

Gut and Psychology Syndrome (GAP Syndrome or GAPS)™

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Not many people would choose to become parents of an autistic child. Yet it is happening to more and more of us in our modern world. There is an unmistakable epidemic of autism going on across the globe. If this can possibly be of any comfort for a parent, then I would say that you are certainly not alone! Most parents of autistic children can clearly recall that traumatic moment of the diagnosis of "Autism" being announced to them by a doctor followed by the statement "There is nothing that can be done." Well, being a doctor myself, I have to say that your doctor is wrong, there is a lot that can be done! I would even go further, depending on your commitment and certain circumstances, you have a good chance of bringing your child as close as possible to normality! Hundreds of autistic children across the globe, appropriately treated and educated become almost indistinguishable from their typically developing (normal) peers. My own son was diagnosed severely autistic at the age of three. Now at the age of 12 he has fully recovered and is leading a normal life. In my clinic in Cambridge in England I work with hundreds of autistic children and adults. My personal and professional involvement with autism has been my best education in how to treat this disorder effectively.

Treating autism is not an easy task. It takes years of continuous effort and commitment. But, being a parent myself, I can tell you that it is one of the most rewarding experiences on Earth! In my book "Gut and Psychology Syndrome.

Natural Treatment for Autism, ADHD, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Depression and Schizophrenia” I would like to share with you what I strongly believe to be the appropriate treatment for an autistic child.

So, what is a typical scenario I see in clinical practice?

Before examining the patient it is very important to look at the health history of the parents. Whenever the parents are mentioned people immediately think about genetics. However, apart from genetics there is something very important the parents, mother in particular, pass to their child: their unique gut micro-flora. Not many people know that an adult on average carries 2 kg of bacteria in the gut. There are more cells in that microbial mass than there are cells in an entire human body. It is a highly organised micro-world, where certain species of bacteria have to predominate to keep us healthy physically and mentally. Their role in our health is so monumental, that we simply can not afford to ignore them. We will talk in detail about the child’s gut flora later. Now let us come back to the source of the child’s gut flora – the parents.

After studying hundreds of cases of autism in children and adults, a typical health picture of these children’s mums has emerged.

A typical modern mother was probably not breast fed when she was a baby, because she was born in 60s or 70s when breast-feeding went out of fashion. Why is it important? Because it is well known now that bottle fed babies develop completely different gut flora to the breast fed babies. This compromised gut flora

in a bottle fed baby later on predisposes her to many health problems. Having acquired compromised gut flora from the start, a typical modern mum had quite a few courses of antibiotics in her childhood and youth for various infections. It is a well known fact that antibiotics have a serious damaging effect on gut flora, because they wipe out the beneficial strains of bacteria in the gut. At the age of 16 and sometimes even earlier the modern mum was put on a contraceptive pill, which she took for quite a few years before starting a family. Contraceptive pills have a devastating effect on the beneficial (good) bacteria in the gut. One of the major functions of the good bacteria in the gut flora is controlling about 500 different known to science species of pathogenic (bad) and opportunistic microbes. When the beneficial bacteria get destroyed the opportunists get a special opportunity to grow into large colonies and occupy large areas of the digestive tract. A modern diet of processed and fast foods provides perfect nourishment for these pathogens and that is a typical diet a modern mum had as a child and a young adult. As a result of all these factors a modern mum has seriously compromised gut flora by the time she is ready to have children. And indeed clinical signs of gut dysbiosis (abnormal gut flora) are present in almost 100% of mothers of children with autism and other neurological and psychiatric conditions.

But why are we talking about mother's gut flora? Because her baby is born with a sterile gut. In the first 20 or so days of life the baby's virgin gut surface gets populated by a mixture of microbes. This is the child's gut flora, which will have a

tremendous effect on this child's health for the rest of his/her life. Where does this gut flora come from? Mainly from the mother.

So, whatever microbial flora the mother has she would pass to her new-born child.

