

# Health Reflections



## Appendix First

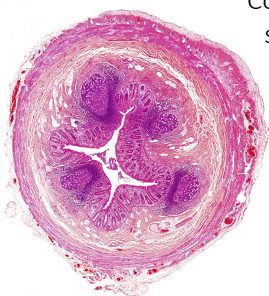
What's the use of an appendix? Back in our schooldays, many of us were told that it's a leftover part with no use at all, except as a reminder that humans, long ago, ate grass.



Thankfully our understanding has moved on, and we have learned that it is not wise to dismiss any subject before considering it at length, with respect and from all angles.

These days, instead of whipping out the appendix as a prophylactic measure, there is a new trend for looking after this remarkable body part, not least because of its contribution to maintaining a healthy immune system.

In her book *Drug Muggers*, Suzy Cohen explains how the appendix safeguards some of our healthy gut microbes, and how “people without an appendix need to be vigilant about creating and maintaining a constant camp of flora because they have lost their storage unit.”



Appendix cross-section

Cohen proceeds to provide us with a summary of what can wipe out our probiotics (another word for our friendly gut bacteria). Her condensed list is often an eye-opener, especially for those who don't usually bat an eyelid before swallowing an antacid, antibiotic, contraceptive pill or over-the-counter medicine.

**A Diverse Camp** Whether you've held on to your appendix or have had it removed, it's a good idea to support the diversity of 'camp microbiome.' Each patient's gut history is different but for those who ask for my help, the support strategy may well entail -



a) **Addressing any maintaining causes of diminished microbial diversity.** Sometimes this will involve seeking your GP's support regarding any possibility of reducing biome-altering prescriptions (never do this on your own whim!) Sometimes it will involve a counsellor's input whilst navigating chronic conflict, because of the impact of emotional stress on the microbiome. It may mean new reading and listening materials to inspire lifestyle changes, or simply making time to enjoy nourishing food.

b) **Mending the gut wall.** Whatever a patient's main complaint, it's common these days for the walls of the digestive system to be damaged. Fortunately, those who wish to repair it can take some pragmatic steps, including eating plenty of nourishing fats (as detailed in Campbell-McBride's book on G.A.P.S.<sup>TM</sup>), avoiding all man-made fats and refined sugar, and choosing non-toxic medicines (such as homeopathy) that don't harm gut microbes.

c) **Adding in probiotics in food form.** The appendix contributes to the in-house formation of some microbes, and dietary probiotics can act as an added bonus. In the absence of an appendix, we may wish to increase consumption of live foods such as kefir and sauerkraut, and commercial probiotic supplements now abound (choose wisely!) For those who can't yet tolerate probiotics due to seriously disturbed health, we work together to pave the way for the body to be able to receive them one day.

### THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK ♥ READ BEFORE YOU THINK\*

*Drug Muggers*: Suzy Cohen (Rodale, 2011);

*The Practical Handbook of Homoeopathy*: Colin Griffith (Watkins, 2006);

*Homeopathy and Appendectomy*: Helen Lee (helenleehomeopathy.com, 2022);

*The Digestive Organs – Pathway to the Centre*: Rosina Sonnenschmidt (Narayana, 2010);

*Madeline*: Ludwig Bemelmans (Viking, 1939 / abridged edition 2012).

\*Fran Lebowitz - Social Studies

# Appendectomies

In my clinic is a toy basket and in it a doll and book featuring the French sweetheart, Madeline. Sewn onto the doll's abdomen is a scar from an operation to remove her appendix. For the story in full, from the playful pranks to the scar that attracts much admiration, please read the book by Ludwig Bemelmans!

Homeopaths reading this story inevitably wonder – *where's the Bryonia or Belladonna or Rhus tox for the girl to take whilst awaiting that ambulance!?* These example remedies cover the type of symptoms often associated with an inflamed appendix, although each patient's presentation (and matching remedy) will differ. Importantly, any suspicion of appendicitis means calling for emergency medical attention first and foremost. Then, the best matching remedy can be administered whilst waiting for help to arrive.

It's also a good idea to have a vial of Aconite 30C on a key-ring in case of such emergencies. For children, the medical decision to take out the appendix can happen at frightening speed, in which case Aconite 30c could come in handy. Siblings too can be scared at the prospect of an operation, but a simple explanation of what's happening – as well as an Aconite 30c – can go a long way in alleviating their fears too.

Post surgery, a homeopath may offer remedies to help overcome any lingering effects from anaesthetics, as well as revisiting the individual's totality medicine. It would be wise to include plenty of collagen-rich stocks in the diet; this promotes mending of both the gut wall and any abdominal incision. Calendula and other individualised medicines in low potency can also promote the smooth formation of scar tissue.

But back to Madeline – her adventures now also feature online as cartoons. Why not download the episode on Madeline's appendectomy and sing along?

"If you believe you must be big  
in order to be tough,  
then you should get to know me –  
I'll teach you other stuff!"



I'm Madeline, I'm Madeline,  
I may be very very small,  
I'm Madeline I'm Madeline  
but inside, I'm tall!"

The **Little Stockpots** is my GAPS group for young families, where cooking skills and lifestyle choices are shared. Why not join our next lesson on Zoom? And why not make your own homemade stock – a delicious ingredient that nourishes and tones the gut wall?

Don't confuse stock with the more popular bone broth – that has a different effect on the body and is often more suitable later down the line!

## Stock for Making French Onion Soup

1. Get out your largest pan.
2. Add plenty of fresh, raw, meaty beef bones to the pan. If available, a chopped ox heart brings added flavour to this stock.
3. Add 3-6 quartered onions and any herbs and vegetables to hand e.g. celery, carrots, garlic, oregano and black peppercorns.
4. Add a good pinch of sea salt or rock salt. Natural salt with no additives is preferable to table salt.
5. Cover with water and bring to a gentle boil for 15-20 minutes, then turn down the heat, leaving to simmer quietly for 2-3 hours.
6. Allow to cool sufficiently before tasting and add more salt, in small increments, until it suits your palate.
7. Strain the liquid, reserve one mugful to drink straight away, and store the rest in glass jar in the fridge for up to a week.
8. Use your stock daily as a basis for French onion soup, beef bourguignon, potage, sauces etc.

Bon appetit mon amie!

*Each Health Reflections article and blog has been written for those who wish to learn about the true meaning of health, who desire to think broadly and who are ready to take responsibility for their own personal choices. All information shared is of educational nature and should not replace medical advice. No guarantees are made regarding accuracy or completeness of content, or its applicability to any condition or personal circumstance. If you choose to implement any of the ideas or principles described, you are taking full responsibility for your actions. In times of illness, seek professional healthcare.*

**AUDE SAPERE – MENTRA WYBOD – DARE TO GET IT**

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