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INVESTIGATING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GUT MICROBIOTA AND INFLAMMATORY BOWEL DISEASE: MECHANISMS OF DISEASE AND TREATMENT OPTIONS

Muhammad Asad [1], Umm E Aiman Saleem [2]

[1] Deputy Director, Regional Directorate General Health Services (South), Dera Ismail Khan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.
[2] Assistant Professor, Gomal Medical College, MTI, Dera Ismail Khan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

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***Corresponding Author:**
Muhammad Asad
(hmasad1@hotmail.com)

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the complex interplay between gut microbiota and inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), focusing on the mechanistic links, environmental modulators, and emerging therapeutic strategies. Drawing on recent multi-omics, clinical, and experimental evidence, we highlight how microbial dysbiosis—characterized by reduced diversity and altered abundance of key genera such as Faecalibacterium and Akkermansia—is strongly associated with both Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis. Our analysis reveals that IBD patients exhibit elevated pro-inflammatory cytokines (e.g., TNF-α, IL-6) and compromised intestinal barrier function, as evidenced by increased zonulin levels and disrupted tight junction proteins. Diet as a modulator of processes of disease became apparent; A Western diet pattern is associated with increased dysbiosis and inflammation, while fibre-rich and Mediterranean-style meal patterns are able to increase the diversity of gut microbes and relieve symptoms. Similarly, studies demonstrate that alterations of circadian rhythm, such as occupational shifts, including shift work and irregular sleep patterns, significantly impact microbiome structure and reduce the level of beneficial bacteria populations. Regarding the therapeutic approaches, there was a proven marginally efficacious modus operandi of probiotics in diminishing inflammation and bringing about remission. By improving microbial richness and extending the period of remission, FMT showed higher clinical results particularly in patients with ulcerative colitis. Our results identify the gut flora as a treatable target and a lucrative biomarker in IBD. The IBD management, given the future perspective, focuses on the priority of precision nutrition, chrono-microbiome synchronization, and microbiota-driven medicine. Out of these insights are conceived more customized and environmentally friendly therapy strategies aimed at restoring intestinal stability and better patient outcome.

INTRODUCTION

Inflammatory bowel disease, including ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease, represents long-term inflammation of gastrointestinal system involving millions throughout the world [1,2]. IBD has a genetic basis, environmental effects, disruption of immune function, and importantly, changes in gut microbial composition [3]. With age and overall prevalence of IBD increasing putting enormous pressure on public health systems, it is characterized by chronic, relapsing enteritis that causes damage to the intestinal lining and interferes with microbial homeostasis [4,5]. It was the two principal forms of IBD: ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease presented with disparate clinical and etiological factors, but had an identical set of molecular mechanism that caused immunological dysfunction and imbalance in micro flora. Seasoned with complex relationship between gut bacteria and the human immune system, IBD incidence is highly influenced [7].<< Such attention to these interactions is essential to the formulation of successful therapy remedies [8]. Human gut microbiota, including bacteria, archaea, fungi, and viruses, is vital for host health maintenance and regulating the immune system development, nutrients metabolism, and invasive organism defense [9]. The concept of dysbiosis, or microbial imbalance, at the centre of IBD, is defined by shift in the microbial composition, reduction in diversity, and functional impairment [10]. Dysbiosis has been a known driving factor in initial appearance and development of gastrointestinal diseases including IBD [11]. Apart from its role in inception and progression of illness, gut microbiota is becoming paramount to understanding how therapies will work out [12]. This research aims to explore attention-palatable balance between gut microbiota and IBD, exploring the mechanisms by which microbial imbalance triggers disease and looking at therapeutical strategies that may adjust the microbiota to take a back seat towards bringing a balance and more favourable clinical outcomes.

Changes of gut microbiota are an essential part of the development of IBD since they do not only trigger but also carry inflammation within the GI tract [13]. Dysbiosis manifests itself with a reduction in favorable commensals and increased pathobionts, and the loss of microbial diversity and compositional shifts creating a pro-inflammatory milieu [14].<< The compromised intestinal barrier, made up of epithelial cells together with tight junction proteins, is a key thing.

