

The **Hearty** Digest

SUNWAY
MEDICAL CENTRE
Sunway City

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from The Editor

Phew! It's already mid-year. How is everyone doing? The recent nationwide Movement Control Order (MCO) has once again forced all of us to stay at home more but let's look at it in a more positive light – we have done it before and we will be able to do it again. Hang in there! And if you absolutely need to go out, do not forget to always wear a face mask, wash your hands and use hand sanitizer frequently, and practice social distancing.

Malaysians and food have always been inseparable, whether in lockdowns or not. "Do you live to eat, or eat to live?" is a phrase often heard. So in this issue, we dive into the world of our digestive health and I hope that as you journey through the pages, you'll be delighted to find new knowledge and tips on caring for your digestive system.

Numerous studies have shown that a healthy gut contributes to a strong immune system, improved mood, good sleep and effective digestion.

“ Learn more about how you can care for your gut with our Consultant Gastroenterologist & Hepatologist, Dr Chung Yun Chien and how you should eat throughout the years with our Dietitian, Celeste Lau. With simple lifestyle changes, you can have good gut health and improve your overall well being.”

Also, we have accomplished various initiatives that contribute back to the community. Take a read on a touching story of Baby Jia Ho who underwent a major surgery with miraculous results and our visit to Anjung Singgah to spread some joy during the holy month of Ramadan (pre-MCO).

So, eat well, sleep enough and stay healthy. Remember, register for your COVID-19 vaccination too.

Till the next one, cheers!

Nur Yee Jie Min
Editor, Hearty Digest



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A Message from The CEO



This year seems like a flash. In the blink of an eye, we have been catapulted to mid-year. Since my last message here, a lot has taken place. Firstly, I would like to wish Selamat Hari Raya to our Muslim friends who celebrated last month. I hope that despite the travel restrictions and quiet festive merriment, you still had a meaningful Eid celebration with your closest and dearest. May we all be reunited with our loved ones in the next festive celebration.

On this second issue of our hospital newsletter, you will find many gems on digestive health. It is a timely reminder for us to take good care of our gut health, especially if you are constantly working from home, having delivered food often and may be lacking daily movements. Are you paying attention to what you consume daily? And are you exercising enough? Let's take good care of our digestive health so that it may serve us well and long.

On May 12, we remembered the unwavering and often unsung heroes of healthcare - our nurses. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the dedicated team of nurses in Sunway Medical Centre. They have shown unconditional sacrifices and relentless perseverance through a highly intense year of battling COVID-19. Our hospital is extremely proud and honored to have such a great pillar of support and we appreciate each and every one of you. Here's wishing all our amazing nurses a Happy International Nurses Day!

In May, we also unlocked an important milestone when all our hospital staff completed their COVID-19 vaccination. At the time of writing, Phase 2 of the National COVID-19 Immunisation Programme has begun for senior citizens, persons with disabilities and those with chronic diseases. I hope that the stories of our vaccinated frontliners in this issue will inspire you to register for your vaccination via the MySejahtera app (if you have not already done so). Vaccination is an essential step for our society to return to social normalcy and boost better economic opportunities to spur our nation forward.

Until the next issue, I would like to gently remind all of us to continue observing the 3Ws (wear a mask, wash your hands, warn others) and avoid the 3Cs (crowded spaces, confined spaces, close conversations), whether we have been vaccinated or not.

Let's take good care of ourselves and each other so that better days may be ahead for all of us. I look forward to writing to you again soon.

Bryan Lin Boon Diann

Chief Executive Officer, Sunway Medical Centre

DO YOU KNOW?

Savour The Moments of Our Childhood

Which taste reminds you of home? A bite, a sip or a smell could transport us back in time. Each of us probably has some fond childhood memories that were shaped by our favourite food - a dish, an ingredient or a favourite person who made even the simplest dish so comforting. Every taste remembered is a nostalgic memory cherished. So we got some Sunway Medical Centre staff members to share their childhood favourites.

“ Cadbury chocolate evokes many fond memories as a child. Even my four children enjoy this chocolate today!”
- Mohd Faizal Nur Mohamad,
Patient Attendant

“ I was a sweet tooth as a child and Chipmores cookies were my favourite. Now, I enjoy spicy food.”
- Chia Min Jye, Food & Beverage

“ A bowl of Penang Curry Mee is like no other. It was my tea-time treat as a teenager (with extra chili!). Today, it reminds me of my late dad, who would buy it for me every time I was home for a visit.”
- Joanne Tay,
PR & Communication



“ My family gatherings aren't complete without tapai (fermented glutinous rice). My grandmother makes them herself!”
- Juliet Jayasuriya,
Lobby Ambassador

“ There was this old couple who sold nasi lemak and roti canai at Batu 14, Puchong. My entire family enjoys them. Unfortunately, the couple has passed on and we miss the taste of their food.”
- Naheem Razza,
Lobby Ambassador

“ My mother makes the best fried meehoon and I haven't had the chance to go home to taste her cooking with the current movement restrictions.”
- Aina Madiah Mohd Noor,
Food & Beverage



