



Message from the Co-Chairs

Dear Colleagues,

From birth, the GI tract serves to provide nutrients to our bodies, enhance the immune response, house the intestinal microbiota, and serve as a “second brain” with the brain-gut axis. The dietary needs of the GI tract change from newborn, thru infancy, childhood, and adulthood. The function of the GI tract will be explained and how a healthy diet can promote optimal organ function and a healthy microbiome. Understanding the normal functions of the GI tract and diet will also help identify when to seek GI care for symptoms. There are natural tie ins to prior World Digestive Health Days (WDHD), particularly the [2020 campaign](#) on the gut microbiome and the [2021 campaign](#) on obesity.

[World Digestive Health Day](#) is celebrated each year on May 29th with associated events, activities, and initiatives continuing throughout and beyond the campaign year. Through a multi-faceted campaign, WGO will provide simple messages for the general public in order to assist them in understanding the important role of diet in GI health. Multiple informational pieces on the GI tract and a healthy diet are planned and will be distributed worldwide for patients including children, gastroenterologists, primary care providers, and other healthcare professionals.

Through the WDHD 2023 campaign, WGO looks forward to providing a better understanding and recognition of a healthy GI tract, and we invite your participation through educating the public to promote a healthy lifestyle.

Sincerely,



Christina Surawicz, MD
Professor Emeritus, Medicine
University of Washington
WDHD 2023 Co-Chair



Carol Semrad, MD
Professor, Medicine
The University of Chicago Medicine
WDHD 2023 Co-Chair

Aims of the Campaign

The aim of the [World Digestive Health Day \(WDHD\) 2023 campaign](#) is to educate the public about the normal functions of the GI tract and ways to keep it healthy, with a focus on healthy eating from infancy thru adulthood. Our

goal is to promote a healthy gut for life going forward rather than focusing on diseases and looking for their causes. In diet, we will focus on the need for adequate protein, promoting fiber, and limiting sugary food and drinks.

Through a multi-faceted WDHD 2023 campaign, WGO seeks to raise awareness of the importance of a healthy GI tract with simple information for the general public (adults and children) that includes:

- The normal function of the GI tract
 - Digestion and absorption: Breaks down food so that nutrients and fluids can be taken up in the intestine and provide energy for the body
 - Immune defense: 70-80% of the body's immune system is in the gut
 - Brain-gut axis: The gut is called the "second brain," and its interactions with the nervous system are important
 - House of the intestinal microbiome
- How diet affects one's daily life and its importance to health. Provide parents and caregivers of children evidence-based guidance on the elements of a healthy diet from infancy thru adolescence.
- Develop educational and training materials based on the latest recommendations for healthy eating and distribute to physicians including gastroenterologists and surgeons, dietitians, other health professionals, and the lay public.

Join the Conversation

Connect with us on social media! Talk about WDHD and digestive health using the hashtags #WDHD2023 and #YourDigestiveHealth

WGO's Social Media Accounts

Facebook: facebook.com/WorldGastroOrg

Twitter: twitter.com/WorldGastroOrg

LinkedIn: linkedin.com/company/world-gastroenterology-organisation-wgo-wgo-foundation

Instagram: instagram.com/worldgastroorg

ABOUT WGO

Established in 1958, WGO is a global federation of 119 gastroenterology and hepatology member societies and four regional associations representing over 60,000 individual members worldwide. WGO focuses on improving education and training standards in gastroenterology, hepatology, endoscopy and other related disciplines globally.

Inform. Educate. Train. Advocate.