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Dr. Stephen Wangen

Is It a Nervous Stomach?

Does stress or anxiety make your digestive problems worse? Have you been told that you have a nervous stomach? Does that make you think that your digestive problems are all in your head?

Getting over this misconception is one of the biggest challenges that we have when we treat people with digestive problems and begin to educate them about the causes behind their physical problems. The overwhelming “conventional wisdom” for dealing with digestive problems, for which there is seemingly no answer, is to blame anxiety and the somewhat mythological gut/brain connection.

Yes, the stomach and the brain are certainly connected, but everything in the body is connected! And yes, the digestive tract does contain a fascinating second brain. But taking antidepressants or anti-anxiety medications is highly unlikely to cure your digestive problem. If you're lucky, then you may see some benefit when taking these types of medications. But they are not treating the cause of the problem - they are treating a symptom.

When stress or anxiety impacts your digestive tract and triggers your symptoms, then it's easy to be convinced that those things are the cause. But stress and anxiety will exacerbate any health problem, and they will generally find your weakness and make it even worse.

The more important question is, “What is making your digestive system so susceptible to stress and anxiety?” Not everyone who gets into a stressful situation gets digestive problems. So there must be a cause behind this interesting connection.

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The **IBS Treatment Center** is the nation's leading facility for the successful treatment of Irritable Bowel Syndrome

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Our job at that IBS Treatment Center is to try to help you to find that cause. It is a detective process and a highly unique specialty that is very different from the colonoscopies and conventional approach of looking for a structural problem or visual damage. Those tests are likely to be normal.

This is of course frustrating and confounding for people with digestive problems. They know that there is a significant problem, but no one seems to believe them because the tests keep coming back normal. Unfortunately this leads to the impression or the direct statement that their problem is all in their head.

In our experience, this is rarely the case. But after a while it can become difficult to tell which came first, the diarrhea or the anxiety. This is because if you're always looking around for a bathroom, then you've got stress and anxiety. But that doesn't mean it's causing the diarrhea.

Of course, dealing with significant mental/emotional health issues is an important part of being healthy. But don't let yourself be talked into having one of those issues if it really isn't you.

We have successfully treated literally hundreds of people who spent years, or maybe their entire life, thinking that their problem was all due to a nervous stomach. If that is you, then please come see us. We want to help you explore this issue in a completely new way and help you put an end to your digestive problems.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Chef to Plate Awareness Campaign, May 2011

Chef to Plate: Celebrating Restaurants Serving Up Gluten Free Awareness

Chef to Plate is a national awareness campaign sponsored by the Gluten Intolerance Group of North America. Last year the campaign was a huge success, reaching millions of people with information. The purpose of this campaign is to spread awareness of celiac disease and gluten intolerances through the restaurants that currently provide gluten-free offerings. *It is not about the promotion of any specific restaurant program.*



Chef to Plate recognizes those restaurants that currently support persons living with gluten intolerances. Any restaurant that offers a gluten-free menu can get involved. This program is not about recruiting new restaurants in serving gluten-free meals, but rather about working with those restaurants that already do, and bring awareness of gluten intolerances to the local community through these restaurants.

[Invitation to be a Campaign Leader](#)
[Campaign Leader FAQs](#)
[Sign up Your Restaurant](#)
[Participating Restaurants](#)

[Gluten Intolerance Group of North America](#)

National Oatmeal Month

Did you know that January is National Oatmeal Month? Indeed, oatmeal is consumed in January at a rate unmatched in any other month of the year. According to Quaker Oats Company, Americans bought enough oatmeal in January last year to make 470 million bowls.



There are many reasons to celebrate oatmeal, not the least among them, is its long-appreciated health benefits. Oats boast both high protein and complex carbohydrates. Their water-soluble fiber actually improves the level of LDL (“good”) cholesterol and assists in a slow digestion rate, helping to maintain stable blood-glucose levels. In fact, oats contain more soluble fiber than any other grain, meaning you will feel fuller longer. This healthy cereal grain can even claim that it may help reduce the risk of heart disease.

