

MY SACRED BULL



Prescription to lead a gutsy life

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It's my gut feeling is a familiar adage. It relates to a feeling not just in your gut, but your mind as well. That something good is going to happen. This isn't gazing at your birth-sign, or planet — it emerges when you think what's in store for you, or a loved one.

In simple terms, your gut is the crossing point between you and your outside world. One outstanding example is the simple earthworm. It crawls ever so gently through the soil, ingesting a tiny part— this fraction passes through its little body and converts into "casting." Is this not an impressive natural act that "extracts" and "adds" to the soil? You and I too interact in much the same way — the difference being of degree.

The food we eat is integrated into the tissues of our being — the excess is expelled. You'd think of our digestive tract as a temporary transit point for building blocks of energy that we may use, or not use. Put simply, the gut is a part of us and not quite a part. It mirrors your nature, your temperament — including the larger nature outside of us. It has its own fertile soil, a complex pattern of microbes — bacteria, fungi, and also viruses. These microorganisms, like what happens in our own world, battle for territorial rights — even individual hegemony, or supremacy.

This is also a world that celebrates the famous Darwinian aphorism — survival of the fittest. To cull one instance. The fungi, over the ages, have learned to secrete a toxin — it has the ability to destroy bacteria, or keep them at bay. Penicillin is a celebrated example of such a toxin — it's used to eradicate bacteria that fill our system. Well, like our natural instinct or natural response, the bacteria do not collapse in the wake of this medicinal assault. They fight with the skin of their teeth. They play games that our politicians excel in. Result? They begin to counter the toxin by becom-

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ing "resistant strains." The fallout is imminent — dangerous consequences to your health and well-being.

Our life is a complete stage show, be it good health or illness. It's also complex and interdependent. You cannot, for instance, extinguish one primary species to benefit the other. If such a thing were to happen, it could lead to considerable changes — right from soil erosion to climatic variation. This thought holds

good for the vitality of your gut too. If you promote fungal forms in your gut, you will hamper bacterial growth at the cost of your well-being. Do you know that bacteria are absolutely essential for the proper functioning of our intestinal tract? Your digestive system would go haywire in the absence of bacteria — this will affect the normal process of digestion and assimilation of food. The end effect could be irritation and tummy ache.

Your gut is also far beyond, and ahead, of your "gut feelings." When you don't take adequate care of your gut, nothing you eat will feel good, or yummy. You'll tend to lose your sense of what is right and what does not agree with you, too. You'll, sooner than later, also forget what your gut really knows. Why? Because, the gut, your "seat of observation," has changed — it's altered into a state of confusion. Our ancients were wise. They knew the rationale of eating well — eating with simplicity. They based their culinary ideals in understanding the good effects of food — differentiating foodstuff that affected or improved their consciousness. Is this not the best prescription, or a realistic, back-to-the-future model, we could follow, or use — with our existing food and eating habits — to lead a "gutsy" life?

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