

A Microbial Ballad: The Gut's Tiny Friends

By Helen Godefroimont

Deep in the gut, where few can see,
A world of microbes thrives in glee.
Through twists and turns of the GI tract,
They shape our health—that's just a fact!

Ruminococcus, king of the grain,
Prefers artichokes—not in vain!
Breaking down pectin with careful might,
Releasing butyrate—a neuro delight.

Lactobacillus, sour yet wise,
Modulates serotonin's rise.
With tryptophan, it crafts the key,
A calmer mind, less anxiety.

Akkermansia, sleek and slim,
Toughens gut walls to keep things in.
Less endotoxin, less brain fog,
A shield against the leaky clog.

Faecalibacterium, gentle guide,
Soothes inflammation far and wide.
Its butyrate fuels microglia's grace,
Clearing debris in neural space.

Bifidobacteria, early friend,
Shapes immunity to defend.
With GABA's touch, it steers the tide,
Easing stress from deep inside.

So next time you eat, give thanks and cheer,
For microbes working far and near.
From gut to brain their whispers weave,
A symphony we must believe!

Scientific Statement

This piece is inspired by working with pre- and probiotic compounds during my Honour's project. It aims to give life to select gut bacterial genera, rather than providing an exhaustive list, as many strains share overlapping roles. To enhance readability and maintain rhyme, each paragraph highlights only certain key actions of a given genus. By anthropomorphizing these microscopic allies, I hope to bring their efforts to life and emphasize the deep interconnection between the gut microbiome and the brain. This work serves as a reminder of the vital role our gut bacteria play in maintaining our health—especially through the gut-brain axis. I hope it inspires appreciation for these tiny yet powerful companions that help shape our well-being! Be grateful for this beautiful symbiotic relationship.

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