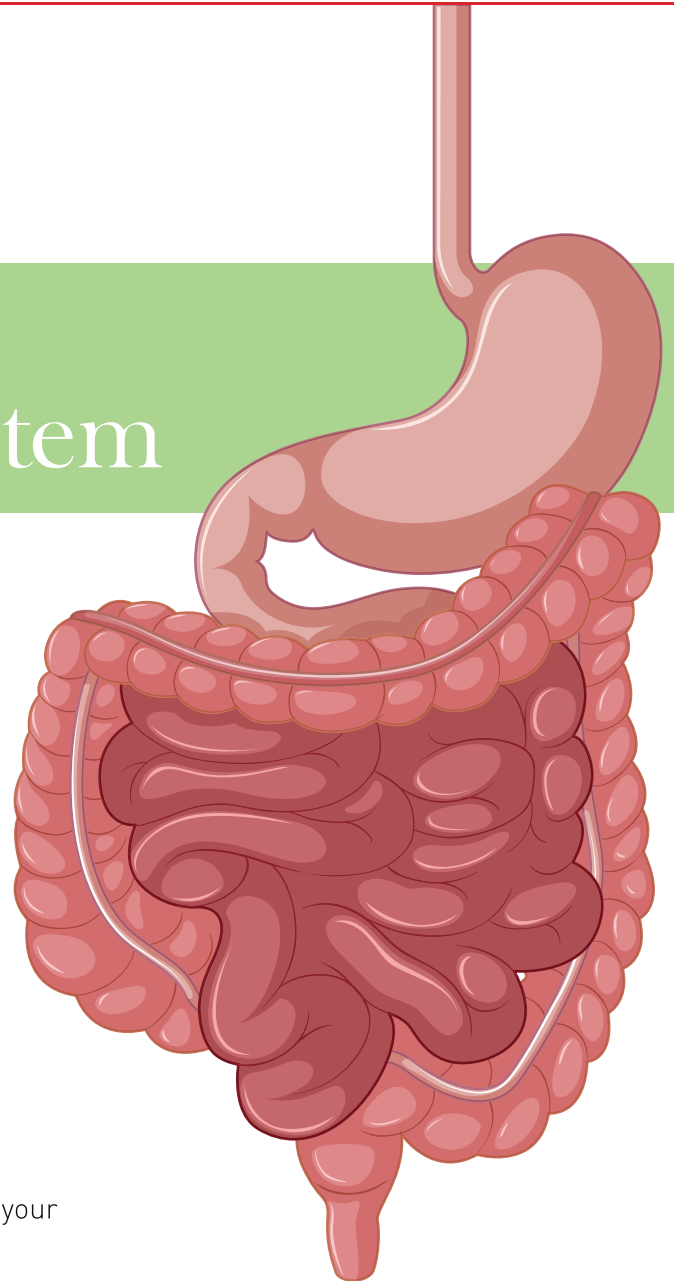
“ I remember those traditional biscuits sold in tin cans, which made me so excited as a child. It's quite difficult to find them today.”
- Nityaenee Nair Balachandran,
Pharmacy Retail Assistant

** All photos credited to Google.*

DO YOU KNOW?

Fun Facts About Our Digestive System

1. The acid in your stomach is so strong it could dissolve an iron nail!
2. To stop your stomach from digesting itself, it's lined with a protective mucus, and your stomach cells are replaced every few days.
3. Your body can move food through the digestive system even while you are standing on your head. It is not connected to gravity because it works with muscles.
4. Your stomach at rest holds about 200g of stomach acid and bile. However, it has the capacity to hold nearly 230g of food at a time if necessary. The average capacity is about 900g.
5. Aerobic exercise is the best type of exercise to keep your digestive tract in shape.
6. Your stomach is a key player in keeping your mood balanced. New research suggests a link between the gut microbiome (the microorganisms that live in any environment) and your mental health.
7. You can live without a stomach. Your small intestines do the most when it comes to food digestion and absorption.
8. Enzymes in your digestive system are what separate food into the different nutrients that your body needs.
9. The average person produces 2 pints of saliva every day. That is equivalent to 2 cans of soda.
10. Guess what? Those laundry detergents advertised with enzymes to remove stains - some of those enzymes are the same as those found in your digestive system!



IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Trust Your Gut

*by Dr Chung Yun Chien,
Consultant Gastroenterologist & Hepatologist*

In the past, we may have thought that our digestive system was pretty simple – food goes in, waste comes out. But there are a lot of things going on in the gut which modern medicine is discovering.

“When people think of gut health, they usually focus on the stomach but the liver, pancreas and gall bladder also play an important part,” said Dr Chung Yun Chien, Consultant Gastroenterologist and Hepatologist, who has advanced training in hepatology and liver transplant.

The liver makes the digestive juice called bile, which helps digest fats and some vitamins. Bile ducts carry the bile from the liver to the gallbladder for storage and it is then used to digest fats whenever we consume fatty foods.

Several factors can cause liver problems including infection, chronic alcohol abuse, obesity and even the use of certain over the counter medications, traditional complementary medicines and herbal compounds.

There are also liver-related problems that are inherited. Genetic causes of liver disease are when one inherits abnormal genes from one’s parents which can result in build-up of substances in the liver.

Meanwhile, fat accumulation in the liver can result in the more commonly known fatty liver disease, and affects patients with metabolic diseases such as diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol or a high BMI.

Over time, damage to the liver may lead to scarring of the organ and this, in turn, can cause liver failure, a life-threatening condition.

“But if we are able to identify the root cause to the problem, early treatment can allow the liver to heal,” Dr Chung said.

“**The best way to protect yourself is by getting regular medical check-ups or health screenings. Many of the patients I have seen discovered that they had problems through medical screening. Prior to that, they were going through their daily lives with no issues. But during a check-up they found things like elevated liver enzymes or Hepatitis C or B virus in them for years without even realising it!**”

He advises those over the age of 50 to go for annual check-ups, especially if one has a family history of digestive issues. A full health screening usually includes liver function and hepatitis viral examination.



