart, hormone production from the endocrine organs, such as, the thyroid and adrenal glands, nutrients and any toxins absorbed from the intestines.

The organs and their ability to function play a very important role in your health and wellness. The organs can be affected by inherent genetic or environmental factors such as the air we breathe, alcohol, drugs: and the quality and quantity of the food we eat. The nutrients in food are the building blocks of all the cells which in turn combine in various combinations to form our organs and determine their capacity to function.

Since the bio feed-back to our conscious brain is very limited, awareness of these organs and understanding of their functions is not naturally available to us.

Better body awareness and understanding can be achieved through education, seeking health professional advice and appropriate investigations.

Disease and the Medical Perspective

From a medical perspective, good health is defined as 'the absence of symptoms and disease, together with a state of mental and physical well-being'.

Illness often occurs by 'stealth' in that there may be a gradual, insidious and often unseen erosion of health and quality of life.

People can eat to excess, or be physically inactive for years on end, come to no obvious harm and believe that they will continue to come to no harm in the future. Unfortunately, this may not necessarily be the case. Many of those apparently 'getting away with it' may, in fact, be in a poor state of health without being aware of it. As with many things in life, appearances are often deceiving.

People may also believe they will get warning signals of any impending problems and have time to act before any harm has been caused. Unfortunately, this too may not necessarily be the case. There are many illnesses that do not present until in an advanced state.

From a diagnostic perspective, there are three basic rules:

1. Specific symptoms

Where there are specific symptoms, such as, headache, fever, chest pain, shortness of breath, abdominal pain, bloating and diarrhoea. It is frequently believed that these symptoms, when chronic and mild, are a normal part of life and are not harmful. It is important to be aware, however, that they may be the first indication of an underlying or developing illness.

2. Non-specific symptoms

Where there are non-specific symptoms, such as, feeling chronically unwell, tired, low in energy, moody, irritable, stressed or difficulty in coping. It is frequently believed that non-specific symptoms are a normal part of life. It is important to be aware, however, they can be the first indication of an underlying or developing illness. Non-specific symptoms, like specific symptoms, can be an indication that things may not be a hundred per cent with your health.

3. No symptoms

It is not uncommon to have no obvious symptoms despite disease being present. For example, people with high blood pressure are usually unaware of its occurrence until their blood pressure is checked. Similarly, people with osteoporosis (bone thinning) are usually unaware of its presence until experiencing a fracture or having a bone density test, also people who have early-stage diabetes commonly experience no obvious symptoms prior to being diagnosed. There are many other examples besides these.

Even in the absence of illness both specific and non-specific symptoms can still interfere with quality of life.

Loss of Well-being

Loss of well-being tends to be a gradual process and can have multiple causes including medical, lifestyle, nutritional and/or psychological factors. Common manifestations include 'Tired all the time syndrome' (TATTS, which manifests as chronic mental and/or physical tiredness), chronic energy depletion and chronic stress. Particularly when severe or manifesting over prolonged periods, these symptoms may be accompanied by a loss of concentration, poor memory, unstable mood, lack of motivation, feelings of physical weakness and difficulties with day-to-day coping. Other possible symptoms are insomnia, depression, anxiety, impaired digestion, bloating, diarrhoea, constipation and frequent and/or urgent urination.

The Underlying Cause

Factors causing organ dysfunction, symptoms and diseases are commonly a combination of genetic make up, the environment and life style issues. The main life-style issues relate to the food consumed, physical activity, psychological and social factors.

Management of the underlying causes is usually required for long-term improvement in health, wellness and prevention. As is often stated, prevention is better than cure.

Options for Improving Health and Wellness

1. **Develop a general knowledge and understanding of:**
 - a. the basic functions of the body and mind;
 - b. the food, gut, body and mind connections;
 - c. the aspects of food that affect health and wellness:
 - nutrient quality and quantity;
 - allergies and intolerances;
 - toxins;
 - infective organisms e.g. bacteria and parasites.

2. **Develop an awareness of your own symptoms.**

3. **Seek qualified healthcare professional advice**

Seek qualified advice to diagnose the condition together with any associated conditions and any identifiable underlying causes. In the process undergo any appropriate investigations that assist with clarifying the diagnosis and any underlying causes..

4. **Undergo regular health checks in the same way you service your car.**

5. **Seek treatment of both the condition and the underlying causes.**

Attending to any causes may expedite and improve recovery, as well as, prevent health and wellness problems in the future.

6. **Don't hesitate to get support if required as it can be very hard to manage.**