**Unlocking the Secrets of Gut Health with Meg Lagerwey |S4 Ep106**

Today, we're going to be speaking to Meg Largaway. She is a health and wellness coach who has a deep focus on gut health. And I have been following Meg for a while on Instagram.

And she's going to tell us a little bit more about herself, about her journey to becoming a kind of gut guru. 70% of your immune system is located in your gut. Your bacteria actually train your immune system.

It's like a boot camp. So from infancy, your gut bacteria are telling your immune system how to react. So if you're not going to have a strong and balanced gut microbiome, you're not going to have a strong and balanced immune system.

What can I do? Like, what would be if a mum was pregnant right now and she's got the chance to follow the gold standard to produce the best gut microbiome for a baby? What are those factors? Welcome to Sense by Meg Fora, the podcast that's brought to you by Parent Sense, the app that takes guesswork out of parenting. If you're a new parent, then you are in good company. Your host, Meg Fora, is a well-known OT, infant specialist and the author of eight parenting books.

Each week, we're going to spend time with new mums and dads just like you to chat about the week's wins, the challenges and the questions of the moment. Subscribe to the podcast. Download the Parent Sense app and Catchmaker every week to make the most of that first year of your little one's life.

And now meet your host. Welcome back, mums and dads. This is Sense by Meg Fora and I am Meg Fora.

And I am delighted that you have joined me today for what is going to be a fascinating deep dive into gut health. And as you know, each week I'm joined either by a mum who asks me questions or by a expert who I've picked out carefully to share some of her knowledge with us around something to do with parenting. And today is exactly that type of podcast.

Today, we're going to be speaking to Meg Largaway. She is a health and wellness coach who has a deep focus on gut health. And I have been following Meg for a while on Instagram.

And she's going to tell us a little bit more about herself, about her journey to becoming a kind of gut guru. And so, yeah, huge welcome to you, Meg. Thanks for joining us.

Thanks, Meg. Thanks for having me. It's awesome to be on this podcast with you.

And yeah, I'll dive right in. My name is Meg and I am a coach, like you mentioned, specializing in gut health. And I kind of started this journey years and years ago when I just struggled with so many issues of my own and just severe bloating, fatigue, acne, anxiety, all these things that I didn't know stemmed from the gut.

And that's when I actually started to study it and then started to help and coach people where I can. Yeah, it's a fascinating field. And I think, as you know, there's so much to learn.

So, yeah, I'm excited to speak about it. Absolutely. And, you know, interestingly, my journey is not dissimilar to yours.

I have become quite obsessed with the gut, just personally, not in terms of my professional life. And I'll actually just share a little bit about my journey with it. My youngest daughter, like you, was battling with all of the things you actually described, you know, from acne to mood changes and so she decided they have a project that they do here in the UK, which is where we're living at the moment, where they have to do a very deep dive into some topic.

And she decided to do teenage mental health as her topic. And as she started to investigate teenage mental health and she was also dealing with all these other symptoms, she then came across all the work on the gut microbiome. And so she became completely obsessed by it.

And I've had to proofread her project. And in turn, I've become obsessed by it. The impact on us goes way beyond just our skin and our bloating, which are all the obvious things, but very deeply into our mental health as well.

And so it was about a month ago or about a month ago, Kath McGaw, who, as you know, is my partner in all things baby feeding, who and I were chatting and she said to me, you know what, Meg, what's going to come out in the research in a couple of years time is that if babies don't have robust gut microbiomes, they are going to have a higher likelihood of diabetes, a higher likelihood of obesity and also mental health issues. And she said, all of these things that we're seeing of high anxiety in our teenagers, it's stemming from what goes on in infancy. So when she started to say that to me, I was like, hold on.

This is really, really important for parents to understand and to hear about. And so it was at that point that I started to follow you. Meg, what is your Instagram profile again? It's the good gut guru.

The good gut guru. So I started to follow a couple of lines in between each of the words little underscores, and I started to follow you and find all these amazing recipes and started to really engage with your content. And at that point, I decided, no, we need to get you on.

We need to talk about how we can protect our gut microbiomes and particularly our babies. So that's what we're going to be talking about today, Meg. And I'm just delighted that you're here with me.

Awesome, I'm excited. So for people who are completely new on this journey, could you give us a little bit of an idea of what is a gut microbiome in the first place and what is its impact on our overall health and particularly with a focus on little ones? So the way I like to describe a microbiome is if you were to, you know, look at a rainforest and zoom in on one particular area, you would find all sorts of creatures and spiders and bugs all living together in harmony, basically. And that's that would be a microbiome.

