

# Is your digestion linked to your migraine?

There are many causes of migraine but for some people there may be a link to their digestive tract. Here's some reasons why...

- Our digestive tract is home to 80% of our immune system and much systemic inflammation can be triggered at this site. Inflammation is a key pathway involved in migraine headache, pain and other symptoms
- The gut brain connection is very important. A number of hormones and neurotransmitters which play essential roles in the brain are produced primarily in the gut. The gut is referred to as the 'second brain'
- Imbalances in our microbiome may be connected with inflammation and production of molecules that cause blood vessels to dilate. If these blood vessels are in the brain, this can be another major pathway in migraine
- There is significant ongoing research into the connection between our microbiome and brain health including migraine

## **Helicobacter pylori**

Correlation with increased incidence of migraine. There may be no symptoms of infection, but commonly this is associated with:

- Acid reflux, requirements for antacids, heartburn, indigestion, nausea

## **How to test?**

You will need a GP referral to test for H pylori. This can be done with a breath test or during a procedure where a camera is inserted down the throat e.g. endoscopy. Treatment is via antibiotics from your GP.

## **Small Intestinal Bacterial Overgrowth (SIBO)**

Patients with IBS have a higher incidence of migraine. SIBO is the most common cause of IBS symptoms.

Common symptoms include but are not limited to:

- Acid reflux, high use of antacids, feelings of extreme fullness or nausea after eating
- Bloating and discomfort
- Irregular bowel movements - diarrhoea or constipation
- Intolerance to onions, garlic, beans, lentils, chickpeas
- Intolerance to fatty foods
- Anxiety

## **How to test?**

This is a non-invasive breath test. A Nutritionist can help you to determine whether this test is best for you or you can enquire at <http://www.gastrolife.ie/> for on-site or at-home testing options.

There are several treatment options depending on test results. A specific diet in the short term can also improve treatment outcome.

## **Bacterial imbalance in lower digestive tract**

Symptoms can be wide ranging, including but not limited to:

- Bloating and discomfort
- Irregular bowel movements - diarrhoea or constipation
- Mucus in the stool
- Food intolerances or reactions that can include migraine, headache, skin rashes
- Low immune system
- History of antibiotic use

## **How to test?**

Using cutting edge technology, the GI Map stool test gives a very detailed profile of your microbiome. This accurately measures your 'good' bacteria and 'bad', yeasts, parasites, worms and critical viruses. This also measures markers of digestive health and inflammation which are extremely important in how the gut communicates with the rest of our body including our brain. A reliable marker of gut permeability or 'leaky gut' is an optional add-on.

Contact [clinic@glenvillenutrition.ie](mailto:clinic@glenvillenutrition.ie) to see if this test is suitable for you