Years ago, oats were regularly on the “must avoid” list for those with celiac and gluten intolerance. But now it is well understood that oats do NOT contain gluten and it is only because they are often contaminated in processing and/or packaging with other gluten-containing grains that they are included in the gluten category.

Current medical opinions are fairly united on the fact that uncontaminated oats are safe for most celiacs, once their disease is well-controlled with a fully gluten-free diet. Still, as with any food, some people will react to oats due to allergies or a sensitivity to food proteins (avenins in oats), so it is best to discuss with your own health practitioner how and when to introduce oats into your gluten-free diet.

Once you have decided to introduce oats to your gluten-free diet, consider them on a “use caution” list. As said, we now know that that oats themselves do not contain gluten, but due to cross-contamination with gluten-containing grains, it is imperative that you buy only Certified Gluten-Free Oats if following a gluten-free diet. Oats that are not so certified, almost certainly have been contaminated in growing, milling, processing and packaging, and therefore, contain gluten.



Many thanks to Jules Gluten Free for this story on oatmeal.



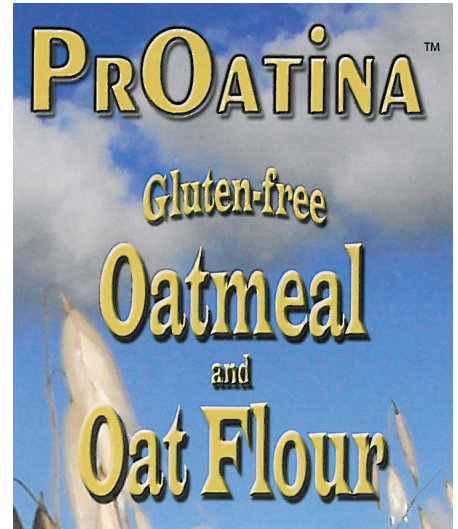
For delicious recipes:
Oatmeal Cake, Oatmeal Cookies, Oatmeal Soap, and more, visit
www.julesglutenfree.com/

(But please don't eat the soap.)

Montana Gluten Free Processors

What do you get when you take an interested agricultural researcher and some can-do, Montana-farmer spirit motivated by personal connections to loved ones with celiac disease? You get some great new innovations for the gluten-free community!

In mid January we here at the IBS Treatment Center were visited by Larry and Dean of Montana Gluten Free Processors. Having already corresponded with them and received some samples, we knew they had good stuff, but it was great to meet them in person. Larry had baked some excellent bread using one of their mixes, as well as some pumpkin muffins. Both were great. Most gluten free breads lack protein, have a crumbly texture, and don't taste very good. The bread we sampled was much, much better than most. It was good enough to fool you into thinking it was just homemade, regular, light brown bread. The texture and flavor were outstanding. Certainly, an excellent bread for sandwiches (with or without toasting!).



The MGFP guys are using several innovations:

- 1. Gluten Free Oats and oat products.** Hull-less oat that are grown gluten free, harvested gluten free, processed and packaged in dedicated gluten free facilities and tested onsite using ELISA technology to be gluten free. They use these oats to make several great products - oat meal, oat bran, and oat flour.
- 2. Gluten Free Timothy Flour.** Specially grown timothy (which you may think of as hay for horses). Their group of local Montana farmers grow the timothy for the grain, which they also grow, harvest, process and store gluten free. The flour they make from these seeds has high protein and high fiber. In fact, you can use it as a straight replacement for wheat flour in breads (it does require xantham gum for yeast risen breads).
- 3. High omega-3 and -6 Oils from Camelina.** Camelina has been cultivated for centuries as an oil source. It grows well in Montana and is high in the omega 3 and omega 6 fatty acids. Oils are always gluten free, but not always high in good Omega-3 and -6. MGFP also sell the crushed seeds (meal) as feed for chickens that produce high Omega -3 and -6 eggs.