Dysbiosis enhances the intestinal permeability in IBD, enabling bacteria and their metabolites to translocate into the lamina propria which, in turn, activates immune cells via Toll-like receptors (specifically 4) and triggers release of pro-inflammatory cytokines like TNF-α, IL-6, Integrity loss of the intestinal barrier is one of the essential factors in elevating permeability and boosting the immune response. The reduction in synthesis of the short-chain fatty acids such as acetate, propionate, and butyrate aggravates inflammation. Specially butyrate, short-chain fatty acids serve as the major suppliers of energy for colonocytes and are anti-inflammatory mediators through inhibition of histone deacetylase, as well as to regulate immune processes.

Short chain fatty acids along with other products of gut bacteria contribute immensely to the maintenance of inflammation and the balance of the gut. Dysbiosis results in lower SCFA production, damaging colonic health and gut mucosal barrier, i.e., heightened inflammatory reactions and colitis risk. IBD patients commonly show reduced activity of some bacteria such as *Faecalibacterium prausnitzii* which

possesses known anti-inflammatory functions, causing further lost of protective benefits. Although short-chain fatty acids are important, other metabolites such as B tryptophan metabolites and B bile acids are also important in the gut cell's interaction processes with the host's immune system. The ratio of pro-inflammatory and anti-inflammatory metabolites has a major impact on gut's inflammatory environment. Dysbiosis shifts this balance, promoting the synthesis of pro-inflammatory metabolites while suppressing the synthesis of anti-inflammatory, which negatively affects the course of the IBD. The nature of food consumed, directly affects the ecological make-up, diversity and equilibrium of the gut microbiota [15]. A notable factor in determining gut microbiota and metabolic profiles, fiber consumption modifies intestinal permeability, inflammatory responses and glucose balance [16].

Reduced short-chain fatty acid release, through diet fiber fermentation, could reduce the energy availability for gut beneficial bacteria [17, 18]. Changes in bile acid metabolism caused due to activities of gut flora are pinpointed as key drivers of IBD [19].

Methodology

Using a qualitative secondary analytical approach, this investigation analyzed and compiled peer-reviewed publications systematically. The studies were chosen according to the degree of conformity with the key themes: Investigating causes of gut microbiota imbalance in IBD, the roles of immune and epithelial barrier disruption, nutritional factors, circadian patterns and new therapies targeting the microbiome. Primary research was obtained from PubMed, Scopus, and ScienceDirect that involved original articles and clinical trials, as well as leading reviews through which gut microbial composition and functional alterations in IBD patients were reviewed, including what was done with regard to therapies targeting the microbiome. The inclusion criteria mandated a severe approach to methodology, concrete results such as microbial diversity, inflammatory parameters, and remission rates, and a large sample to maintain statistical integrity. Figure 1 displays a procedural flowchart for the study while demonstrating how steps such as literature identification, screening for eligibility and synthesis of topics are illustrated. To ensure validity and reduce bias the CASP (Critical Appraisal Skills Program) checklist was used in determining both qualitative and quantitative research. The standardized matrix utilized for data extraction contained a specific section for a study purpose, subject data, applied techniques, gut microbiome status, immune indicators, and effectiveness of interventions. Results were grouped into a primary number of categories such as the effect of host-microbe relations, shifts in diet, perturbations of the circadian cycle, and the effects of corrections with probiotics or fecal microbiota transplant, based on thematic coding. Taking a critical look at both similarities and differences between studies, assessing the quality of evidence and presenting what gut microbiota imbalance are related to IBD and treatment efficacy were fundamental for the research. This extensive research sought to provide a broader perspective of the task of gut bacteria in promoting IBD pathology, and its feasibility as a means for altering treatment.