When we speak about the gut microbiome, we are talking primarily about what's happening in the large intestine. So the microbiome that exists there, there's bacteria, there's fungi, there's viruses, there's archaea. And they all live together harmoniously doing different things.

And these bacteria specifically, we have your beneficial and your disruptive bacteria. So essentially, you do have disruptive bacteria, but you don't want to disturb that balance. So there's trillions and trillions of bacteria in your in your gut.

It's you can't even fathom the number. And and also just to note, you've also got a microbiome on your skin. You've got an oral microbiome.

You've got a woman, have got a vaginal microbiome. So these different microbiomes all over your body. And basically, we are like walking bacteria.

And so back to the gut, the beneficial gut bacteria that are based in your large intestine do a whole bunch of things for your body. And when they are fed the right things and when they are, you know, in harmony with the rest of the body, so they're not out of balance, they are supporting your immune system, which is hugely important for babies and infants, because you're 70 percent of your immune system is located in your gut. So your bacteria actually train your immune system.

It's like a boot camp. So from infancy, your gut bacteria are telling your immune system how to react. So if you're not going to have a strong and balanced gut microbiome, you're not going to have a strong and balanced immune system and you're going to be sick.

And and also that can then lead to allergies and autoimmune diseases down the line. So it starts right from birth, strong and even pre pre while the mom is pregnant. So that's super important.

And then it also helps with digestion and nutrient absorption. So, you know, we can be feeding our babies all these wonderful things, but if they're not absorbing it, it's not going to be effective. So your gut bacteria matter in terms of what you're absorbing.

And then your gut bacteria also help with releasing, getting rid of toxins in your body because they support your liver and they reduce inflammation in the body. So, you know, chronic inflammation later on in life. We need to look at what's happening in the gut.

And so all of these these amazing things happen just because of these bacteria that are living in your large intestine. Yeah, that's amazing. Super interesting.

And, you know, I mean, I love the way that I look. I certainly didn't know that. Did you say it was 70 percent of our immunity comes from our gut? Yeah, 70 percent.

Yeah, it's incredible. So I certainly didn't know that. And, you know, it's been many years, long before I even started to look into the gut microbiome and I'm doing it just as a lay person.

But long before that, I started to really worry about people having sterilizing their baby's world too much. And, you know, we went through a patch back in the 90s and early noughties where, you know, everything was sterile for children. They weren't able to touch anything.

You still get moms who like this. They don't want their children getting dirty. They, you know, they won't let their baby touch anything that hasn't been sterilized.

They sterilize their bottles until a year of age. And probably about eight years ago or maybe 10 years ago, even, I started to say to parents, the minute your baby's rolling, stop sterilizing because there are microbes in our world that are actually very important. And would you agree with that? 100 percent, yeah.

I am some people think that I'm crazy because I've got a little one. She's 13 months now and I've got a three year old. And they were always covered in mud and always, you know, out and about.

And I think in particular environments, I'm quite, you know, strict like in an airport, we're going to be as careful as we can because there's all sorts of bugs and stuff coming there that we wouldn't necessarily want, you know, them to interact with. But in terms of, you know, outdoors, soil, if you're going. And what's amazing about microbes is that they are everywhere.

They're in the air. So if you're going into the forest in a different location, you can think of that as like your daily dose of probiotic. You're getting a whole new host of microbes that you're interacting with.

So that's also something to think of, you know, what what excursion can we take today to expose our baby to something new? And then, yeah, with definitely the over sanitization is a massive problem for sure. Amazing. So interesting.

So what other things I mean, other than over sterilization, would you think would be the key factors that contribute to this really healthy gut microbiome? And when I when I'm posing this question to you, I'm thinking and I've always I always think about infants like this, that they get this little blank slate and we have got this opportunity to provide them with the very best start in life. And obviously that's why I talk about sensory and why I talk about connection and, you know, focus on all of that. But now I've got this blank slate gut.

What can I do? Like what would be if a mom was pregnant right now and she's got the chance to follow the gold standard to produce the best gut microbiome for a baby? What are those factors? OK, so Meg, you mentioned a study. I don't know if you want to talk about that study quick, about when she's pregnant and put the. Yeah, I mean, I mean, that was something that was super interesting.