A healthy gut contributes to a strong immune system, heart health, brain health, improved mood, healthy sleep and effective digestion. Numerous studies have demonstrated links between gut health and the immune system, mood, mental health, autoimmune diseases, endocrine disorders, skin conditions, and cancer.

“With simple changes to your lifestyle, you can have good gut health and improve your overall well being,” Dr Chung said.

Our bodies need nutrients from food and drinks to conduct daily functions and stay healthy. Proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals and water are essential nutrients which help our digestive system to break down into parts small enough for the body to use for growth and cell repair.

“The gut microbiome plays a vital role in one’s overall health. Each person has about 300 to 500 different species of bacteria in their digestive tract. While some microorganisms are harmful to our health, many are incredibly beneficial and even necessary to a healthy body,” he adds.

“The pitfalls of modern living such as high stress levels, insufficient sleep, processed food and antibiotics often result in a variety of problems, which could easily be related to an unhealthy gut – upset stomach, unintentional weight changes, sleep disturbances, chronic fatigue and skin irritations such as eczema,” Dr Chung said.

** This article was first published in [The Star](#)*

Here are some tips that you can adopt in your current lifestyle:



Watch your alcohol consumption:

“The liver has to work very hard whenever we consume alcohol. So drink in moderation and know your limits!”

Practise good hygiene:

“Wash your hands before preparing and consuming food, and ensure it is cooked well. For those who are getting tattoos or body piercings, be mindful about the cleanliness of tools used.”



Get vaccinated:

Protect yourself against diseases such as Hepatitis B and A.

Seek medical advice before taking medication:

“People are taking prescription and non-prescription drugs rampantly these days and may even mix with alcohol, or herbal supplements and complementary medicine without understanding the chemistry on how they work.”



Wear protective gear:

“Those who have exposure to industrial aerosol sprays such as insecticides, fungicides and paints should always protect themselves with masks and proper protective gear (both for ingestion and to protect your skin).”

Maintain a healthy weight:

Choose a good diet and stay fit.





IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Through the Years: How Should You Eat

by Celeste Lau, Dietitian

You are what you eat – how true is this saying? Nutrients from food provide fundamental elements needed for our body's structure, function and overall well being. As we move through different stages in life – baby, child, teen to adult – our nutritional needs vary.

Different nutrients are needed to build, repair and maintain different body functions as we age. We can maintain our health by eating well through different stages of life. Therefore, it is a fact that nutrient intake is based on our age. But besides age, each person's requirement is also based on gender, body composition and level of physical activity.

“Babies usually double their length and triple their weight between birth and one year of age. Breast milk is able to supply adequate amounts of nutrients, fluids and energy. It is recommended that infants be exclusively breastfed up to 6 months old.”

Six-month-old infants require more nutrients therefore solids can be introduced to complement their milk intake. In their childhood, kids will store more nutrients to prepare for their rapid growth during puberty. Due to their smaller stomach capacity and active lifestyle, it is advisable to offer them some healthy snacks in between meals to meet their nutritional needs. Do consult your paediatrician or dietitian if your child is under the 3rd percentile of the growth chart or if you notice their slow weight gain.

During adolescence, teenagers grow and develop at different rates. Energy, protein and other nutrients increase during this critical period of growth and development. Their appetite often increases but as teenagers gain more confidence, they can be tempted to eat more junk food that is high in fat, sugar and salt. Choose snacks that are higher in protein or energy snacks for them as well as fruits and nuts to supplement their needs.

“Bone building is important during early teen years to our 20s, so the more calcium you start off with, the better, as your bones will lose density over the years. Good sources of protein include lean cuts of beef, chicken, fish, and lamb. Not a meat eater? You'll also find protein in eggs, beans, tofu and nuts, as well as low-fat or fat-free milk, yogurt and cheese. Consuming enough protein may be linked with bone health.”

Adults often need to juggle multiple roles and responsibilities, and working life usually means more meals outside, relying on quick and convenient food that are high in salt and sugar. Not forgetting that quick coffee break or happy hours with your colleagues! Hence, adults should establish healthy eating habits such as including more fruits and vegetables in their diet, and limit their intake of fat, salt, sugar and alcohol.

As we age, our digestive system may not work as well as when we were younger. Some elderly persons may have difficulty getting adequate nutrition because of age- or disease-related impairments in chewing, swallowing, digesting and absorbing nutrients. Emotional, psychological problems, medical conditions and limitations in self-feeding may also affect food intake.

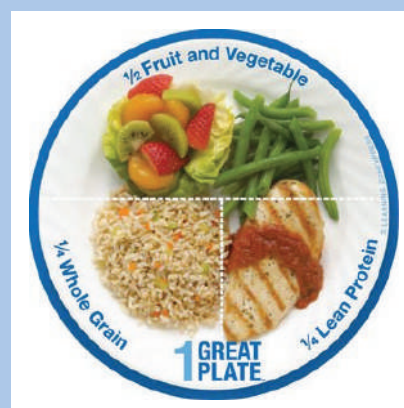
A registered dietitian or nutritionist can work with them to develop an eating plan based on a speech therapist's recommendations for the appropriate diet texture modifications and taking the person's condition into consideration to ensure adequate nutrition.

Meanwhile, the elderly should be served with a smaller portion of nutrient dense foods and nourishing fluids throughout the day. Sometimes, eating together with the elderly will encourage them to have more appetite to eat.

Nutritional needs vary from one life stage to another and eating according to age does contribute to gut and overall health. Nevertheless, adopt a healthy and balanced diet with adequate fluid intake into your daily life.

