



INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE GUT MICROBIOME CLINIC SURVEY (GMC)

I. General Instructions

The in-clinic gut microbiome survey (see Clinic Survey) should be administered to all individuals who are eligible for and enroll in the gut microbiome portion of the study. Questions 1 and 2 assess past year antibiotic use. Although individuals who have used antibiotics within the past month will be excluded from the study, people differ in the speed with which the gut microbiota reestablishes after antibiotic use. Similarly, bowel preparations for colonoscopy will clear microbiota from the lower intestine (Question 3). We are not excluding individuals, but would like to collect this information. Diarrhea (Question 4) in the past 2 months may indicate a recent disruption in their microbial community (e.g., viral infection). Their bowel frequency (Question 5) provides information on transit time (as does the Bristol Stool Chart included in the home survey). Questions 6-10 relate to their diet or the use of products that may impact the microbiota. Question 6 assesses typical diet with respect to meat consumption and is included as a high-level dietary indicator for individuals who do not complete the FFQ. Questions 7-10 query the consumption /use of foods/products that have a shorter-term impact on the gut microbiota. Ideally, these would be asked at the time of the stool collection, but in an effort to minimize the length of the home survey, we have included these questions here.

II. Detailed Instructions for Each Item

0a-0b. Enter the date the survey is administered, the staff code for the person completing the form, and the participant ID.

1. Ask the participant if they have used oral or injected antibiotics in the past 12 months. Note that this includes only oral and injected antibiotics. If the participant used any oral or injected antibiotic in the past 12 months, mark “yes.” If the participant only used an inhaler or topical cream, mark “no.” If the participant used oral or injected antibiotics as well as an inhaler or topic cream, mark “yes.” If the answer is “no” for this question, skip to Question 3.

2. For participants who used an oral or injected antibiotic in the past 12 months, ask them whether their most recent use was 1-2 months ago, 3-6 months ago, or 7-12 months ago and check the appropriate box. We are not interested in use more than 1 year (12 months) ago. Recall that participants who have used antibiotics within the past month are excluded from the study.

3. Ask the participant if in the past 2 months, they had a colonoscopy or other procedure that required bowel preparation, including sigmoidoscopy, some gynecologic-related procedures/surgery. A bowel preparation involves ingestion of a solution usually over the course of about 12 hours that serves to thoroughly clean the bowel.

- 4.** Ask the participant if they have had diarrhea in the past 2 months. This question is a bit relative. We are interested in an unusual bowel pattern that may indicate a recent disruption in their gut microbiota. Some individuals may regularly have loose stool. In this question, we are interested in atypical diarrhea. For individuals with frequent loose stools, if their bowel pattern over the 2 months was not unusual, even if it involved what could in absolute terms be considered diarrhea (loose stools), mark “no.” Mark “yes” if the participant reports having atypical diarrhea in the past 2 months.
- 5.** Ask the participant about their typical stool frequency. There may be variability in this over the course of several weeks. If the participant has difficulty responding, it may help to ask about the past 2 weeks. Elderly individuals may be constipated and may have several small stools over the course of a day. Each would be considered a single “bowel movement” for the purposes of this question.
- 6.** Ask the participant about their typical dietary preferences with respect to meat. If they have no restrictions, check “standard diet.” If they restrict their red meat consumption (even if not completely), check “standard diet with poultry and/or fish.” If they consume fish, but not poultry, check “standard diet with poultry and/or fish.” If they consume no meat (including red meat, poultry, fish), check “vegetarian.” If they refrain from consuming all animal products, check “vegan.”
- 7.** Ask them about their use of probiotic supplements over the past 2 weeks. In this question, we are not interested in foods (such as yogurt), but only supplements (usually pill form). We included some brand names, but this is not an exhaustive list.
- 8.** In this question, we are interested in their consumption of foods that contain active bacterial cultures, including yogurt and sauerkraut. These foods have a short-term impact on the gut microbiota and so we include a separate question here about recent consumption, even though participants who complete the food frequency questionnaire will likely be asked about their longer-term consumption of at least some of these foods.
- 9.** Ask the participant about their past 2-week use of fiber substitutes, such as Metamucil. There are many other brands.
- 10.** Ask participants about their use of laxatives or stool softeners over the past 2 weeks. We included a list of brands, but there are certainly others. We also included mineral oil. If the participant indicates that they used an enema for the relief of constipation, the answer to this may be “yes.” The distinction is whether the enema was a gentle process used for bowel stimulation (answer “yes”) or was a product for complete emptying of the bowel (answer “no” to question 10 and “yes” to Question 3).