health&wellness

Functional Medicine: Gas? Bloating?



By Dr. Cynthia Crosser

Are you the person who has become uncomfortable leaving home because of bloating and/or gas or even belching? This is a symptom that is very commonly mentioned by patients. Most people today will approach "Dr. Google," maybe listen to a video or perhaps even purchase a probiotic or digestive enzymes in hopes of feeling a reduction in their symptoms. Some get lucky, at least for a short while. Most do not in my experience.

There are many variables that come in to play within the process of digestion and elimination. We can start with gluten. Merely the elimination of gluten may not cause change. Why? Because gluten (gliadins) represent only part of wheat. Wheat also contains lectin to which you may also be sensitive as evidenced by antibodies in your blood. If this

tests positive, foods containing lectin should also be avoided. I would not recommend avoiding these foods without testing as they also contain beneficial nutrients. In addition, you may be consuming foods that cross react with gluten and this will also cause an immune response and symptoms.

As we age we produce fewer digestive enzymes and the acidity of the stomach may factor in as well. This is another component for effective digestion prior to food being moved in to the small intestine.

Then I have patients that self diagnose with SIBO and initiate a FODMAP Diet. While this may be helpful, it should not be long term and should be done one-on-one with a healthcare provider. Again, testing should be done to determine if this indeed is the condition in question.

Intestinal permeability, known as leaky gut, is another consideration due to the fact that an unhealthy gut lining will not effectively assimilate nutrients for proper digestion. The pancreas is a player in the process of digestion and investigating the potential for this to be part of the issue is important too.

If you are not consuming adequate amounts of soluble fiber on a daily basis, you will not provide the food for a healthy microbiome and may, in fact, have a desirable environment for the growth of Candida. A functional stool test would help to assess if this is a factor because the pH of the stool will be more alkaline. The stool sample will usually also show reduced short chain fatty

Fats may also be a problem if you have had your gall bladder removed or exhibit cholestasis or thickening of bile as a result of a condition like hypothyroidism. These are basic explanations of potential causative factors for bloating and gas. As you can see these symptoms are not related

to one cause and you could waste money, time and be sacrificing your health without the appropriate information that would be gleaned from seeking professional advice. I will also recommend specific testing based on a thorough history and consultation to determine how to best address this so you move about freely, comfortably and can actually be healthier! For more information go to our website at www. crossernaturalhealth.com.

For more information contact Dr. Cynthia Crosser at www.crossernaturalhealth.com or call 302-994-1010.





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