So I'm following a whole lot of stuff on the gut microbiome at the moment because I'm I'm fascinated. And there was research that came up last week that showed that moms taking prebiotics, I don't know if it was prebiotics or probiotics in pregnancy and you can maybe probiotics in pregnancy impacts her baby's gut microbiome when they start to test the stool in the first few months after life. So things that are happening in pregnancy already are actually impacting the baby's gut microbiome.

Yeah, for sure. And then that also goes on to diet. You know, if the mom's diet is one that's rich in fiber and includes a lot of variety in foods, you're going to see the mom having a healthy gut microbiome, which will then affect the baby's gut microbiome.

And that research is quite new. So it's exciting to just stay on the pulse there. But then beyond that mode of birth is quite important.

And I think a lot of people know this. You know, a vaginal birth, the baby's getting exposed to the vaginal microbiome and there's all sorts of bacteria that are then going straight to the infant's gut and starting to always get this word wrong, colonize. There we go.

The gut microbiome from there. But, you know, if in some cases that's not possible and a C-section is the way that the mom has to go. Some doctors are letting moms do a swab of the vagina and actually covering the baby in that.

So that's something that you can talk to your gynae about that. Or, you know, then beyond that, instead of the vaginal canal being the first mode of exposure, then it would be the skin. So then potentially the dad is his first skin to skin contact microbiome.

That's why they take the shirt off. So there's that exposure to microbes from the start. And then, OK, beyond birth stuff, breastfeeding is the first 100 days of the baby's life is crucial for that imprint on that gut microbiome.

Breastfeeding, I mean, breast milk contains beneficial bacteria that's actually going straight to the infant's gut microbiome, starting it like a seeding of the process. And then there's also obviously antibodies in breast milk. And then beyond that, there is something called human milk oligosaccharides, which is basically a prebiotic.

So the difference between a prebiotic and a probiotic, think of your probiotics as your actual bacteria and your prebiotics is what's feeding the bacteria. So the human milk oligosaccharides or HMOs, they actually feed the bacteria that the mom is giving to the baby anyway. So it works as a full system.

It's giving the baby the bacteria and feeding the bacteria with the right type of food. It's amazing. So breast milk is just I know it can be a touchy subject, but I feel like we're going into this epidemic of people just not even trying.

They don't understand the benefits beyond just, you know, breastfeeding is hard work, especially in the beginning. But what it can do for your baby, especially those first 100 days, even if you're getting donated breast milk, it's just amazing for your baby for those first 100 days. And then beyond that, starting with solids the right way.

And this is obviously where you and your expertise are. But, you know, avoiding the process, things like the rice, cereals and the maize, anything that's over processed. I like to start with whole foods, you know, something that is steamed and easy for them to start eating.

And then, you know, moving on to more variety in their diet, more plant based foods. And maybe just to mention on that. Prebiotics.

So I mentioned the oligosaccharides as food for the bacteria. The same goes for. Prebiotics are found in plant based foods.

They are the fiber and plant based foods. So that's where prebiotics come from. So that's why everyone in the gut health field talks about trying to get 30 different types of plant based foods in a week, because then you're getting a whole range of types of fiber.

And that's all going to feed the bacteria in your gut. So you need to think of the same with your baby. Obviously, not straight away.

They need to train their gut to get stronger and stronger. But you need to be adding variety into their diet from as soon as possible. Yeah.

Yeah. I mean, I mean, I mean, the solids journey is I mean, that's super fascinating to me. You know, one of the reasons why Kath and I talk about introducing solids between four and six months of age is for exactly that reason, because you want as much diversity and kind of variability in the diet as possible.

And the problem with when you start solids is that you're not getting that. You can't in the first few weeks. It is it's one or two, maybe five vegetables, you know.

Another thing that strikes me about something you said there, which I think is so important, is that if those prebiotics are sitting in the skin and in the fiber of the of the plant matter, you know, of the fruits and vegetables and you look at something like a highly processed cereal, like porridge, like, you know, and this is going back to the kind of nineteen hundreds where we used to feed babies, you know, and I don't want to mention brands, but highly processed rice cereals. And, you know, those have got absolutely no fiber in them because they're highly processed. So actually what you're feeding your baby is not feeding their gut microbiome at all.

And it's probably got some sugars in it and emulsifiers or stabilizers, which are just going to destroy that little gut. And yeah, so that's something that I see a lot still is people starting with that. And start with, yeah, I would start with like a sweet potato.

