

HERBAL TREATMENT OF DYSBIOSIS

Q. Would long-term use of antibiotics for my acne cause a problem? I often have wind and bloating after meals and my eyes and skin feel itchy.

A. Bacteria are necessary for proper digestion but a healthy gut requires the right balance of different types. Repeated use of antibiotics can lead to an overgrowth of some types of bacteria causing other beneficial ones to be destroyed. This can cause food to ferment and putrefy in your gut and toxins to build up, leading to several unwanted symptoms.

If you have some or all of the following symptoms, then you probably have an imbalance of bacteria, called dysbiosis. *There may be other reasons for such symptoms, so consult a qualified health practitioner to be sure.*

- Abdominal pain, churning and/or bloating.
- Excess gas.
- Eating fruit causes bloating (due to the sugars)
- Frequent tiredness, and/or dizziness and light-headedness (due to toxins being absorbed by the liver)
- Confusion, poor memory or mood swings.
- High intake or cravings for sugar, refined carbohydrates or alcohol (these feed bacteria and yeasts)
- Excessive itching, especially skin, vagina, rectum, scalp (systemic yeast infection).

Keeping a food diary.

You have to be very strict about your diet by cutting out all foods with yeast and sugar, including fruit and milk (containing the sugars fructose and lactose), fermented products like soy sauce, wine and beer and fungal products like mushrooms. Do this for 10 days. You then re-introduce 1 or 2 foods at a time to see if symptoms return. Increase vegetables, proteins and essential fats, for example those from oily fish. This is not an easy thing to do but definitely worth the effort. Consult a nutritionist or herbalist who will be able to help.

Herbs that help.

Anti-fungal, broad-spectrum anti-bacterials and herbs that support the immune system should be taken at the same time as the dietary changes. Particularly effective herbs and spices to add to food are Garlic, Oregano, Cinnamon, Fennel and Cardamom. You can get these from wholefood shops and supermarkets. Chamomile taken as a tea is helpful. A herbalist can prescribe tinctures of Barberry or Goldenseal, Goldenrod and

Calendula. Echinacea is one of many plants which provide immune system support.

I would suggest you try herbal treatment from a qualified herbalist for your acne, so that you can gradually stop the antibiotics.

It is advisable to consult a qualified herbalist before taking herbs.

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