By working with local farmers in dedicated fields, MGFP has great control over quality and purity. They are also dedicated to helping grow the community of gluten free support across the USA. To that end they supply free samples and a kit of information to those that want to help. Contact the IBS Treatment Center (206-264-1111 or email at info@ibstreatmentcenter.com) if you would like a sample kit. We have a limited supply so we will pass your name along to Larry and Dean if we run out.

www.montanaglutentfree.com

New Gluten Free Support Group

Janell's Guten-Free Market in Everett announces the formation of a new GIG Support Group. Meetings will be held monthly with the kick-off meeting to be held next week on Thursday, January 27th at 6:30 PM, at the market. Next month's meeting will be February 24th.

In anticipation of Valentine's Day, Janell recommends the following allergen-free, sweet treats:

Valentine's Chocolates from Amanda's Confections <http://www.amandasown.com/>

ORGRAN Heart Shaped Shortbread Cookies <http://www.orgran.com/products/88/>

Yummy Earth Lollipops just \$3.99 for a bag of 50. <http://www.yummyearth.com/aboutus.html>
Great for classroom treats!

Janell's Gluten Free Market Everett, WA

Some Say January Should be National Pizza Month...

Whether you have a gluten intolerance, or you are adopting a healthy lifestyle, **Dad's Gluten Free Pizza Crust** offers an amazing alternative to everyone's favorite food. Dad's pizza crusts are par-baked, each individually wrapped and ready to add your favorite toppings.

During January Dad's is offering a 25% discount with the purchase of 5 or more crusts. If you order 10 or more crusts, shipping is automatically free! Enter code 25JANOFF at check out. Offer expires January 31, 2011.

www.glutenfreepizza.com



Dr. Wangen's Scheduled Presentations

If you would like Dr. Wangen, or a representative of the IBS Treatment Center, to speak to your organization please contact us via email at info@ibstreatmentcenter.com or at 206-264-1111.

PCC GLUTEN FREE BAKING CLASSES Info on PCC website and PCC Cooks Calendar
Teaching the classes together will be Dr. Wangen "The Gluten-free Doctor" and Reginald Beck "The Fearless Baker"
Register through PCC.

Edmonds PCC

Friday, January 21, 6:30 to 9 p.m.

Issaquah PCC

Monday, January 24, 6:30 to 9 p.m.

Greenlake PCC

Monday, March 7, 6:30 to 9 p.m.

Redmond PCC

Friday April 8, 6:30 to 9 p.m.



Tumwater/Olympia, WA

Saturday, February 5, 2011, 1PM

Tyee Event Center, 5757 Littlerock Road SW, Tumwater WA. Book signing after the talk at G.F. Joe's Market, which is just across the parking lot. Hosted by G.F. Joe's Market. Free, open to the public.

Federal Way, WA

Saturday, March 5, 2011 Time TBD.

Afternoon class at Marlene's Market and Deli. Open to the public, registration required.

Rochester, NY

Tuesday, March 15, 2011, 7PM

Social Hall at St. Anne Church, 1600 Mount Hope Ave, Rochester, NY 14620.

Hosted by Rochester Celiac Support Group. Free, open to the public.

Denver, CO

Thursday, March 17, 2011 7PM

First Plymouth Church in Englewood. Hosted by the Celiac Sprue Association in Denver.

Free, open to the public.

St. Louis/Shrewbury, MO

Saturday, March 19, 2011. Dr. Wangen to speak at 9:00AM

Shrewbury City Center, 5200 Shrewbury Ave. Hosted by Andrea's Gluten Free. www.andreasglutenfree.com

Day long informational gluten-free fair. Contact: maureen@andreasglutenfree.com or 636-536-9953

Chicago, IL

April 29-May 1, 2011. Dr. Wangen to speak at 8:45AM on Saturday, April 30

Gluten and Allergen Free Expo, held at The Wyndham Hotel, 3000 Warrenville Rd, Lisle.

Hosted by Gluten Intolerant Group of Greater Chicago. Open to the public, registration required.