Tips everyone can adopt into their lifestyle

- Eat a healthier diet that focuses on colour, variety and freshness. Minimise packaged and processed foods
 - Eat in moderation. You should feel satisfied at the end of a meal, but not stuffed
 - A minimum of 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity is recommended weekly for adults
 - Drink plenty of water
 - Cook more meals at home even with simple recipes
 - Plenty of fruits and vegetables – at least five servings a day
 - Avoid excessive health supplements
- Control emotional eating by learning healthier ways to manage stress and emotions
 - Keep your caffeine intake in check by limiting regular coffee to about 3 cups or less per day, and watch what you put into it! Too much caffeine can interfere with sleep, make you jittery and cause you to lose energy later in the day.
 - Suku-Suku-Separuh (Quarter-Quarter-Half): A guide to healthy, balanced meals is a simplified and easy visual guide for healthy eating. What you need to do is to divide your plate into 4 compartments:
 - o Half of the plate with different colours of fruits and vegetables
 - o Quarter of the plate with wholegrains such as brown rice, wholemeal bread and oats
 - o Quarter of the plate with lean protein such as tofu, tempeh, egg, fish and lean meat



IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Is Fasting Healthy?

by Dr Sheikh Anwar Abdullah, Consultant Gastroenterologist & Hepatologist

The practice of fasting during the holy month of Ramadan brings many health benefits, especially to ease and restore the digestive system. In fact, caring for the digestive system is important to strengthen the body's immune system and prevent digestive problems, especially when fasting.

The digestive system is called the "second brain" among doctors as it is regulated by the enteric nervous system (ENS) which has more neurotransmitters than the brain. Neurotransmitters in the digestive system produce 95% of serotonin, a hormone that affects emotions and is used in the digestive process.

“Fasting helps control acid reflux as the practice helps lower the acid in the stomach, reducing the symptoms of reflux. Also, when fasting, the pancreas produces less enzymes due to the lack of food, allowing bile juice to become more concentrated that helps when breaking fast.”

Consuming food rich in complex carbohydrates can help supply energy for 6 hours before glycogen stored in the liver is converted to glucose to provide energy. Energy generation then continues through the burning of fat which contributes to weight loss.

Consuming foods rich in complex carbohydrates and fibre as well as grains, vegetables and fruits can improve your overall digestive health, not only when fasting. These foods help maintain the movement of food through the digestive tract, reducing constipation. It also helps prevent various digestive conditions such as haemorrhoids and irritable bowel syndrome (IBS).

“During the month of Ramadan, children can be encouraged to fast for 3 to 4 hours a day as early as the age of 5, while children aged 7 can learn to fast the entire day. Parents can introduce fasting to your children for the first time by preparing them mentally and physically, and allowing them to observe the practice.”

Fasting puts the body under mild stress, like what happens when we stress our muscles and cardiovascular system during exercise, it enhances our cells' ability to cope. In other words, they become strong. Although fasting can be challenging and sometimes uncomfortable, research has shown the benefits of this practice. This is why fasting is recommended.

* Adapted from an article published in **Berita Harian**



AT A GLANCE: DIGESTIVE HEALTH

What does your stool say about your health?

COLOURS



GREEN
Ate a lot of greens



BROWN
Good!



BLACK
Iron pills or bleeding



WHITE
Blocked bile duct



YELLOW
Malabsorption



RED
Bleeding

SHAPES

TYPE 1
Nutty hard lumps
No fibre



TYPE 2
Chunky sausage
Constipation; most likely to cause haemorrhoids



TYPE 3
Cracked sausage
Latent constipation



TYPE 4
Smooth sausage
Normal



TYPE 5
Soft balls
Ideal



TYPE 6
Fluffy & mushy
Stress



TYPE 7
All liquid
Diarrhoea



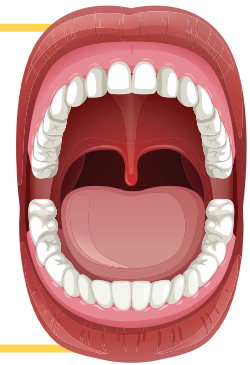
AT A GLANCE: DIGESTIVE HEALTH

A Food Journey Through Our Body

Stage 1: Mouth

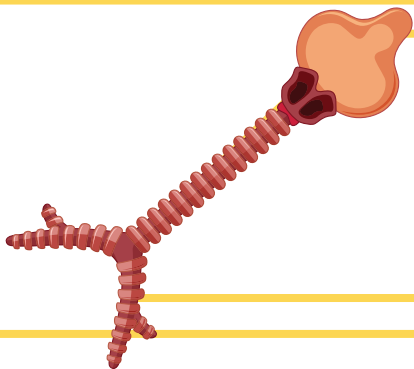
The digestive process starts in your mouth as you chew where your salivary glands produce saliva to moisten the food so it moves easily through your oesophagus and into your stomach. Saliva also contains an enzyme that breaks down starches in your food.

Health tip: Enjoy food by eating and chewing slowly.



Stage 2: Oesophagus

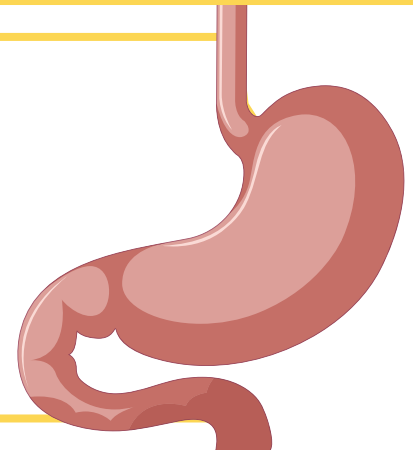
The oesophagus is a 25cm long tube that contracts to shift chewed food down into your stomach. A slimy mucus oozes from the oesophagus to help food on its way.



