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Manipulation of gut flora in the perioperative period, what are the benefits, and what is the evidence that it works??

Category: Integrated Health

Mandy Parkinson-Bates¹, Kiron Bhatia^{1,2}

¹Heidelberg Weight Loss Surgery, Melbourne, Australia, ²Austin Hospital, Melbourne, Australia

Purpose

Bariatric surgery, particularly gastric bypass by its very nature, results in anatomical changes that exclude or bypass a significant segment of stomach and proximal small intestine. This has implications for the gut microbiome. We attempt to explore the administration of probiotics in the bariatric surgery patient group as to its efficacy in altering outcomes.

Method and Results

A literature review was conducted with the above search criteria in mind and results discussed. A preliminary model for a planned study is also presented with specific outcome measures such as presence of symptoms, stool frequency and character based on the Bristol scoring system as well as weight loss outcomes.

Discussion

Pre-existing ailments such as irritable bowel and other functional gut disorders can often have an impact on post-operative recovery and overall outcomes. Probiotic use has been reported to assist with decreased IBS-like symptoms, enhancing the bioavailability of essential micronutrients such as Vitamin B12 and Folate as well as augmenting weight loss results. To date this subject has not been assessed in any great detail. We review the available evidence and concepts surrounding probiotic supplementation.