

INTERACTION BETWEEN GUT MICROFLORA AND IMMUNOCOMPETENT CELLS

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Summary. The intestinal mucosa, most colonized by microorganisms than any other part of the body, constitutes the interface with the external environment, through which most pathogens initiate infectious processes. Intestinal mechanisms of defense must discriminate accurately between comensal microorganisms and exogenous pathogens. The gut associated lymphoid tissue (GALT) plays a key role in this mechanism. Symbiosis between macro and microorganisms is very important. Besides production of vitamins, suppression of the growth of pathogenic bacteria, the intestinal microflora modulates functions of the immune system. The understanding of these modulatory functions will provide a unique opportunity to prevent or treat intestinal disorders, food allergy, infections and autoimmune diseases. Published data of different authors about the influence of gut microflora on the immune system is reviewed in the article.

Keywords: lactobacilli, gut microflora, probiotics, gut associated lymphoid tissue (GALT), immunomodulation, immunocompetent cells, cytokines.