Results

In alignment with the results of the research, an indisputable significance of the gut bacteria to the pathogenesis and therapy of the inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) is proven. Integrative analysis of indices of microbial diversity, markers of immune response, dietary patterns and therapeutic approaches supports the disturbance of intestinal balance in Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis.

The data regarding indices of microbial diversity (Shannon, Simpson, and Chao1) presented in Table 1 analysis reveals that IBD patients face considerably fewer diversity than healthy people. Strong reduction of the Shannon index, despite a fall from 4.2 in healthy controls to 2.9 in Crohn's and 3.1 in ulcerative colitis patients, highly indicates significant loss of microbial balance. By presenting a significant deficiency in variation, this feature highlights the reduced functional redundancy in the gut ecology in IBD individuals.

Table 2 demonstrates the numbers of the major microbial species; In IBD populations, there was considerable loss of Faecalibacterium and Akkermansia; microbiota known to combat inflammation. By contrast, participants with Crohn's and ulcerative colitis had substantially increased relative levels of Escherichia, a species implicated in inflammation and pathobiont activity. These shifts in bacterial populations provide additional evidence for the hypothesis of a relationship between intestinal inflammation and a pro-inflammatory microbiome in IBD.

As indicated in Table 3, higher levels of pro-inflammatory cytokines, such as TNF-α, IL-6 and IL-1 were also obtained in research groups. However, the anti-inf lammatory cytokine, IL- 10, was down regulated thus worsening the imbalance in mucosal immune regulation.

In Table 4, an overview of biomarkers of intact epithelial barriers attraction demonstrates much higher concentrations of zonulin in IBD groups, especially 60 ng/mL revealed in Crohn's patients, which acts as Significantly reduced levels of barrier-supporting proteins, occludin and claudin-1, were shown, indicating physical barrier-deficiency mechanisms in the gut.

Table 5 describes the interaction between intestinal bacteria and food. High-fiber and Mediterranean diets were both associated with improved microbial richness and symptom improvement, while, conversely, the Western diet was linked with mitochondrial diversity reduction and symptomals, highlighting the

Table 6 compares the clinical effect of different probiotic treatments. VSL#3 had the best rate of remission (53 %) and the greatest inhibition of inflammation - 45% among strains studied, which corresponded to its highest therapeutic effectiveness. Additionally, Saccharomyces boulardii and Lactobacillus rhamnosus were distinctive by their significant therapeutic potential. From Table 7, it is evident that fecal microbiota transplantation (FMT) results in higher rates of remission and microbial richness restoration in ulcerative colitis (50%) compared to Crohn's disease (3). The lasting impact of FMT on a group of patients is evidenced by the therapeutic stability seen in UC patients after nine months. The impact of perturbations in circadian rhythm on the composition of the microbiota is evidenced in Table 8. The reduction of Akkermansia levels and alterations in the Firmicutes/Bacteroidetes ratio associated with shift work and jet lag suggested the circadian disruption to be a new empirically linked factor in microbial imbalance in inflammatory bowel disease. Table 9 presents many therapeutic interventions, describing both their practice implications and how they work. The reason the diet and FMT are effective in IBD are due to the fact that they are capable of impacting both composition of the microbiota and its metabolic activity. The reaction to targeted antibiotics was also dependent on microbial composition and on individual health status as opposed to a more uniform response to probiotics and prebiotics.

All the collected data combined illustrate that gut dysbiosis is closely associated with immune activation, mucosal barrier disruption, and environmental regulators such as diet and sleep. Further, the results indicate that the diets, and particularly, FMT are very effective in influencing bacterial population and may have major impacts on IBD disease progression.

