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# LIFE

# Both probiotics, prebiotics key to healthy gut

My big New Year's resolution was to get my gut into better shape. I'm not talking about a flat stomach after having three kids, that ship has sailed — but about the gut microbiome. Do I need to take probiotics?

Considering the abundance of A foods and drinks with which many of us celebrate the weeks between Thanksgiving and Jan. 1, the new year is a logical and appropriate time for a gut reset. And, yes, we're talking about the gut microbiome here, which is the collection of trillions of microorganisms that call our digestive tracts home. These include the vast and varied colonies of bacteria, fungi, protozoa, friendly viruses and other microbes that interact with our bodies and, in many cases, help to keep us healthy. Research into the microbiome continues to uncover the many ways in which gut health plays a role in general health, including how it affects processes as varied as the immune system, blood sugar regulation, the cardiovascular system, cholesterol, weight and even mental health.

The good news is that, with several simple lifestyle choices, you can improve your gut health. To understand how, we should define two important terms — the probiotics that you mention and another equally important piece of the gut microbiome puzzle,

### **ASK THE DOCTORS**





**GLAZIER** 

prebiotics. Probiotics is the word we use to describe the good microbes living in our guts. A wide variety of types and strains of probiotics are now available as dietary supplements, and in food sources such as yogurt, kefir and naturally fermented foods and drinks. The jury is still out as to whether or not probiotic supplements are actually helpful in achieving and maintaining

Perhaps more important are prebiotics. These are a type of indigestible carbohydrate that are found in fiber-rich foods, including fruits, vegetables, seeds, beans and legumes. Prebiotics pass through the digestive system and arrive in the colon largely intact. There, they provide a food supply for the all-important probiotics living in our gut. In

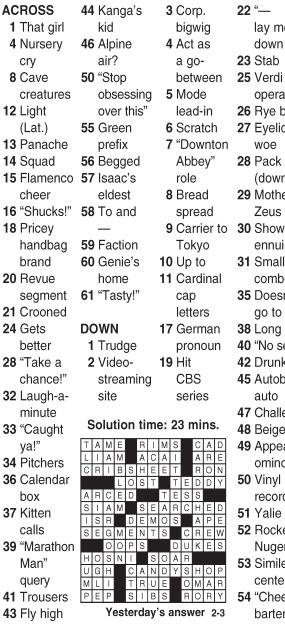
order to support your microbiome, it's important to eat a wide range of fresh fruit, vegetables and other prebiotics.

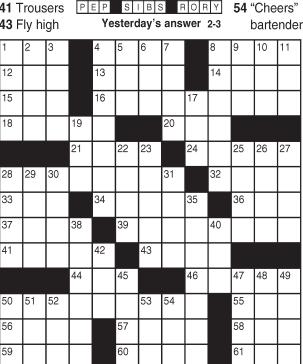
In addition to what you do eat, gut health depends on steering clear of certain foods. Unfortunately for those of us with a sweet tooth, recent studies have shown that a high intake of simple carbohydrates in the diet can tip the balance of gut bacteria to specific types of microbes associated with low-grade inflammation. That's pretty much the opposite of what you're trying to achieve. The occasional sweet treat won't wreak havoc on the gut, but people who regularly eat a lot of sugar or highly processed foods need to rethink their diets.

Gut health isn't all about food. Studies have found that, just like our hearts, bones, muscles and mood, the denizens of our gut microbiomes respond positively to exercise. A study published in 2017 found a link between exercise and the bacteria that support weight loss. Add in adequate sleep and managing stress, and you're on your way to a healthier gut in 2021.

Eve Glazier, M.D., MBA, is an internist and associate professor of medicine at UCLA Health. Elizabeth Ko. M.D., is an internist and assistant professor of medicine at UCLA Health.

## CROSSWORD & CRYPTOQUIP





## 15 18 33 37 41 56 59

#### **CRYPTOQUIP** 2-3

XZG LPOO DIO BHLPD ВН IJ MZL SGGQJ SQBFFGYDBJXGV

YEDZX PLM. Е DIGJJ E ' H

XZG BMGV HBP LIX.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF IT IS DIFFICULT FOR CERTAIN PEOPLE TO MAKE ANY MISTAKES, I GUESS THEY'RE HARD OF ERRING.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: X equals T

The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

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BRIDGE

#### **HIGHLIGHTING YOUR HEALTH**

# Make women's health a priority in the New Year

Screening and treatment could help prevent cervical cancer.

