

Does microbiome health matter to overall health?

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis.

In 2015, a flurry of media articles made a controversial claim: oral hygiene could determine a woman's risk of preterm birth. Journalists had widely misinterpreted a study by foetal-health experts at the Baylor College of Medicine, Texas, which showed that microbes in babies' guts matched those in their mothers' mouths. The study also correlated preterm birth risk with certain types of oral bacteria in women. Jonathan Eisen, an evolutionary biologist and science blogger based at the University of California, Davis, pounced on the media's misleading reports: the study made no causal link between mouth bacteria and preterm birth, he wrote on his blog, so it was ludicrous to imply that better oral hygiene averted problem pregnancies.

There are few places on Earth where microbes don't thrive; the human body is a microbial hub, packed with possibly trillions of microbial cells that interact with our own cells in myriad ways – many of which we're only just discovering. But as research on the human microbiome unfolds cautiously, microbe pseudoscience is on the rise, inspiring Eisen to take up his weapons.

Via his blog (phylogenomics.blogspot.co.uk) he has risen to prominence as an authority unafraid to slam bad science. "There are two ends to this. There's ridiculous stuff about why we should kill all microbes. That's the germophobia club, and then there's 'microbiomania', who think microbes are beneficial and do everything."

Read full, original post: [Do probiotics cure asthma? Don't believe the hype](#)