Approaches to Dealing with Sibo Small Intestine Bacterial Overgrowth

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The Center for Occupational & Environmental Medicine releases an article about small intestine bacterial overgrowth (SIBO). Along with an overview of SIBO and its symptoms and causes, the Center for Occupational & Environmental Medicine looks into three approaches to dealing with SIBO.

?Many doctors believe small intestine bacterial overgrowth is generally underdiagnosed,? says Dr. William J. Weirs, a board-certified physician in the field of Emergency Medicine, Environmental Medicine, and Integrative Medicine and author of the Center for Occupational & Environmental Medicine article. ?Some studies indicate that up to 80% of people with irritable bowel syndrome have SIBO. Small intestine bacterial overgrowth is not something to take lightly.?

SIBO has also been known as blind loop syndrome. This condition develops when there is an irregular increase in the general bacterial growth of the small intestine. This growth comes from types of bacteria foreign to the small intestine. The bacteria in the small intestine is its own complex environment. When any unknown bacteria is introduced to the small intestine it can throw off the whole flow of the system.

Because of this, SIBO is more likely to affect those with digestive problems such as Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) and those who have recently had abdominal surgery. Women, older persons, those with previous bowel surgeries, those with a history of drinking, and those who have recently finished a course of antibiotics are also more susceptible.

On top of this, those with particular medical conditions are also more prone to develop SIBO including those with HIV, cirrhosis, Celiac Disease, Crohn?s Disease, Hypothyroidism Scleroderma, and Fibromyalgia. Those with long-term use of medications that may lessen stomach acid production are also susceptible for SIBO.

SIBO mainly occurs when anatomic abnormalities or changes in your PH levels happen in your small bowels. It could also occur when your immune system is malfunctioning or when your small intestine loses the ability to effectively remove the food and bacteria due to the malfunction of its muscular activity.

Signs and symptoms of SIBO include nausea, bloating, diarrhea, malnutrition, abdominal pain, loss of appetite, unintentional weight loss, and an uncomfortable feeling of fullness after eating. While IBS and SIBO share many symptoms, SIBO can be detected by a breath test, while IBS is a functional disorder that is diagnosed when symptoms can?t be clinically explained.

The simple SIBO breath test is non-invasive and measures hydrogen and/or methane levels in your breath to determine the presence of gas-producing bacteria in the small intestine. Additional tests a healthcare provider could look into for more signs and causes of SIBO include blood tests for vitamin or blood protein deficiencies or stool tests for excess undigested fats or bile acids.

SIBO is usually treated with the antibiotic, rifaximin (Xifaxin) or if higher methane levels are found, the antibiotic neomycin (Mycifradin) could be added to the prescription. There are also other holistic approaches to treat and prevent SIBO including lifestyle changes and nutritional supplementation such as digestive enzymes.

Simple and holistic ways to control SIBO symptoms are to avoid sugary foods and drinks and any liquid medications or fiber supplements that contain sugar or alcohol as an ingredient. Another diet recommendation is to follow a low-FODMAP diet, a diet that reduces certain kinds of carbohydrates that are harder to digest. Removing foods like dairy products, protein sources, breads, and cereals allow the digestive system to rest and restore a healthy gut flora balance.

Nutritional supplementation is another holistic way to reduce symptoms of SIBO. Digestive enzymes are a type of nutritional supplement that help the gut restore healthy bacteria. Many over-the-counter supplements offer digestive enzymes that help break down food and aid in digestion. Common enzymes made in the small intestine include lactase and sucrase, which break down lactose and sucrose respectively.

Read https://coem.com/blog/small-intestine-bacterial-overgrowth-sibo/ to learn more about small intestinal bacterial overgrowth treatment. The Center for Occupational and Environmental Medicine can also help, call 843-572-1600 to learn more or to schedule an appointment.

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