**Vidant Health News** 

The New Year brings the promise of a new beginning and it is often a time to make resolutions for positive changes in health and well-being.

Experts at Vidant say it is also a time to remember to be proactive about women's health year-round, especially when it comes to cervical cancer.

The cervix is the lower, narrow end of the uterus, and when cancer starts in this area, it is called cervical cancer. Each year more than 350 North Carolina women are diagnosed with cervical cancer and over 100 die from the condition, according to the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services. The majority of these deaths occur in women over the age of 45.

Although cervical cancer starts from the cells with pre-cancerous changes, only some of the women with pre-cancer of the cervix will develop cancer. For those that do, treating cervical pre-cancers can prevent almost all cervical cancers.

There are ways to reduce the risk for cervical cancer that should be a checklist to anyone concerned about their health. Infection by the human



PHOTO BY VIDANT HEALTH NEWS

Dr. Grainger Lanneau is chief of gynecology oncology at Vidant Health/Vidant Cancer Care.

papillomavirus (HPV) is one of the most important risk factors for cervical cancer. The risk is most likely affected by increasing the chances of exposure and sexual partners to HPV.

Women who smoke are about twice as likely as nonsmokers to get cervical cancer. Tobacco byproducts have been found in the cervical mucus of women who smoke and researchers believe that these substances damage the DNA of cervix cells and may contribute to the development of cervical cancer.

Other factors including diet and economic status can make an impact. Women whose diets don't include enough fruits and vegetables may be at increased risk for cervical cancer. Many low-income women do not have adequate health care services, including cervical cancer screenings.

Dr. Grainger Lanneau, chief of gynecology oncology at Vidant Health/ Vidant Cancer Care said, "The two most important things to do to prevent cervical cancer are to get the HPV vaccine if you are eligible, and to be tested regularly according to American Cancer Society (ACS) guidelines."

Pre-cancerous changes can be detected by the Pap test and treated to prevent cancer from developing. The HPV test looks for infection by highrisk types of HPV that are more likely to cause pre-cancers and cancers of the cervix. HPV infection has no treatment, but a vaccine can help prevent it.

These tests are done in the same way with a special tool used to gently scrape or brush the cervix to remove the cells for testing. If pre-cancer is found, it can be treated, keeping it from turning into a cervical cancer. The result of the HPV test, along with past test results, determines your risk of developing cervical cancer. If the test is positive, this could mean more follow-up visits, more tests to look for a pre-cancer or cancer and sometimes a procedure to treat any pre-cancers that might be found.

For more information about the risks and prevention of cervical cancer, or if you do not have a primary care provider, please contact the Prevention Clinic at Vidant Cancer Care at 816-RISK (7475).

## **KOLASA**

Continued from B4

However, distance running does require adopting heathy dietary habits to enable efficient recovery from the intense beating that your body endures. After running two half marathons and training for a full marathon (which was postponed to next year), I have researched nutritional changes that can aid distance runners.

First, I want to talk about carbs and water. Essentially, distance runners should meet the carbohydrate needs proportional the amount of training done. On average, I'll run approximately 15-25 miles per week or about 3-4 miles a day. For my body type and metabolic ability, I can use approximately 400 calories per three-mile run. That means I need about 200 additional calories a day to provide enough carbohydrate to break down for the run while also dipping into some of my previously stored energy. Water intake is also vital. If you're like me, I will frequently try to

power through a run without drinking water; it's a hassle to carry water. However, consuming water every 60 minutes of a long run is essential for healthy recovery. Investing in an easy-to-carry water pack has been one of my best purchases during training.

Distance runners should not try to restrict their diet in hopes of losing weight to run faster. This hinders their ability to meet their running goals and creates adverse effects to the hormonal balance, bone health and immune system. In fact, there is a strategy called carbohydrate loading that can be used to boost energy stores and increase endurance. About a week prior to a long running event, you begin increasing carbohydrate intake while cutting back foods that are high in fat. Furthermore, training is scaled back three to four days prior to the event, which boosts muscle glycogen stores when combined with the increased carbohydrate intake.

