

Did you know your belly may be smart and tough?



In some cultures, the gut is thought of as the root of instinct and emotions. The saying goes, “trust your gut,” which means trusting your intuition about something. The gut is also associated with toughness of character and stamina: “Doing that took guts!” As it turns out, these are both great characterizations of the gut.

The gut is smart.

It is sometimes called the “second brain” based on the enteric nervous system (ENS) of about 100 million nerves in the lining of the gut. In the womb, the ENS actually develops from the same tissue that makes up the central nervous system. This is why the ENS has many structural and chemical similarities to your brain.¹ Even now, as you’re reading this, the brains in your gut and your head are communicating back and forth. Imagine that!

The gut is tough.

The gut has an army of microorganisms defending your body. In fact, 95 percent of the bacteria and microorganisms living on and in your body are found in the gut — about one hundred trillion microbes! These tiny beneficial bacteria, which are 10 to 50 times smaller than human cells, act together as a physical barrier protecting your gut.¹ They join together against pathogens (anything that causes a disease, like a virus or bad bacteria).²

Be sure to participate in *The Gutsy Challenge* to cultivate a healthy gut. Get started today <for your chance to win>! <Visit XX to pick up your copy of the challenge materials.>



¹ Journal of Neuroscience, "Advances in enteric neurobiology: The "brain" in the gut in health and disease," October 2018

² Nature Outlook, "The gut microbiome," January 2020

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