I mean, that's so basic. Part of what I love about your Instagram is the way that you do create recipes. So, I mean, maybe it would be a great thing now if you could give us a couple of ideas.

You've got a 13 month old. Like what were your favorite recipes to start? And how did you actually make that food? Like if you're doing sweet potato, are you leaving the skin on? I don't know. I mean, these are the sort of things that I think are interesting.

Yeah, so with willow, that's my little one. I started with sweet potato, I think, and zucchini was maybe her second one. Everything just popped in the oven.

The little bit of just like that, poke the holes and put it in. And then I mixed it maybe with a little bit of olive oil once it's roasted and then blend that all up. And with the skin on.

So did you put the, you did. With the skin on, extra fiber. You know, and you're starting out so tiny in the beginning.

They're barely eating anything. It's more textural experience. But yeah, everything with the skin on.

Pears, for example, she really struggled with in the beginning. I think it's very high fiber and it's a, yeah, she just was sore. So I took that out completely and then started with, when I introduced pear again, I took the skin off just because just to make it a little bit easier on her tummy.

And now she can eat pears because we moved quite slowly through that. And then beyond that, my favorite thing for both my girls is oats. I always use organic oats because oats are heavily sprayed with glyphosate, especially right towards the end of near harvest.

And they've sprayed when they're still damp. They soak up a lot of that herbicide and pesticides. So organic oats, slow cook them on the stove.

And I just pack that with whatever I can find. Seeds, mixed seeds, chia seeds, zucchini, spinach, carrots, olive oil, cinnamon. You know, I go wild so that they are getting the plant points in at some point.

I mean, dealing with a toddler, it's quite difficult. She's quite a picky eater, but I know that she's going to eat her oats, you know, even if I add a little bit of honey, something to sweeten it up. I at least know she's getting almost 13 plant points in her breakfast meal.

Oh, I love that. That is amazing. So you will, and you will do this every morning, like make up this pot of oats with the seeds, the chia seeds, the zucchini, the spinach.

Every day. And that's what they're going to get for breakfast. That's what they get for breakfast.

So actually with Isla, she's my oldest. She goes to school and they do breakfast there. But I'm that mother who sends a pot of oats that I've made to school.

And I think the teachers are like, oh, that's crazy, mom. But I want her to get that food in because I don't know when throughout the day she's going to eat veggies again. You know, we're in that struggle at the moment.

And Willow gets the same thing. Sometimes I blend it up a little bit if it's too bitty and she doesn't like the texture. But yeah, she gets the exact same thing in the mornings.

I love that idea. And, you know, it's so interesting because one of the recipes that we've got in Weaning Scents is a smoothie that has got quinoa, spinach, berries, banana. I mean, it's got, you know, it's got a whole lot of vegetables and fruits.

And we always say to moms, if your baby doesn't want to eat at night, just give them the smoothie because it tastes good. And it's, you know, it's full of things. But actually, I've never thought about making sure that in the morning that first meal, which is actually, by the way, moms and dads, that is the one that they're actually going to eat because that's, you know, most little ones are much more fussy later in the day, but they will eat their breakfast.

And so loading it is such a good idea. Yeah, no, it's something that I've done from when I started eating solids. So it's a really effective way to make sure that they're getting their plants.

And you can, I mean, I'm not one to disguise veg. I know that that's maybe something that's a bit touchy. But it is nice to know that they're eating it, but they don't even know what they're eating.

If I had to tell Isla there was spinach in her oats, she might not want to eat it. So it's just yummy, delicious oats in the morning. I love that, Meg.

And just out of interest, you don't put any dairy in that? No, no dairy. And that's quite important because dairy interrupts the absorption of iron and you're putting the spinach in there. So you're allowing that full absorption.

Yeah, yeah. Amazing. Excellent.

And what would you say then a nice snack would look like for little ones? How would you load a snack up? Yeah, so that's also something I think I feel like every day is different. And when I try and, you know, the ideal would look a certain way and then I think about my own kids and I'm like, oh, it's so hard to get this right. But, you know, something like banana with nut butter is nice.

I mean, that's got protein, fat from the nuts and protein from the nuts. And then you've got your fiber in the fruit. So something like that.

Or a smoothie, I often do smoothies for the girls for snacks or so. And sometimes I even will put a little bit of protein powder into Isla's smoothies. Just a pure like pea protein.