Stage 3: Stomach

Glands in your stomach lining produce stomach acid and enzymes that break down food. The acid in your stomach is so strong that it could dissolve a nail! To stop your stomach from digesting itself, it is lined with a protective mucus and your stomach cells are replaced every few days.

Health tip: Eat a balanced meal - vitamins, minerals, fibre.



Stage 4: Intestines

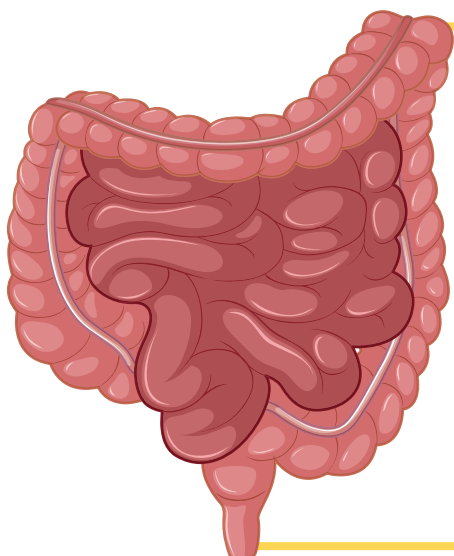
- Small intestine

The small intestine is 20 feet long and about an inch in diameter. Its job is to absorb most of the nutrients from what we eat and drink.

- Large intestine

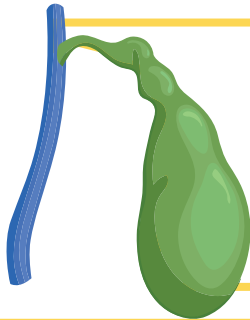
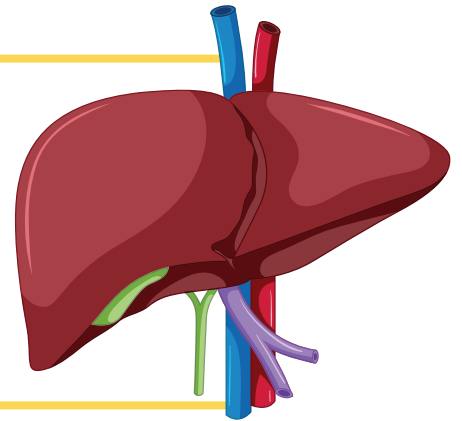
The large intestine is 5 feet long and about 3 inches in diameter. The colon absorbs water from wastes, creating stool. As stool enters the rectum, nerves there create the urge to defecate.

Health tip: Pay attention to alarming symptoms such as persistent vomiting, severe pain, loss of weight, blood in stool, nocturnal symptoms, persistent diarrhoea and fever.



Stage 5: Liver

This largest internal organ in your body has about 500 different jobs! It's like a chemical processing factory – blood carries nutrients from the small intestine to the liver and the liver decides what to do with them. It also gets rid of toxins, recycles old blood cells, makes bile and other digestive juices as well as produces, stores and releases glucose to give you energy.

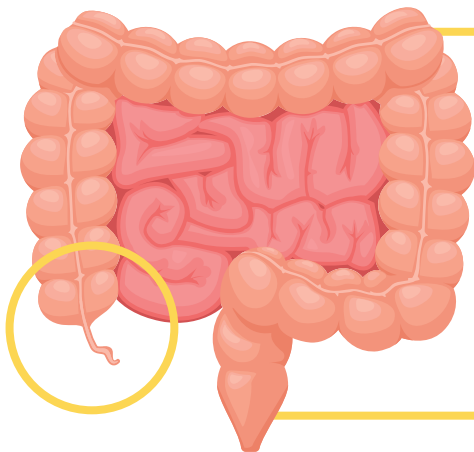
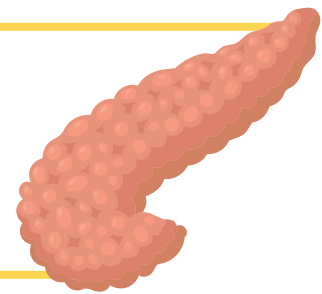


Stage 6: Gallbladder

The role of this green, pear-shaped organ is to store bile, a liquid that aids digestion and makes it thicker and stronger before adding it to the small intestine.

Stage 7: Pancreas

The pancreas makes enzymes which help digest nutrients in your food. It also makes insulin, a hormone which helps control your blood sugar levels.



Stage 8: Appendix

The appendix stores “good bacteria” that can help your digestive system work again after you’ve been eating poorly.

Health tip: Probiotics may be potential in improving digestion, reducing diarrhoea and relieving constipation. It can be found in yogurt, lactobacillus milk, kombucha, kefir, kimchi, miso, natto, tempeh and dietary supplements.

YOUR EVERYDAY WELLNESS

Healthy Eats

We know that a healthy and balanced lifestyle does wonders for our health, but do you know it affects our mental health too? This includes eating well, exercising and relieving stress. So here are some recommendations to help you stay moving and motivated.



Sunway FutureX Farms

Ardent to see plants, people and passion grow, Sunway FutureX Farms aims to feed communities with fresh, sustainable and fresh, tasty produce by kickstarting the city's first urban-farming movement through decentralised farms. You can be a part of a food revolution by signing up to be a Grower and receive food that is grown using sustainable, safe and smart farming technology.

