



For immediate release

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New website helps Brits learn to love their guts!

A new website is urging the people of Britain to get gutsy - and join a growing community of people getting in touch with their digestive systems.

www.loveyourgut.com aims to get people thinking and talking about digestive health. Around a third of people in the UK regularly suffer from digestive symptoms¹ – yet the subject remains taboo, with a widespread reluctance to recognise and confront such conditions.

So ahead of this year's Gut Week, which will take place on 14th – 20th July, the campaign partners (digestive health charities Core, The Gut Trust and St Mark's Hospital, Harrow, in association with Yakult) have unveiled a fresh new site. www.loveyourgut.com offers simple, accessible, practical help and advice on digestive health. The site will include:

- A wide range of tips for achieving and maintaining good digestive health, from experts such as Nicki Waterman and Dr. Nick Read;
- Advice on potentially serious digestive symptoms to watch out for – and what to do if any warning signs are detected;
- A practical guide on communicating gut problems to your GP
- A monthly 'Ask the Doctor' column, where experts will answer your digestive queries online;
- A complete guide to each of the components of the digestive system (there are more than you think!), with details on the vital role played by each one;
- Fascinating digestive facts (did *you* know if all the bacteria in your intestines were all lined up side by side, they would stretch twice round the equator?);

¹ Gut Omnibus Survey, Taylor Nelson Sofres, RSGB, February 2006. 1000 respondents.

- A comprehensive overview of many of the most common digestive complaints, with information on causes and symptoms as well as prevention and treatment;
- 'Gut-friendly' recipes from Love Your Gut supporters such as Antony Worrall Thompson;
- Profiles of the many celebrities and experts who support the Gut Week campaign, including amongst others Gaby Roslin, Denise Welch, former Olympic swimmer James Hickman, Antony Worrall Thompson, Ian Marber (The Food Doctor) and This Morning's Dr. Chris Steele.
- Fun educational activities including the exclusive 'Gut Game' where you will find yourself in charge of a sandwich as it makes its way through the gut!

The need for a comprehensive site for digestive problems has become vital. Recent research has shown that just 11% of people would willingly discuss bowel habits with workmates, for example, whilst 40% would not seek medical advice even if they detected a change in bowel function². However, over a third of us say we do use the internet to gain health advice³ - so it is important that there is plenty of expert and accurate information available via this medium.

Campaign supporter Dr Chris Steele believes the Love your Gut site will help get people thinking more about digestive health.

"It can be hard for many people to seek medical advice over bowel problems as they feel embarrassed or don't know what to say," said Dr Steele.

There is no substitute for seeing your GP or practice nurse, but if people need to check their symptoms, learn what terminology to use or just use it to learn more about their bodies, then this new site could be the first step they take on the path to better digestive health."

- ENDS -

Notes to editors

² Gut Week survey, tickbox.net, March 2008. 1,663 respondents.

³ Gut Week survey, tickbox.net June 2007. 1,694 respondents.

- Gut Week is organised by the national medical research charity Core - the working name for the Digestive Disorders Foundation (registered charity no 262762), The Gut Trust (registered charity no 1057563), St Mark's Hospital, Harrow (St Mark's Hospital Foundation – charity no. 1088119) and Yakult.

CORE

Core - the Digestive Disorders Foundation - is an independent national charity that funds medical research into the prevention, cure and treatments of all forms of digestive disorders which account for one in ten of all deaths in the UK. It relies on charitable donations to continue its work. Core provides quality information for sufferers on a wide range of digestive problems through its web-site: www.corecharity.org.uk or through leaflets and fact sheets available from Core, 3 St. Andrews Place, London NW1 4LB or by emailing info@corecharity.org.uk. Core does not endorse any specific commercial or pharmaceutical products.

The Gut Trust (Formerly the IBS Network)

The Gut Trust is a national charity, which offers support, information and advice on Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS).

The Gut Trust can be contacted through its website: www.theguttrust.org., email info@theguttrust.org. by phone on 0114 272 3253 or by post – The Gut Trust, Unit 5, 53 Mowbray Street, Sheffield S3 8EN. A free Fact Sheet IBS Information and Advice is available on request. A helpline operates on 0114 272 3253 Monday to Friday 6pm to 9pm and Saturday morning 10 to 12 noon when calls are answered by IBS specialist nurses. The Gut Trust does not endorse any specific commercial or pharmaceutical products.

St Mark's Hospital, Harrow

St Mark's Hospital, Harrow, in north west London, is one of a few hospitals in the world specialising in research into and treatment of bowel and gut disease and disorders. Every year patients with very little hope for a successful outcome are referred to St Mark's where they receive the benefit of years of pioneering research and the most effective treatment currently available. No other hospital can claim to have done so much to spearhead the fight against diseases of the bowel such as Crohn's, colitis and cancer. More information can be found at www.stmarkshospital.org.uk or www.stmarksfoundation.org