And what brand do you recommend of pea protein? So I use the Noah and Co. They've got a natural plant-based vanilla one. And that's even got a little bit of probiotics in it.

So and it's super clean and it doesn't taste like... Pea protein can have quite a strong taste and they've done super well with that. So I love a smoothie in the afternoons, you know, that time where they're a little bit fussy, they're hungry or... And especially when Isla gets home from school, I'll try and give her something really good to eat. And then also, you know, obviously we need to think of protein with kids.

And it's so sometimes I'll do like a quinoa in the smoothie. Like you mentioned that smoothie that's in the weaning sense. I've used that recipe actually.

And then also, obviously the girls, we're not fully plant-based. So I do give them things like eggs and boltong. But when I do that, you know, you want to balance it and make sure they are still getting their fiber as well.

Yeah. So it's not just animal products throughout the day. Yeah.

I love the idea of that. I mean, I'm picturing with those banana and that you mentioned first, the banana with peanut butter, like literally just kind of slices of banana just with a little smear of peanut butter. Is that how you present it to them? Like that and maybe one or two raisins, the ants on the log type thing.

And then they'll eat that as much as they want. Also, I prefer to use like almond butter or something, but peanut butter is also, yeah, delicious. Okay.

I mean, are there different nut butters that you do and don't recommend? I mean, what should parents be looking at when they're looking at buying a nut butter for their baby? Not to mention brands, but there are some on the shelves which are maybe full of sugar and salt. I don't know. Yeah.

And so butternut, I know we weren't going to mention brands, but butternut spreads is a great one. It's just nuts and that's what you want. A lot of the other brands have got either added sugars or salts and then also stabilizers and emulsifiers, which we don't want to do.

So anything that's just got the peanuts or the nuts in it is a good option now. Brilliant. And for that, I mean, we've always talked about that in a weaning sense as well, that moms just have a look at how many ingredients are listed on the back.

By law, they have to list every ingredient, which hopefully they do. And if you can see more than three ingredients in something, you need to read those ingredients carefully because, you know, a good nut butter can just be, you know, three ingredients really or even less. Yeah, even less.

Yeah. And then so if we are worried that our little ones are not getting sufficient pre and probiotics, I mean, and you've described very nicely the difference between a prebiotic and a probiotic. First of all, do prebiotics come in supplements? Because I know probiotics do.

And if so, I mean, what would you be recommending? And when would you be introducing those? This episode is brought to us by Parentsense, the all-in-one baby and parenting app that help you make the most of your baby's first year. Don't you wish someone would just tell you everything you need to know about caring for your baby? When to feed them, how to wean them, and why they won't sleep? Parentsense app is like having a baby expert on your phone guiding you to parent with confidence. Get a flexible routine, daily tips and advice personalized for you and your little one.

Download Parentsense app now from your app store and take the guesswork out of parenting. What would you be recommending and when would you be introducing those? So you can, there are prebiotics available, but I wouldn't recommend prebiotic supplement unless you've got something like Crohn's or ulcerative colitis where you actually struggle to eat veg long term. Then I would recommend a fiber supplement or like an inulin or chicory root.

Those are prebiotics that you can get in a supplement form. But yeah, it's not something that I recommend off the bat. I think food, nothing beats food at that point.

And then when it comes to probiotics, you know, if your baby's following the breastfeeding, good introduction to solids, I would try, you know, introduce some fermented foods. Full cream yogurt is a nice one and babies tend to love that. Not too much dairy, but that's a nice form of probiotic.

And then if you can, I mean, Willow doesn't eat it, but like kimchi or sauerkraut is also a nice form of fermented food. But no, so if your baby's gone through a course of antibiotics, which is also something I wanted to touch on is the avoiding unnecessary antibiotics. When your baby is sick, you know, you need to advocate for your kids and you need to actually learn about what, you know, one course of antibiotics is going to do to your baby's gut microbiome.

And then how can you fix it from there? You know, not every cold needs an antibiotic. So just, you know, questioning, is this absolutely necessary? Can I do a specific strain of antibiotics and not a broad spectrum? Asking those types of questions to a doctor. I mean, I think before you move off that, I just think it's a very important thing to talk about is the medicines that we give to babies from the day they're born.

So, you know, I spoke about this blank slate we've got to work with and we've spoken about all the things we should be doing, but of course there are things that we shouldn't be doing as well. And maybe sterilizing is one of those. Antibiotics is another.

