

The Gut-Brain Axis: How Your Gut Microbiota Influences Stress, Mood, and Mental Health



Glossary

Brain

The organ in your head that controls thoughts, feelings, memory, and actions.

Central Nervous System (CNS)

The brain and spinal cord, which control most of the body's functions.

Cognitive Function

The mental skills your brain uses to think, learn, remember, and solve problems ("*thinking*").

Dopamine

A neurotransmitter that affects pleasure, motivation, and movement.

Enteric Nervous System (ENS)

A network of nerves in the gut that controls digestion. It can work on its own or in connection with the brain.

Gut

The part of your body that digests food — including your stomach, intestines, and bowels.

Gut Microbiome

All the genetic material (DNA) of the microorganisms living in your gut.

Gut Microbiota

The collection of microorganisms living in your gut.

Gut Microbiotic Dysbiosis

An unhealthy imbalance of microorganisms in the gut, which can affect digestion and mood.

Gut Microbiota Symbiosis

When the gut's microorganisms and your body work together in a healthy, balanced way.

Gut-Brain Axis

The connection between your gut and brain, where they send messages to each other to help control mood, digestion, and health.

Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)

A common gut condition causing stomach pain, bloating, and changes in bowel habits.

Mental Health

A person's emotional, psychological, and social wellbeing — how we think, feel, and handle life.

Microorganisms

Tiny living things like bacteria, viruses, and fungi that can live inside and outside the body.

Neurotransmitter

A chemical messenger that carries signals between nerve cells in the brain and body.

Prebiotics

Foods or fibres that feed the good(or beneficial) bacteria in your gut.

Probiotics

Live helpful bacteria you can eat, often in yoghurt or supplements, to support gut health.

Serotonin

A neurotransmitter that helps control mood, sleep, and digestion. Most of it is made in the gut.

The Second Brain (The Gut)

A nickname for the enteric nervous system because it can work on its own and affects mood and health.

Vagus Nerve

A large nerve that connects the brain to the gut and other organs, helping them communicate.