

Chasing links between mental illness and microbes living in our guts

“If you would have asked a neuroscientist 10 years ago whether they thought the gut microbiota could be linked to depression, many of them would have said you were crazy,” says [Jeroen Raes](#), a systems biologist and microbiologist at KU Leuven in Belgium. Yet evidence from small studies of humans and decades of animal model research have begun to show a link between the gut microbiome and mental health.

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In a [study](#) published in February, for example, Raes and colleagues found that, compared with healthy controls, patients with depression had lower levels of Coprococcus and Dialister bacteria—even after taking into account patients’ use of antidepressants. Later that month, a separate team [reported](#) that the abundance of several types of bacteria, including Veillonellaceae and Lachnospiraceae, correlated with schizophrenia severity.

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“Microbiology is not simple, because it involves ecologies,” says [physiologist Bruce] Stevens, who recently finished running a human clinical trial to identify gut bacteria species that may affect mental health. “You can’t take down one bacterium without taking down the whole nest, so translation to treatment is going to be tough. A single species won’t do it.”

Read full, original post: [Gut Microbes May Play a Role in Mental Health Disorders](#)