Find out more on
<https://sunwayxfarms.com/>

YOUR EVERYDAY WELLNESS

Home Workout



Nintendo Switch Ring Fit Adventure

If you enjoy your video games as much as your exercise routine, why not combine both? This adventure game allows you to explore more than 100 levels in over 20 vibrant worlds in your quest to defeat a bodybuilding dragon and his minions using real-life exercises. Traverse grass-swept plains by jogging in place, attack enemies with overhead shoulder presses, and refill your health metre by striking some yoga poses.

Price: RM315 on [Shopee](#)

YOUR EVERYDAY WELLNESS

Feel Good

Autonomous sensory meridian response or better known as ASMR is a tingling sensation that begins in the scalp and moves down the back of the neck and upper spine. In simpler terms, it is the sensation people get when they watch stimulating videos. Although we may be more familiar with food related ASMR videos, ASMR can also be in the form of whispering, crinkling of wrapping paper and tapping.

ASMR Sleep Time by Stacy Aster **(12 million views)**

It is said ASMR sounds can assist in helping you sleep, relax and calm down. It is also intended for study, rest and meditation. This video features 3 hours of ASMR sounds including scratching, tapping and crinkling to help you sleep.



Spicy Boneless Chicken with Smooth Carbonara Spicy Chicken Noodles Mukbang ASMR by Eat with Boki **(28 million views)**

Warning! Do not proceed on an empty stomach. Listening to the chewing, slurping and swallowing sounds from this video truly whets your appetite. One of her signature ASMR sounds is the popping of a soda can and the burst of gas bubbles.

YOUR EVERYDAY WELLNESS

Tips from SunMed Doctors

In a rare and unique appearance, Sunway Medical Centre and Sunway Traditional & Complementary Medicine (TCM) shared the stage on BFM 89.9 on "What Should I Eat For A Healthy Gut Health?". We put together some interesting points from their conversation. To listen to the full podcast, you can [click here](#).

1. Health screenings are important, especially for those above 50 years old. Ageing may increase the risks of both non-cancerous and cancerous digestive health problems such as stomach ulcer or cancer. 80% of people who have *Helicobacter pylori* (*H. pylori*) bacteria do not show symptoms until their later years.
2. Digestive health is more than just a physical aspect but what you go through emotionally has an impact too. The Gut-Brain Axis (GBA) is a communication between the nervous system, linking emotional and cognitive centres of the brain with peripheral intestinal functions.
3. Taking fruit juice is not the same as taking whole fruits. Instead, consider juicing as a treat.
4. The best probiotics is having a diet with a good mix of fruits and vegetables.



Dr. Max Hu
Consultant Gastroenterologist and Hepatologist,
Sunway Medical Centre

1. Start with small incremental steps such as going for a walk even for 5 minutes a day and add a portion of fruits into your breakfast.
2. Our digestive system is most active during the daytime from 7am to 11am. A good habit is to eat during the day time and rest our stomachs during the night, especially two hours before bedtime.
3. The warming, cooling and neutral nature of food can be used to correct the body constitutions and affect our gut health. Take for example our Malaysian favourite, the Nasi Lemak - the sambal is a 'warm' food and the cucumber balances out as a 'cooling' food.
4. Liquid diets are only advisable if you have certain health conditions that require you to do so for a short term. Instead, eat in moderation.
5. There is no one size fits all when it comes to probiotics or prebiotics. More importantly, consuming only when necessary and natural sources of food is always a better option.



Mun Weng Yan, Senior Physician
Sunway Traditional & Complementary
Medicine (TCM)

SUNMED HIGHLIGHTS

The Language from A Heart That Cares:

Our Nurses

Each year on May 12, the world shines a light on International Nurses Day. Nurses work long and hard hours yet they are relentless in caring. In this issue, we talked to three nurses in our hospital. Here are their stories.

The One Who Walks the Footsteps of Her Aunt

“When I was in primary school, my late grandfather fell ill and I remembered my aunt, who was a nurse in Singapore then, took a few months off to return home to look after him. I watched her care attentively for him. She seemed to have the right knowledge and that really lifted our family’s burdens. It was comforting to know someone in the family knew what she was doing.”

“Back then, I was still young but watching her flow like a dancer in her element, made me want to walk in her footsteps. Those few months left a deep impact on me growing up. From then on, I was determined to be a nurse so I could care for others around me and myself, with the right knowledge.”



Michelle Moh, Staff Registered Nurse
Currently serving in the Medical Surgical
-Renal Transplant Ward

Today, Michelle is progressing into the third year as a nurse and sees this as her lifelong path. Hailing from the land of Hornbill, Sarawak, she has come a long way from home. She has not seen her family since she was last reunited with them during Chinese New Year in 2020.

Serving in the time of a pandemic as a young nurse, it has been challenging as workload increases and nurses are stretched beyond their usuals. She experienced the rising expectations of patients and their family members and sometimes, the lack of understanding in adhering strictly to the new Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) such as shorter visiting hours and limiting caregivers to stay the night.

She hopes visitors and patients can be empathetic towards the situation that while SOPs might inconvenience us a little but they have our best interests in mind.

Michelle is also one of the nurses who is administering the COVID-19 vaccines as part of the Sunway Medical Centre Vaccination Team. She hopes that those who are eligible to be vaccinated will not fear this key step to curb the pandemic but encourages us to register to be vaccinated.

Being apart from her family for more than a year now, she only has this simple but weighted wish in mind, “I miss my family a lot. Video calls only make me miss them ten times more. I wish to be able to go home soon.”