Having the correct levels of vitamins and minerals are essential. I personally use the MyFitnessPal app to keep

track of what I am eating. This app keeps track of the number of macronutrients like carbohydrates, lipids, protein and micronutrients or vitamins and minerals. An ideal situation is to obtain adequate levels of these nutrients via diet or use supplements if necessary. For some who don't get enough vitamins and minerals via diet, adding a daily multivitamin to maintain endurance levels and muscle health may be the solution. Your vitamins and mineral needs may vary based on your running level. Some runners take fish oil supplements.

If you're a beginner getting used to the distance and rigor, fish oil can help. When you begin running, your body tries to generate a lot of lactic acid in your muscles. Fish oil will reduce the lactic acid build up in the muscles, giving you a more comfortable run. Fish oil can be obtained by eating fatty fish or via plant oils like canola oil. The experts recommend a daily 1.6 grams of fish oil for a healthy adult male and 1.1 grams for females. This is about 3 ounces of salmon per day.

If you don't meet your need for calcium, a supplement may be helpful for bone health, and if your diet is low in magnesium, taking some may help to transfer energy to the muscles to aid in contraction. Iron may be an important mineral for distance runners since its utility is increased in distance athletes during digestion and metabolism. A low-iron diet can result in low energy and disrupt multiple metabolic processes in the body.

It's always best to talk with your doctor or registered dietitian nutritionist before you add supplements and be careful not to over supplement. Do your homework first and know what your diet provides to you. Everyone is different so find what works for you.

Tomorrow morning, you should wake up and go on a run. See how your body feels. If you think you need more energy, change your diet a bit. If you feel dehydrated, drink some water. I strongly encourage budding runners to document their progress and use a fitness app, such as Nike+ Run Club or Map My Run.

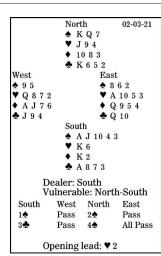
### BY PHILLIP ALDER United Feature Syndicate

Sam Ewing, a former major league baseball player who hit .464 in his junior year at the University of Tennessee, said, "Nothing is as frustrating as arguing with someone who knows what he's talking about." Maybe even worse is arguing with someone who believes he is right and won't back down when you know he is wrong.

Bridge can be frustrating because there always seem to be exceptions to the "rules." There are two in today's deal. How should the defense and declarer-play go in four spades after West leads a fourth-highest heart two to East's ace, and South wins the second trick with his heart king?

"Always return partner's lead." East had that ringing in his ears, but it is much more a rule for no-trump than for suits. If he had shifted to a diamond at trick two, he would have defeated the contract.

After winning trick two, declarer cashed his spade ace, played a spade to the queen, ruffed the heart the club ace, played a club to a diamond.



to the king and led another club.

East correctly deduced that his partner still had the club jack; otherwise, South would have taken the club finesse. So, in an echo of yesterday's deal and thinking "don't ruff partner's winner," East discarded the diamond four.

Yes, West won the trick, but he was endplayed. If he led a diamond, South would score his king. Or if West returned a heart, declarer would ruff with dummy's spade queen and discard a diamond from hand. Either

East should have ruffed jack in his hand, cashed the third club and switched

way, the contract was home.

## **BAGELMAN**

Continued from B4

from Europe, the cream cheese is British, and the capers are Italian — so brings together multiple sweet onions and fresh linary

every bite.

When you add them together the flavors build course, has been imported and complement each other from the garlicky bagel, luscious cream cheese, smokey, fresh Lox, briny you see how this one dish and salty bites of capers,

cultures and continents in lettuce and tomato. It's a journey for the senses and I encourage you to try this if you have never had it before, with no passport required.

As you can see, Bagelman did not disappoint with its variety of cu- their offerings. The bagelman.com

shop is open 6:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Monday-Saturday and 7 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Sunday.

For more information, or to place an order for delivery of pick-up, call 252- 689-6000, or visit website www.nc-



**KATHY KOLASA** 

## Diet enhances, improves running experience

lease don't ignore the advice to continue to wear your mask and social distance, wash your hands and eat healthily even after you have had your vaccine. And join "Walk with a Doc," on Saturday. Meet ECU medical students and Dr. Brandon Kyle from ECU Behavioral Health from 9 to 10 a.m. at Lake Laupus.