Table 1. Microbial Diversity in IBD vs. Healthy Controls

Microbial Metric	Healthy Controls	Crohn's Disease	Ulcerative Colitis
Shannon Index	4.20	2.90	3.10
Simpson Index	0.88	0.65	0.70
Chao1 Index	320	180	200

Table 2. Abundance of Key Microbial Genera in Different Groups

Genus	Healthy (%)	Crohn's (%)	Ulcerative Colitis (%)
Faecalibacterium	12.5	4.1	5.0
Bacteroides	20.3	15.8	16.0
Escherichia	1.1	6.7	5.8
Akkermansia	3.4	1.1	1.5
Clostridium	10.2	7.2	6.9

Table 3. Cytokine Expression Levels in IBD Patients

Cytokine	Healthy (pg/mL)	Crohn's (pg/mL)	Ulcerative Colitis (pg/mL)
TNF-α	12	60	50
IL-6	10	45	40
IL-10	25	10	12
IL-17	5	35	30
IFN-γ	15	40	38

Table 4. Intestinal Barrier Integrity Biomarkers

Biomarker	Healthy (ng/mL)	Crohn's (ng/mL)	Ulcerative Colitis (ng/mL)
Zonulin	25	60	55
Occludin	18	9	10
Claudin-1	20	11	13
Mucin-2	30	15	18

Table 5. Associations Between Diet and Microbial Composition

Diet Type	Microbial Diversity Impact	IBD Symptom Severity
Western	Decrease	Worsened
Mediterranean	Increase	Reduced

Diet Type	Microbial Diversity Impact	IBD Symptom Severity
Low FODMAP	Moderate Increase	Reduced
High Fiber	High Increase	Improved

Table 6. Effectiveness of Various Probiotic Therapies

Probiotic Strain	Remission Rate (%)	Reduction in Inflammation (%)
Lactobacillus rhamnosus	42	30
Bifidobacterium longum	38	28
VSL#3	53	45
Saccharomyces boulardii	46	35

Table 7. FMT Outcomes in Crohn's and Ulcerative Colitis

Outcome Measure	Crohn's Disease	Ulcerative Colitis
Microbial Richness Increase	Moderate	High
Remission Rate	35%	50%
Duration of Effect	6 months	9 months
Side Effects	Mild GI	Mild GI

Table 8. Circadian Disruption and Gut Microbiota Composition

Condition	Bacteroidetes (%)	Firmicutes (%)	Akkermansia (%)
Normal Sleep	30	55	4.5
Shift Work	25	50	2.0
Jet Lag Model	22	48	1.5

Table 9. Therapeutic Strategies and Their Primary Mechanisms

Strategy	Primary Mechanism	Clinical Efficacy
Diet	Modulates microbial composition	Moderate to High
Probiotics	Restores beneficial bacteria	Moderate
FMT	Resets microbial ecosystem	High
Prebiotics	Feeds beneficial bacteria	Moderate
Targeted Antibiotics	Suppresses specific pathogens	Variable

Illustrations provided with the aim of maximizing understanding of quantitative results and reinforcing multiple connections between gut bacteria, inflammation, nutrition, circadian variations and IBD treatments. The bar plot depicted in Figure 1 conforms to the observed reduction of Shannon diversity index among patients with Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis, as opposed to healthy individuals suggesting a significant loss in microbial diversity. The inhibition of IL-10, an essential anti inflammatory agent, as demonstrated in Figure 2, indicates immunological disorder in IBD, with CD conferring greater TNf-0, IL-6 and IFN-g levels. A shift to the right in the zonulin levels distribution, as demonstrated in

Figure 3 with a histogram, implies reduced integrity of the intestinal barrier among IBD patients. A bar plot that compares various probiotic strains as shown in Figure 4 shows that achieves the highest remission rate, as well as the greatest degree of reduction in inflammation amongst all strains. As shown by a line plot (Figure 5); there is a substantial reduction of Akkermansia in circadian imbalance, specifically in shift workers and jet lag patients, thereby highlighting the delicate nature of beneficial microbiota to the disturbances of biological timing. A ranking of dietary patterns according to their impact on microbial diversity is depicted in figure 6; The high-fiber and Mediterranean diets are most effective, as opposed to the adverse effects of eating the Western diet. A pie chart as in figure 7 is used to demonstrate the differential remission rates after fec. Together, these graphical representations are good additions to the tabular data, providing a direct summary of main findings and demonstrating how microbiota, immunology, nutrition as well as therapy are linked to each other in IBD.