The One Who Faces COVID-19 Despite Her Fears

“Early this year, when I was assigned to work in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) for COVID-19 patients, I would be lying if I said I wasn’t scared. It was nerve-wracking at first. There were countless “What ifs?” flashing through my mind. In the early days, I wasn’t used to donning a full Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and sometimes for a full 14-hour shift.”



Wan Nur Farhanim Radziah binti Ali,
Senior Registered Staff Nurse
Currently serving in the COVID-19 Intensive Care Unit (ICU)

“Now, it has definitely changed the way I interact with others and made me conscious of practising strict SOPs. For example, during my break time, I would quickly shower before going out to take away food and rarely dine-in these days. I eat by myself mostly and don back the PPE to continue my shift after. During my days off, I only go out when it’s necessary because I believe this is not the time yet for us to relax.”

Hanim has been serving in the High Dependency Unit (HDU) before taking on the ICU that cares for COVID-19 patients. This is a road less travelled by many and yet, she stands tall to face the challenges despite her fears. This can only be stemmed from a heart that truly cares. Nursing has always been the profession of her choice since young. She gushed over caring for babies in HDU before this but now, she can only watch them from afar and hope that the little ones will be reunited with their parents soon.

Coming from the East Coast state of Kelantan, Hanim too hasn’t seen her family since July in 2020. Just like many who have been separated from their loved ones for a prolonged period while continuing to serve selflessly, she wishes to be reunited with her family soon.

“ I witness COVID-19 patients fighting for their lives. It is scary because this is so new to all of us. So I wish that we must not forget our fight against this pandemic is not over yet. I hope while we care for the patients in the wards, you care for us outside the wards by wearing masks properly at all times.”

The One Who Takes Pride in Small Tasks That Save Lives

“Nursing can sometimes be a thankless profession. There are also stigmas around certain tasks that nurses perform such as changing a patient’s pampers, cleaning them, helping them to the toilets. But what people may not realise is that, these seemingly small and insignificant tasks are what help us to peek into a patient’s health and progress. For example the texture of their stools and the colour of their urines actually tell a lot! This way, we can monitor them closely to provide necessary feedback to the doctors.”

“In times of a pandemic, nurses are stretched and some more than others. The spirit of teamwork is more important than ever. Whenever my team has some time in hand and see another team on a heavier workload, we would step up to offer support. This way, we can spread out the load better.”



Meera a/p Hasnit, Staff Registered Nurse
Currently serving in the Medical Surgical Ward

Despite having only one and a half years of experience in Nursing, Meera understands the field with maturity and adapted quickly when the pandemic hit just a few months after she started work. If anything, she is definitely one who doesn’t give up easily when faced with difficulty.

This truly showed when her mother (who is an Indian national) went back to India for prayers purposes just when the pandemic hit our shores last year and her return to Malaysia was halted. It took several appeals before Meera could be reunited with her mother after a long year! Those times when she was on her own and having only moved here from Malacca, she continues serving with pride regardless of the tasks given.

Her personal journey too has not been without challenges. As the child of a single mother, she pursued Nursing due to financial constraints, putting aside her initial dream of becoming a doctor. But she is currently also studying while working and continues to embrace learning and gaining knowledge for her future.

“I hope that people can see that the smallest tasks we do can help to save lives in our own unassuming ways. Also in this new normal where SOPs are crucial, I hope our visitors and patients understand that we each play a role even in adhering to them. It really makes a difference.”

In her words, Meera sums it up nicely,

“If doctors are the brain of the hospital, nurses are the heart. These two must go hand in hand.”

You are remembered, appreciated and celebrated today and every day. Happy International Nurses Day to all dedicated and compassionate nurses of Sunway Medical Centre!

SUNMED HIGHLIGHTS

From The Frontlines: A Vaccination Journey

In such pivotal times, any effort to serve the people must be taken with utmost responsibility and Sunway Medical Centre is honoured to be entrusted by the Ministry of Health to become an appointed vaccination centre for the Petaling District. Championing the push towards a successful national immunisation effort, our frontliners share their experience taking the vaccine.



Dr Samuel Ong, Consultant Cardiologist
Fully vaccinated in **March 2021**

“ I registered to be vaccinated because I wanted to protect myself and do my part in contributing towards herd immunity. I feel privileged to be among the first to be vaccinated in the country and was looking forward to it.”

On the day of vaccination, I could feel an air of excitement in the room and the SunMed Vaccination Centre was running like clockwork! Each person on duty knew their roles well - they were efficient, friendly and helpful. This really made the whole experience pleasant and memorable.

After my first dose, I experienced some pain in my neck and a swollen lymph node that went away after a day or two. I had no fever, chills or severe pain. Then, I was told that the side effects for the second jab could be worse and so I was mentally prepared for it. After three weeks, I had my second dose and felt a bit light-headed. There was also a bit of swelling on the left muscles with a tinge of soreness. However, these side effects subside after a few days. Overall, I did not experience any major side effects and glad that it went well.

I truly hope that life can return to normal in stages after being vaccinated. I look forward to the day when we can do away with our masks and see the faces of people again, especially their smiles. I anticipate a day when we can mingle freely together with our loved ones, a day when we can travel to see the world once more and a day when businesses will thrive and livelihoods will flourish for families who have been struggling the past year.

“ For such days to make a comeback, vaccination is key and herd immunity is essential. Therefore, I urge everyone who can be vaccinated to sign up for the vaccination if you have not done so. This is important for not only for yourself but also your community - your family, workplace and the nation. I wish you all the best when your turn comes!”