Dear Readers: In this column I routinely encourage you to be physically active, at whatever level you can do. For most of us, it's walking — aiming to get as many steps as we can. Some of my readers and students like more strenuous activity. Ashish Khanchandani, a Brody medical student (class of 2024) who enjoys long-distance running wanted to explore how diet and nutrition can improve endurance, energy and speed. He also says you should wear a face mask while running when you know you will be running in a crowded location. Here is what he wants runners to know.

While in the midst of a global pandemic, everyone is attempting to find a way to maintain some sense of normalcy. I have found solace in running. Running allows me to venture outside every day, and the sport enables me to maintain a healthy lifestyle amid the pandemic.

See KOLASA, B5

**TASTE FOOD** 

# An ode to lentil, sausage and kale soup

don't know why I overlook the humble lentil. These tiny legumes that resemble pancaked pebbles are often bypassed in my pantry, as I reach for grains and beans. When I finally do cook lentils, I remember how good they taste, how satisfying they are to eat, and how easy they are to prepare. Eminently flexible, lentils can stand in for a grain, starch, even a protein. They are healthy too — rich in nutrients and high in protein, iron and fiber, arguably placing them neck and neck with other lauded foods in the super-food department. They also have the added benefit of being very easy on the wallet.

Lentils cook quickly and

LYNDA **BALSLEV** 

without any fuss, gamely absorbing the flavors and seasonings of their fellow ingredients and braising liquids, while adding a hearty, earthy and rich base to soups, stews,

side dishes, even salads. This soup is a perfect example. It's the essence of a simple lentil soup, with traditional seasonings and sauteed aromatics such as onion, carrot and thyme simmering in a good amount of stock. Yet it doesn't stop there: Wilted kale leaves add balance and freshness to the feisty broth infused with spicy chorizo sausage, along with peppery and smoky paprikas, a dollop of tomato paste for fruity good measure, and another dollop of fiery harissa to boot.

In essence, this is a lentil soup and then some. It's inspired by North African and southern Mediterranean flavors, which lend warmth and vibrance to what remains a remarkably humble and satisfying soup that passes for a delicious weeknight dinner.

**Lentil, Sausage and Kale Soup** 

Active Time: 45 minutes Total Time: 45 minutes Yield: Serves 4



LYNDA BALSLEV/TASTEFOOD

Lentil, sausage and kale soup.

#### **Ingredients:**

- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil 12 ounces Spanish chorizo, sliced 1/4-inch thick
- 1 small yellow onion, chopped
- 1 large carrot, diced 1 small red bell pepper, diced
- 1 cup grape tomatoes, halved
- 1 cup brown lentils, rinsed and picked
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste 1 teaspoon thyme
- 1 teaspoon sweet paprika
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- 4 cups chicken stock
- 4 to 6 lacinato kale leaves, tough stems removed, torn into bite-sized pieces
- 1 tablespoon harissa
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons sherry vinegar 1 teaspoon salt
- <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> teaspoon freshly ground black

Heat the oil in a large pot or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the chorizo in one layer and brown on both sides, 4 to 5 minutes. With a slotted spoon, transfer the sausage to a plate lined with paper towels. Pour off all but 1 tablespoon fat from the

Add the onion and carrot to the pot and saute until the onion softens and the carrot brightens in color, about 3 minutes. Add the bell pepper and tomatoes and saute until the pepper is crisp-tender, about 2

minutes. Add the lentils, stir to coat, and then add the tomato paste, thyme, the sweet and smoked paprika and the cumin. Cook, stirring constantly, until blended and fragrant, about 1 minute. Pour in the stock, partially cover the pan, and simmer over medium-low heat until the lentils are tender but not mushy, 25 to 30 minutes. Add the kale leaves and continue to simmer until wilted, 2 to 3 minutes.

Stir in the harissa, brown sugar and vinegar, then add the salt and black pepper and taste for seasoning. Serve warm.

Lynda Balslev is an award-winning cookbook author, recipe developer, tester and editor. Taste Food is distributed by Andrews McMeel Syndication.