Gut flora is something we do not think much about. And yet the number of functions the gut flora fulfils is so vital for us that if some day our digestive tract got sterilised we probably would not survive.

The first and very important function is appropriate digestion and absorption of food. If a child does not acquire normal balanced gut flora, then the child will not digest and absorb foods properly, developing multiple nutritional deficiencies.

Apart from taking a vital part in nourishing the body, beneficial bacteria in the gut act as the housekeepers for the digestive tract. They coat the entire surface of the gut protecting it from invaders and toxins by providing a natural barrier and producing a lot of anti-bacterial, anti-viral and anti-fungal substances. At the same time they provide the gut lining with nourishment. So, it is no surprise that when the gut flora is abnormal the digestive tract itself can not be healthy. Indeed most patients with autistic spectrum disorders present with digestive problems. In many cases these problems are severe enough for the parents to talk about them first. In some cases they may not be severe, but when asked direct questions the parents describe that their child never had normal stool, that their

child suffered from colic as a baby and that tummy pains and flatulence are a common part of the picture. In those cases where these children have been examined by gastroenterologists, inflammatory process in the gut was found along with faecal compaction and an over-spill syndrome. The most recent research was performed at the Royal Free Hospital in London by Dr. Andrew Wakefield and his team. They found an inflammatory condition in the bowel of autistic children, which they have named Autistic Enterocolitis.

Well functioning gut flora is the right hand of our immune system. A baby is born with an immature immune system. Establishment of healthy balanced gut flora in the first few days of life plays a crucial role in appropriate maturation of the immune system. If the baby does not acquire appropriate gut flora then the baby is left immune compromised. The result is lots of infections followed by lots of courses of antibiotics, which damage the child's gut flora and immune system even further. At the same time in the first two years of life the child receives a lot of vaccinations. A child with compromised immune system does not react to vaccinations in a predicted way. In many cases vaccines deepen the damage to the immune system and provide a source of chronic persistent viral infections and autoimmune problems in these children.

So, the autistic child who we are talking about, did not get normal gut flora from the start and then got it damaged even further by repeated courses of antibiotics and vaccinations. As a result these children commonly suffer from digestive

problems, allergies, asthma and eczema. But apart from that in autistic children and adults something even more terrible happens. Without control of the beneficial bacteria different opportunistic and pathogenic bacteria, viruses and fungi have a good chance to occupy large territories in the digestive tract and grow large colonies. These pathogenic microbes start digesting food in their own way producing large amounts of various toxic substances, which get absorbed into the blood stream, carried to the brain and cross the blood – brain barrier. Due to the absence or greatly reduced numbers of beneficial bacteria in the gut flora, the child's digestive system instead of being a source of nourishment becomes a major source of toxicity in the body.

In my book “Gut and Psychology Syndrome. Natural Treatment for Autism, ADHD, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Depression and Schizophrenia” we will look in great detail at what particular toxins have been found in autistic children and adults and how they make these children and adults autistic. The toxicity, which is produced by the abnormal microbial mass in the digestive tract of the child, establishes a link between the gut and the brain. That is why I named this condition: the **Gut and Psychology Syndrome (GAP Syndrome)TM**. Patients with GAP Syndrome fall in the gap – the gap in our medical knowledge. As a result they do not receive an appropriate treatment.

The book on GAP Syndrome explains how and why autism develops and how to treat it using a sound nutritional protocol. The treatment is completely natural and

can be implemented at home. It is a self-help book with a comprehensive recipe section and is written in easy to understand language. Knowledge is power! This book gives the parents the power to help their child !

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To learn more about Gut and Psychology Syndrome, how it develops and how to treat it with a sound nutritional protocol please look at **the book by Dr. Natasha Campbell-McBride “*Gut and Psychology Syndrome. Natural treatment for autism, ADHD/ADD, dyslexia, dyspraxia, depression and schizophrenia.*”** You can get the book on www.mindd.org or Tel: (61) (2)9388 7383