Another thing that comes to mind for me is, you know, and this has been for the last 20 years, there's this like over focus on reflux in babies, you know, that babies have reflux and therefore they need to have usually what's called a proton pump inhibitor or an antacid is given so quickly. What is the impact of those PPIs and acids? Yeah, I mean, that's, yeah. So, I think the reflux in babies, I don't know where that's stemming from and it seems that it's a real problem.

I mean, I know so many moms whose kids are actually struggling with it and, you know, then it impacts sleep and it's a real struggle to get through it. But yeah, so protein, the PPIs basically long term can lead to more imbalance in the gut microbiome. So, they basically will stop the production of acid, which then gives the chance for more pathogens and things to grow because the stomach is not producing enough acid.

So, then you've got a low acidic environment in your stomach. And then if they encounter, you know, something on a fruit or something that's potentially very harmful, but your stomach is going to destroy that. That's why the acidity is so high in the stomach.

It's your first kind of gatekeeper to destroying any pathogens coming in. So, then we see lower acidity there and we see those pathogens then actually moving through to the large intestine and then can become a systemic problem after that. So, I also recommend, you know, trying to work holistically on that reflux problem.

Is it something you absolutely need to treat or can you elevate your baby at night? Are there other ways you can help with the reflux before medication straight away? Yeah, and you know, I think this is something that I'm quite passionate about. Most babies have a form of reflux. They have some, and reflux can, let's not see it as a terrible word, it's regurgitation of milk.

And 90% of those regurgitation of milk is completely harmless. It might be a little bit of an irritant, but actually it's completely harmless. Some babies pass it very outwardly.

So you'll actually see the milk coming up and it can feel like they've brought up their entire feed. And you know, that's often when people say, oh my gosh, they've got such terrible reflux that, you know, they're bringing up most of their feed. But actually, when you measure it out, it's probably a tablespoon or two that just looks like a lot.

Many babies have what's called benign reflux, which is just where it comes up and goes back down and they swallow and they might make a little bit of a funny face because it might burn them a little bit as it comes up and down. But none of those, not either of those, even if it's big quantities of reflux are actually dangerous for babies at all. The only time we worry about reflux is when it's pathological reflux, which is when babies are not gaining weight and they're getting lung infections.

And those two, that's pathological reflux. That's something that needs to be treated and so on. But, you know, Kath and I have been talking about this and actually we think, I think, and I think the research is going to come out about this, that actually offering a proton pump inhibitor like Nexium, so moms, you might know it as Nexium or an antacid, actually maybe it's not the best thing because if it's not pathological and it's something they just have to get through and it's, you know, it's, and it's not, it's might be a little bit of a sleep disruptor, but it's nothing, it really isn't something that is going to make, make for long-term problems.

Then why would you go and disrupt the gut microbiome, which can actually have long-term implications? Yeah. And I think being educated is the key. I mean, you, you go to the PED or whatever, and this is the problem.

Okay. Here's the solution, one type of solution. And then you, I mean, you, so your primary thing is just to make sure your baby's comfortable and that's what you want and actually just knowing the effect of it.

And can we, like you say, can we just push through for the next few months? And then it not affect the gut microbiome in the long-term. Yeah, for sure. Absolutely.

And, you know, you've brought up something that I find very interesting, and there was an incredible book written last year, and I'm going to forget the name of the author. I'll try and remember and pop it into the show notes, but it was written about, you know, kind of where health is going. And basically one of the things that it said was that, you know, kind of medicine 3.0 was, which is what we've lived through now, was anesthetic, antibiotics, antivirals, vaccinations, you know, that was medicine 3.0. And it really contributed incredibly to longevity and, you know, because people could survive a caesarean section, you know, for example, because you've had, you know, you've got antibiotics and anesthetic.

So, you know, medicine 3.0 is very important. And our medical doctors, by and large, rely on medicine 3.0, which is, there's X number of tools in their toolkit, which is predominantly medicines. And so when you go to your pediatrician, he's going to look at you and say, look, it's probably, it's reflux, it's something your baby will outgrow, but if you do want something, we can give them a proton pump inhibitor and give them Nexium.

And of course, that's the tool that is in their toolkit. Medicine 4.0, which is the space that we're moving into now, and obviously the space that you are playing very keenly in, is preventative health and actually creating health through, actually through lifestyle, which is basically exercise, sleep, and of course, food. And so, you know, I think that, I think that's where we almost need to turn our heads as parents and clinicians is, okay, medicine 3.0 had a role to play, but in this particular thing, which is long life health and longevity and, you know, long life, it's actually much more about what we're feeding our children rather than giving them medications.