SPONSORED CONTENT

# Bagelman Bagels now serving imported New York pastrami

BY CHRISTINA RUOTOLO

Hot Dish

eb. 9 is National Bagel Day, so now is the perfect time to talk bagels. It is estimated that over 200 million people consumed bagels in 2020. I wasn't surprised by this statistic as I am one of the millions of people who eat bagels on a regular basis for breakfast, lunch, dinner, or whenever I want an enjoyable snack. Bagels are the perfect base to add on whatever tastes and flavors

Bagels have been a staple since they were first brought to the U.S. by Jewish immigrants. The New York style bagel is postcard-perfect with a crisp, shiny crust wrapping fresh bread with just the right amount of density and chew. Bagels are made from yeasted wheat dough, hand-shaped, boiled then baked in order to achieve the trifecta of textures that make for a great bagel. They can be eaten any time of day but are consumed most often for breakfast or brunch.

What better way to celebrate the bagel than to introduce you to Bagelman Bagel at 1904 E. Fire Tower Road. This location has been open for four years, but partner John Grillo — the Bagelman — owned and operated Boulevard Bagel with his family for over 20 years.

The staff starts bright and early before the sun comes up when



PHOTOS BY HOT DISH/CHRISTINA RUOTOLO The Bagelman now offers New York pastrami

bagel makers put on their aprons, and hand shape the dough in 13 flavors including plain, cheddar, combo, sesame, poppy, onion, garlic, salted, jalapeño, great grain, chocolate chip, blueberry and cinnamon raisin. There is a flavor for every mood from cheesy to sweet to salty. And don't forget you can add a flavored cream cheese, or "smear," to your bagel. Flavors include plain, light, strawberry, walnut raisin, blueberry, chive, veggie, pineapple walnut, chocolate chip, or spinach garlic. My favorites are a cinnamon raisin bagel with walnut raisin cream cheese and a cheddar cheese bagel with spinach garlic cream cheese with

sandwiches.

some crispy bacon. The menu offers a wide variety of breakfast and lunch items from sandwiches piled high with your favorite meats, cheeses and eggs, to BLTs, a deli bagel with assorted deli meats and cheeses, a pizza bagel with gooey melted cheese

bagel dog which is a bagel stuffed with a Nathan's all-beef hot dog. Other menu items include omelets and wraps like the curry chicken salad, tomato basil chicken bacon, or the club wrap. They even have hearty soups like broccoli cheese, baked potato or tomato, which can be paired with a classic grilled cheese. Gluten-free wraps are available, too.

classic.

They also have fresh salads, homemade pimento cheese, chicken salad, fresh fruit cups, parfaits, cinnamon rolls, muffins and crumb cake, which pairs perfectly with a hot cup of fresh brewed coffee or a cold glass of Simple Natural white or chocolate

There were so many options I was not sure what I wanted to eat first, so why not start with a crowd favorite, the breakfast special. The toasted plain bagel is topped with crispy bacon, melted

and pepperoni, and even a fun hot cheddar cheese and eggs. It was a perfect protein-packed breakfast sandwich to fuel a long workday. You can pick bacon or sausage, change up the cheese, and add a smear.

The Bagleman's bagel and lox sandwich is a

Next I tried a new addition - imported New York pastrami sandwiches and Reubens. You can only get these after 11 a.m. They have limited qualities as they are made fresh, packaged, placed over dry ice and delivered daily from New York. I was lucky enough to snag myself a pastrami sandwich served on Jewish rye bread with a slathering of tangy deli mustard. OK, I was going to say that I sampled the sandwich, but let's be real people, I'm Italian, and if you put a half pound of pastrami in front of me, this girl will eat that in minutes flat, and that's what I did.

For those not familiar with pastrami, it's corned beef that has been brined, seasoned with pepper and spices like coriander,



dried and then steamed. The rich red color and texture is indicative of the deep flavors from smoke and sweet coriander. The meat has a snap from the pepper-crusted edges and drying process but is so juicy it melts on the tongue when you eat it. It was easy to see why they have been selling out of this on a daily basis. So, if you want to try this for yourself, get

there before 11 a.m. For the last stop on the Bagelman food tour, I wanted to try something traditional, so I ate the Bagel with lox sandwich. Bagels and lox is a Jewish staple. The sandwich features a melding of transcontinental flavors and traditions. Start with a combo bagel spread with fresh plain cream cheese then top with a generous amount of wild-caught salmon that's brined and smoked, lettuce, tomato, capers and sliced red on-

The lox is traditionally Scandinavian as they used to brine and smoke their meats during long winter months, the bagel, of

See BAGELMAN, B5



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