SUNMED HIGHLIGHTS

From The Frontlines: A Vaccination Journey



Apnidyawati bt Amsy Priyadi,
Senior State Registered Nurse
Fully vaccinated in **April 2021**

I was extremely excited to be among those in the first phase to receive the vaccine. I believe that many, especially in healthcare have been desperately waiting for this. It feels like we can finally see the light at the end of the tunnel. Vaccination is a key step towards ending this long-standing pandemic.

I am thankful to not have experienced any major side effects besides soreness at the injection site and minor hand numbness, which are normal reactions to vaccines. I performed hand exercises to encourage blood flow and applied a cold compress over my shoulder. Honestly, the numbness was bearable and went away after a while.

“ If you are worried and fearful of the vaccine, I encourage you to clear your concerns with your doctor and ensure that you are informed by reliable sources. It is important to make our decisions based on facts and not fear.”

Being vaccinated has given me a sense of comfort and peace of mind. I am now more at ease knowing that I am protected and at the same time, I am protecting those I come in close contact with in my line of work.

I strongly urge each person to register to be vaccinated. Being vaccinated not only breaks the chain of transmission, but also protects those who aren't able to be vaccinated like children.

Don't know what to expect during your vaccination?

We had a chance to host BFM 89.9 at our vaccination centre in April. Take a listen to what our Medical Director, Dr. Seow Vei Ken, and the SunMed Vaccination Working Committee Lead, Sherry Woo, have to say on [*The Daily Digest Podcast*](#).



#SunMedCares

Saving Lives: One Baby at a Time



Two-month-old baby Jia Ho was born with congenital heart defects, Large Patent Ductus Arteriosus (PDA), a heart defect that occurs when a hole between two major blood vessels in the heart remains open after a baby is born. This hole is supposed to close shortly after birth but his condition worsened with the presence of many smaller holes (Fenestrated ASD).

In April, Baby Jia Ho underwent successful PDA ligation and ASD closure surgeries under Sunway Medical Centre's Corporate Social Responsibility programme. He was placed under the careful and trusted care of Dr Ang Hak Lee, Consultant Paediatrician and Paediatric Cardiologist.

"Even though PDA ligation is not a complicated surgery, it contributed to a major impact on Baby Jia Ho. He was on a ventilator for months, but after that surgery he can breathe on his own without the machine," Dr Ang said.

"Even at such a young age, he is such a fighter and I'm relieved that he is recovering well. Finally, Jia Ho is home and reunited with his siblings," Madam Ang shares.

In days like this, we are reminded of the gift of life.

“As a mother, it is devastating to see my little one being hooked to so many wires since he was born. For the past 2 months, his siblings have been asking why he hasn't come home yet,” Madam Ang grapples with the painful journey her baby has had to go through.

Precious little Jia Ho has only known life in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at Sunway Medical Centre since he was born. This newborn has never felt his mother's touch and is fed through a tube due to his small size.

#SunMedCares

A Father's Love Through Kidney Transplant

Last year, Calvin* (not his real name) rushed his 20-year-old daughter to a clinic when she started vomiting profusely. The doctor found that her blood pressure was not normal for someone her age but was sent home with some medication.

However, she was in much discomfort being unable to put her head down and her eyes rolling to the back of her head. Calvin then sent her to a private hospital in Johor for further checkup and was told that she had kidney failure.



His daughter had no symptoms of the disease besides some bruises on her legs. Her biopsy showed that it was caused by IgA nephropathy, but she has no family history from both paternal and maternal families. The only possible reason is probably due to stress and lack of sleep from juggling study and working part time.

“Calvin and his wife went for the compatibility test and found that he was compatible. Without any hesitation, he decided to be his daughter's donor. Calvin didn't think that donating his kidney would affect him. The surgery was done by Dr Murali Sundram, Consultant Urologist with Dr Ng Eng Khim and Dr Rosnawati Yahya as their Consultant Nephrologists.”

“All three doctors were approachable and willing to explain the entire process in detail. That was very helpful and comforting. Dr Murali even agreed to snap a photo of my donated kidney which I now keep,” Calvin recalls.

“Some things in life are worth it, and this is one of them. All I wanted is for my daughter to be healthy as she still has a long journey ahead of her. With kidney transplant, she now has another chance to live a normal life as much as she can. And that's all that matters.”

Such is the devotion of a father's love.

#SunMedCares

Spreading Ramadan Joy



In April, Bryan Lin, Chief Executive Officer of Sunway Medical Centre joined forces with Wilfred Yeo, Senior General Manager of Sunway International Hotels & Resorts and Nik Tasha Nik Kamaruddin, Senior General Manager of Sunway Group Brand Marketing & Communications at Anjung Singgah in downtown Kuala Lumpur to distribute buka puasa meals for the homeless.

This is part of the Sunway Group's annual Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives during festive seasons to bring some cheer to local communities. Anjung Singgah is a temporary shelter for the homeless in urban areas, an initiative by Yayasan Kebajikan Negara (YKN).



#SunMedCares

A Touch of Happiness: Loving Bears Project



The Leo Club of SMK Seafield brought happiness and joy to children at Sunway Medical Centre's paediatric ward with handmade teddy bears made from towels. The club's secretary, Lee Jia Ling presented the 100 teddy bears to Deputy Nurse Manager of Ward 5A, Sr. Niktheya a/p N. Taramalingam.



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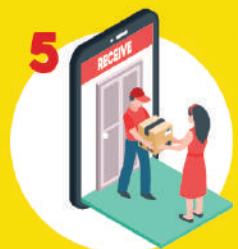
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