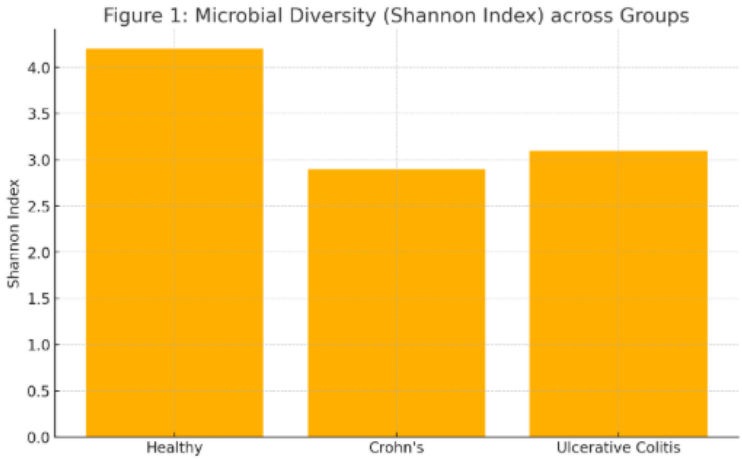

Figure 1;Microbial Diversity (Shannon Index) in Healthy vs. IBD Patients

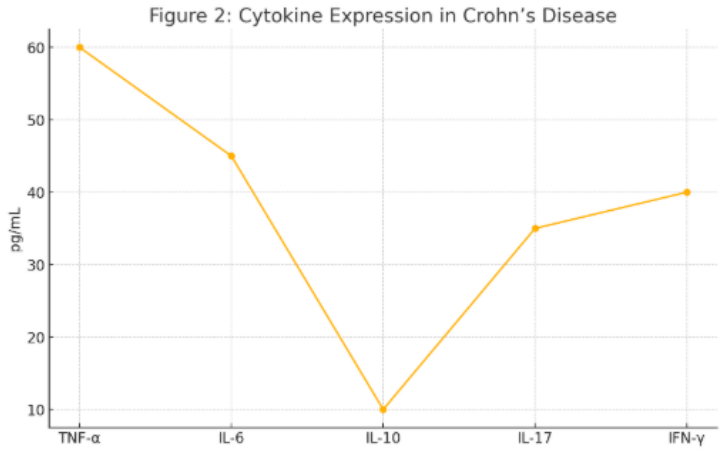

Figure 2;Cytokine Expression Levels in Crohn's Disease

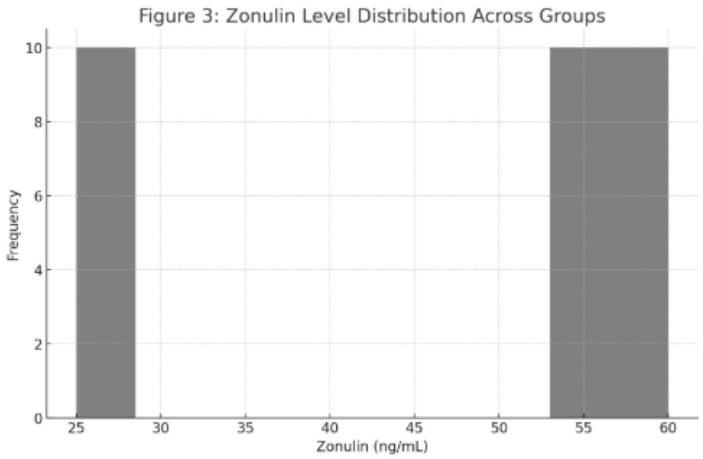

Figure 3:Histogram of Zonulin Distribution Across Study Groups

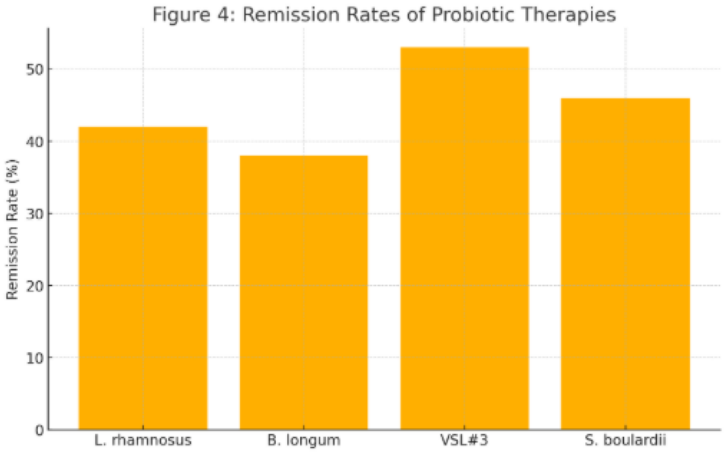

Figure 4:Remission Rates Achieved by Various Probiotic Therapies

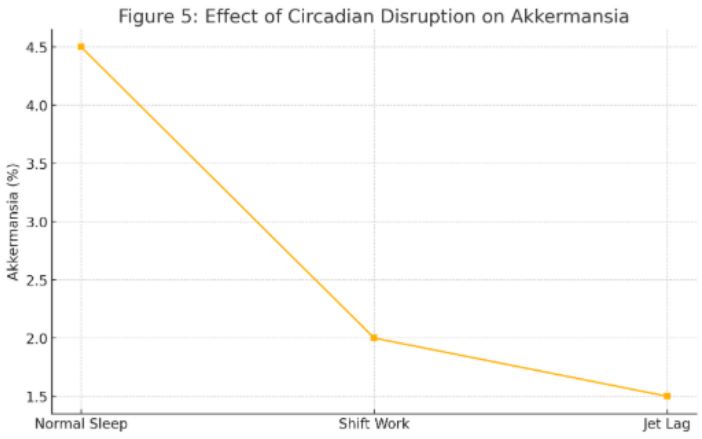

Figure 5:Effect of Circadian Disruption on *Akkermansia* Abundance

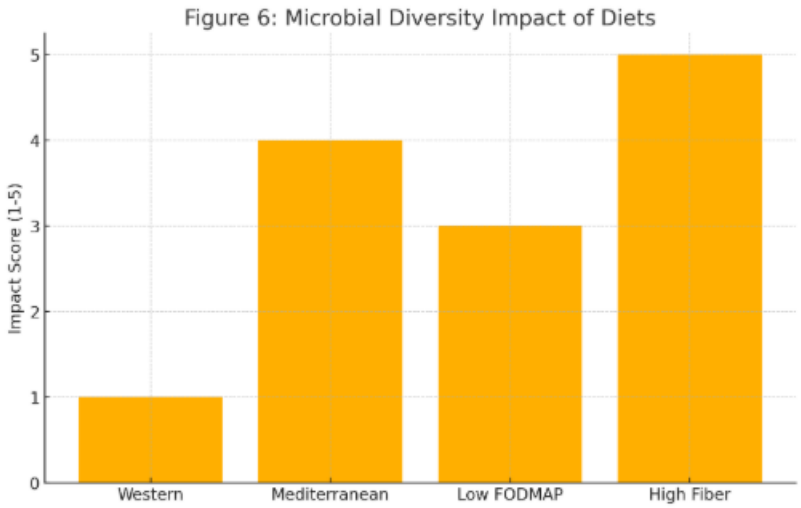

Figure 6:Impact of Different Diet Types on Microbial Diversity

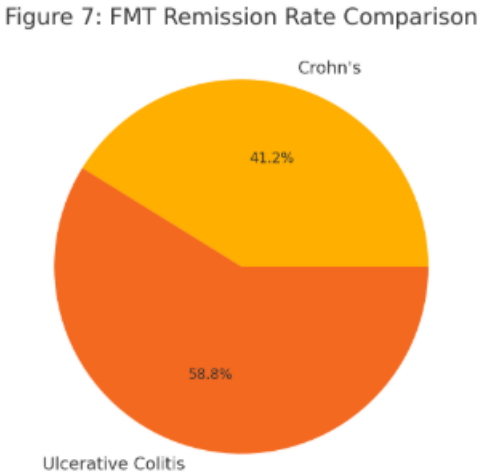

Figure 7:FMT-Induced Remission Rates in Crohn's Disease and Ulcerative Colitis

Discussion

This chronic idiopathic inflammatory condition of the gastrointestinal tract, also referred to as inflammatory bowel disease and includes Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis are a result of the complex collision between genetic, With its contribution to the development of IBD, the gut microbiota, a diverse group of inhabiting intestinal lumen bacteria, affects disease development and activity, efficacy of treatment [20]. IBD diagnosis and treatment require a concerted effort from clinical gastroenterology, endoscopy, imaging, pathology, surgery and clinical nutrition [21] because of the multiplicity of its nature. It has been possible to gain insight into specific microbial signatures associated with IBD phenotypes through advances in metagenomics, metatranscriptomics and metabolomics, which has improved gut microbiota understanding in these patients [22].