Yeah, no, it's, I mean, diet is the biggest contributing factor at this, beyond, you know, birth, breastfeeding, then from there, it's a huge implication into your gut health. Yeah, absolutely. So, I'm quite aware of the fact that I asked your question and then we didn't actually get down to the final answer and that was on the probiotics.

So, do you recommend moms actually giving their little ones probiotics after birth? Do you recommend it, for instance, if they're colicky? Do you recommend it if a mom is not breastfeeding, for instance, or do you say wait until six months? Or really, what are your guidelines in terms of probiotics? So, this probiotics is a bit of a sticky one. There's so much research coming out, you know, do we, should we actually give probiotics alongside antibiotics, which is what we see a lot. Some research suggests that probiotics can inhibit the regrowth after an antibiotic course.

So, it's like, you know, I'm nervous to say something and then it's not actually what's being, that this field is so exciting that there's new stuff coming out all the time, but in my experience, I haven't given my girls probiotics unless I feel, okay, getting sick a bit more than I would like, how can we shift things a bit? And it's not, so then I'll go onto a probiotic and I'll rotate the probiotics. I won't stay on one, so I'll do a certain probiotic for two months and then rotate to another for a few months. So, we're getting different strains.

The thing with probiotics is that, you know, if you've got a vitamin D problem, you're not going to supplement with vitamin C. It's the same with the probiotics. If you've got one strain that's missing, we don't know what strain that's, you'd like. So, then we supplement with all these other probiotics and are we actually helping the problem? So, and I think it's easy to look at probiotics as a solution for poor gut, but actually you're going to be pouring in bacteria into your gut.

Is it going to stay there first? Is it making it through your stomach acid? So, has it been tested to actually make it through that intensely acidic environment and then moving through to your large intestine where it needs to go? And then are you feeding it the right food so that they actually can survive or be beneficial at all? So, yeah, it is a touchy one and I think someone like a gastroenterologist would be more versed on this because they can, you know, prescribe very strong specific strains for specific problems. If a baby's got diarrhea, what strain do they need for that specific problem? So, yeah, I only supplement my goals when I kind of feel that we need a bit of extra support, yeah. So, what I'm hearing you say then for both prebiotics and probiotics is that your first line of defense is food and food is your medicine.

And so, I think that probably is the message for today is that, you know, it's a lot about, yes, what we're eating when we're pregnant, about breast milk because that's baby's first food and then later on about the type of foods that you do wean your babies onto. I absolutely love your Instagram posts and if anybody is looking for ideas and recipes, my suggestion is that you do follow the Good Gut Guru. Is that what it is? Yeah, yeah, that's it.

Good Gut Guru, yeah. And so, do go and have a follow everybody. I just think that there's so much, so many gems there.

One of the things that I absolutely love, Meg, is that you do these incredible like little pots and if I think about a busy mom who's like just, she's sleep deprived, she's actually depleted completely. I often look at those pots and I think those pots are medicinal, you know, you've got some, you know, some chia seeds in there, you've got, you know, they really are fabulous little pots. So, everybody go and have a look.

You'll pick up incredible recipes and Meg, I just think you're onto something. I mean, you are just creating such accessible information for moms around their health and around their little ones as well. So, thank you so, so much for joining us today and sharing a little bit of your wisdom.

Thanks, Meg. Yeah, it's been great. I could speak about this for days.

And I could too. So, I mean, I could too. And I mean, I was just saying to Meg before we started chatting is that I've, because I'm so interested in this now, I'm picking up all the scholarly articles and research.

You know, I do, I have a scholarly article search on my Google searches. So, it feeds through every morning, all the latest research. And I'm going to start sharing some of them with you on WhatsApp, I think, because like this is, this field in infant microbiomes is exploding.

And I just have a feeling that, you know, this is a space that probably we all need to be focused in on. So, thank you. Well, thank you for joining me, moms and dads.

And we will certainly be back again, of course, this time next week. And a huge thanks to Meg, who you can all go and follow. And Meg, I'm sure you do have one-on-one consultations with people as well, and they can probably get hold of you on your Instagram for that.

Yeah. Excellent. Thanks to everyone who joined us.

We will see you the same time next week. Until then, download ParentSense app and take the guesswork out of parenting.

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