

Microbial passengers of our gut and skin change as we grow

When we are born, our mothers seed us with our first bacteria. As we grow up, these microbes—the microbiota—behave like an extra organ. They help us to digest our food, they shape the development of our gut and our nervous systems, and they train our immune systems to deal with threatening infections.

Over the past decade, scientists have documented these successional changes, often by studying their own kids. But Sathish Subramanian from Washington University in St Louis has gone one step further—he has developed ways of measuring the maturity of an infant's microbes. He then used those measures to work out how malnourishment in early life affects the growth of our bacterial partners, and whether we can do anything about it.

Read the full, original story: [Does Your Microbiological Age Match Your Biological One?](#)