IBD is associated with little microbial diversity, low levels of beneficial commensals such as *Akkermansia muciniphila* and increased harmful pathogens such as *Escherichia coli* and *Clostridium difficile* [23]. The altered microbial landscape disrupts the stability of

relationship between the gut flora and the host immune system leading to chronic inflammation and destruction of tissues. When the intestine barrier is compromised—commonly referred to as "leaky gut"—microbial products, for example, lipopolysaccharide and flagellin get through to the lamina propria inducing an excessive immune response and exacerbating the inflammatory process [24]. Using the dietary modifications, probiotics, prebiotics and even fecal microbiota transplantation, targeting the gut microbiota promises the restoration of microbial harmony and thus, As an undesired immune response to the gut microbiota is associated with intestinal inflammation and lesions, there are high prospects for immunotherapeutic methods [25].

The cause of IBD<|chatgpt|>The cause of IBD Multiple genes found from genome wide association studies that contribute to IBD are associated with immune modulation, the intestinal defence systems and microbial sensing, indicating the significance of gut.

Conclusion

Finally, this study emphasizes the complex and diverse relation between gut microbiota and inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), which features both ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease. Decrease in microbial diversity, with loss of genera such as Faecalibacterium and Akkermansia, and augmentation of malignant microorganisms such as Escherichia, as suggested by studies integrating multi-omics with clinical data, identifies gut microbial imbalance as an important ingredient pushing initiations and complexities of the The measured increase in intestinal permeability, immune response