

# AB017. Understanding the knowledge, awareness and perceptions of the gut microbiome and Fecal Microbiota Transplantation (FMT) in Singaporean adults

Lydia Wan Zhen Lim<sup>1</sup>, Rachel Quek<sup>2</sup>, Kai Yee Toh<sup>1</sup>, Jeremy Lim<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Laboratory and Operations, AMILI Pte Ltd., Singapore; <sup>2</sup>Marketing and Research, AMILI Pte Ltd., Singapore; <sup>3</sup>Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health, National University of Singapore, Singapore

Correspondence to: Lydia Wan Zhen Lim. Laboratory and Operations, AMILI Pte Ltd., Singapore. Email: lwzlydia@gmail.com.

**Background:** Recent scientific developments have suggested Fecal Microbiota Transplantation (FMT) as a promising treatment modality for diseases as diverse as Inflammatory Bowel Disease and autism. Recent studies have also highlighted the importance of the gut microbiome (GM) in many common diseases such as diabetes. Nonetheless, the level of public knowledge and perceptions of the GM and FMT remain unclear. This study aims to identify the degrees of knowledge, awareness and perception in Singaporean adults regarding human GM and FMT, which would allow the implementation of education programmes that effectively inform target groups.

**Methods:** A 19-question online survey was administered to 1,831 Singaporean adults from the Singapore Population Health Studies Online Panel, a population-based cohort consisting of Chinese, Malay and Indian participants. The questionnaire provided information about FMT and GM, and surveyed participants' knowledge and perceptions of both topics.

**Results:** Only 32.6% of participants have ever heard of GM before. However, 92.7% have consumed probiotic drinks, of which almost half consumed for gut health. Nearly 84.8% have not heard of FMT before, but 72.0% would consider undergoing FMT to treat CDI. Approximately 58.1% chose colonoscopy over the nasal passage as the preferred mode

of FMT. Preference for oral medication (57.2%) and being uncomfortable with the concept of FMT (54.1%) were the main reasons behind refusing FMT. About 52.1% were much more inclined to accept FMT if orally administered in capsule-form. Willingness to receive FMT depended on recommendation from healthcare providers (77.1%) and clinical studies (59.7%).

**Conclusions:** Awareness regarding GM and FMT were relatively low despite high engagement amongst participants in behaviours that improve gut health. Strategies to raise awareness may focus on the benefits of GM to cater to an increasingly health-conscious society. Barriers to accepting FMT may be overcome by making validated sources of information readily available for the public.

**Keywords:** Awareness; gut microbiome; fecal microbiota transplantation; knowledge

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## Footnote

*Conflicts of Interest:* The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

*Ethical Statement:* The authors are accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

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