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| The gut-brain connection The enteric nervous system, or the second brain, is made of two layers of more than 100 million nerve cells that line your entire GI tract. While its main job is to help you digest food, it also communicates regularly with your brain through neurotransmitters. Neurotransmitters are the molecules used by the nervous system to transmit messages to neurons and muscles. How much – or how little – of these neurotransmitters you make may be due in large part to the trillions of microbes that live in your gut. Researchers have found evidence that irritation in the gastrointestinal system may trigger mood changes, such as depression and anxiety.***Did you know?*****70% of the immune system lives within the digestive tract.****So what causes the bad bugs to take over?** A few common habits may give these bad bacteria the upper hand. For one thing, a Western diet that is low in fiber and high in sugar, heavily processed foods, and meat protein leads to unfavorable shifts in the microbiome that promote inflammation. Studies have shown that if you have too much of these bad bacteria in your gut, you are more likely to have bowel-related disorders such as Crohn’s disease, ulcerative colitis, and irritable bowel disease.Interested in learning more ways you can support your gut health? Reach out to your Everside Health provider today! |
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