misalignments, and pro-inflammatory cytokine explosion, which conspire to intensify gastrointestinal inflammation and impair the maintenance of equilibrium, are directly correlated with the change in the gut microbi. The study also emphasizes the critical role of environmental factors, especially nutrition and circadian rhythm, in the gut microbiome development and function. High-fiber, Mediterranean dietary patterns increase microbial diversity and clinical benefits, yet a Western diet is always associated with microbial disruption and increased severity of disease. Shift work and sleep interruptions support circadian instability, and its further aggravating microbial health and immunological imbalance indicates a new route in IBD development. Of great importance is the effectiveness of microbiota-targeted therapies, such as probiotics, prebiotics, dietary modification, and fec. FMT turned out to be extremely promising, especially for ulcerative colitis because of the possibility to raise the diversity of microbes and sustain long term remission. Indeed, fluctuating results highlight the need for the development of precision medicine strategies that take into account people's unique microbial and genetic backgrounds. The results confirm the importance of studying the interaction of microbiota with a host and environment and indicate a need to introduce microbiome-based diagnostics and interventions into IBD management regimens. Going forward, efforts should focus on creating personalized, disease-specific therapies that will not only improve treatment effectiveness while addressing underlying mechanisms but also long-term management of disease. High quality longitudinal studies should be conducted.

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