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Understanding the Gut-Skin Connection | Video Transcript

Hidden in the mysterious darkness of your large intestine, live trillions of bacteria and fungi. Individually, each microbe is invisible to the naked eye, but together they account for up to two kilograms of your total body weight. The total population is known as your gut microbiome. The relationship we have with these microbes is pretty amazing. The relationship is symbiotic, meaning it is mutually beneficial. We give them a roof over their head and food to eat. In return, good microbes make vitamins for us, train our immune system and produce substances that enter our blood stream to provide us with energy and support our health.

Did you know that your personal gut microbiome is totally unique? It is gifted to you by your mother at birth and evolves throughout your lifetime. The health of your microbiome is determined by a combination of factors including your environment, mindset, stress levels and, perhaps most importantly, your diet. A diet that is high in sugar and processed foods, upsets the delicate equilibrium of good and bad microbes in the gut, leading to imbalance and disease. Another common name for an imbalanced gut is gut dysbiosis.

An unhappy gut sets in motion a chain of unhappy events in the body. Of particular relevance to us is that poor gut health wreaks havoc on our skin. A sluggish digestive system and imbalanced gut leads to an overloaded liver and inflammatory toxins circulating around the body. This exacerbates skin challenges like acne, rosacea or any sensitive or inflamed skin conditions.

Poor gut health gets in the way of a clear, glowing complexion. But the reverse is also true. When we make the changes required to heal our gut, our skin is supported and renewed from within. When we cultivate populations of good microbes in our gut, they produce substances that keep skin looking beautiful and slow down the ageing process. So, let's take a closer look at the gut and the skin, and how that connection actually works.

You may have wondered, how does gut health actually affect the skin when they are physically so far apart? It all comes down to the various colonies of micro-organisms that live in the gut. Each microbe has a specific function and character. In the process of their normal metabolism, certain microbes produce substances that get into our blood stream, circulate around our body and find their way to our skin. When we have large populations of beneficial microbes in our gut, they circulate substances that keep the skin looking beautiful and slow down the ageing process. On the other hand, if your gut is dominated by bad microbes, the substances they produce can irritate and inflame the skin and accelerate skin ageing. Let's take a closer look at the specific skin benefits we receive when our gut is healthy and well-balanced.

A healthy gut boosts skin health by:

- Strengthening thinning skin.
- Maintaining blood flow to skin.
- Maintaining skin hydration.
- Reducing trans-epidermal water loss.
- Decreasing skin sensitivity and inflammation.
- Improving barrier function.
- Accelerating skin healing, and
- Improving UV protection.

Isn't that amazing? If I made a cream that could do all of that I'd be world-famous. You really do your clients an incredible favour by helping them to improve their gut health.

On the other hand, a disturbed gut negatively affects skin by:

- Increasing skin inflammation
- Increasing skin sensitivity and irritation.
- Worsening skin conditions like acne, eczema, rosacea and perioral dermatitis.
- Reducing skin hydration.
- Reducing skin barrier function, and
- Accelerating skin ageing.

This tells me two things. You simply cannot heal skin conditions without first healing the gut. And secondly, if your clients are concerned about anti-ageing they need to consider the important role that gut health plays in keeping their skin youthful and supple.

So, as you can see, beautiful skin really does begin in the gut. If we want to heal skin disorders or maximise anti-ageing, it is vital that we pay attention to our client's gut health and support them to make positive changes. But in order to do that, we need to become confident in identifying an unhappy gut. The good news is there are some simple red flags to look out for. I am going to introduce you to a helpful handout and check-list called, '7 Signs You Have a Unhappy Gut'.

I recommend that you go through this checklist with your clients as part of your consultation process. It will help you and your client to together identify their gut challenges and it opens the opportunity for you to offer them gut health solutions and support. Let's take a look at each of these seven signs of an unhappy gut and simple explanations you can share with your client about each one.

1. You are experiencing skin challenges like acne, eczema, rosacea or perioral dermatitis. If you have a high proportion of bad bacteria in your gut, the substances they manufacture can drive inflammation and irritation in your skin. You need to address skin disorders at the source of the issue – in the gut.
2. You are constipated. If you don't have a bowel movement every day, this is a tell-tale sign that your gut is unhappy. Removing toxins and wastes from the digestive system is an important part of maintaining a healthy gut environment. Constipation results in irritating toxins and waste hormones being reabsorbed into your system. This undermines skin health and general wellbeing.
3. You have loose stools, diarrhoea, bloating or gas. These are clear indications that all is not well with your gut. These symptoms can be a sign of a damaged gut wall or an imbalance in the microbe population in your gut. An unhappy gut can set up inflammation that affects your whole system, so improving gut health should be a priority.
4. You often feel out of sorts. If you are irritable, anxious, depressed, or you simply struggle to think clearly, then your gut health may be part of the problem. The microbes in your gut produce a wide range of neurotransmitters that affect mood. Cultivating a happy gut can make a noticeable difference to your resilience and positivity.
5. You love sugar and carbs. The bad microbes in our gut love sugar and refined carbs! Some research suggests that bad microbes can hack into our nervous system and drive our food cravings. The best approach is to go cold turkey and cut out sugary foods altogether while you heal your gut. If you starve out those bad microbes, the cravings will disappear.
6. You are often sick. Did you know that your gut is the classroom for your immune system? Microbes are responsible for teaching and regulating immune cells as they mature. If our microbiome gets out of whack, our immune system often follows suit. This is why people with auto-immune disorders often experience a lessening of symptoms when they improve their gut-health.
7. You've recently been on antibiotics. Antibiotics can sometimes be a cause of poor gut health. They are necessary to fight infection but unfortunately, they also kill our beneficial microbes. Without the support of a quality probiotic to replace good bacteria and fungi, it can take a very long time for our microbiome to recover.

You can download this checklist from the link listed below, (www.bestowbeauty.com/7-signs-unhappy-gut) or from this lesson on the Bestow University platform. I hope you find it a helpful tool to use in your consultations with your clients. If you identify that a client has one or more of these symptoms, I recommend you introduce them to Bestow Gut Love + Powder and either the Bestow Love Your Gut Programme or the Bestow Gut-Skin Connection Book. We'll be looking at these in more detail a bit later on.