



CONVERGENCE

News, Links, and Insights
by JEFFREY BLAND, PHD



July 2019 - Mid-Month Bonus

Thank you for subscribing to Dr. Jeffrey Bland's newsletter. Enjoy and share this information, which is for educational purposes only. Always consult with a qualified healthcare professional when you are in need of medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment.

In this issue: The Vantage Point: The Big Bold Health Podcast; There Are Plant-Based Diets and There Are Plant-Based Diets; A Well-Suited Microbiome Couple; The Seventh Annual Thought Leaders Consortium (New Video Message)

The Vantage Point: What's Been Happening in Dr. Bland's World?

Do you want to track Dr. Jeff Bland's activities, see photos from his travels, and find inspiration in his words? Follow his social media pages to stay connected!



Welcome to the
Big Bold Health Podcast,
Dr. Michelle Leary-Chang!

Episode 6
Fertility: Are There Ways to Optimize the
Body for Conception and Pregnancy?

Are You Listening to the Big Bold Health Podcast?

Big Bold Health! You were introduced to the company in the last newsletter, now meet the podcast. When you put Jeff Bland and James Maskell together as co-hosts, you know the result will be conversations that are fearless, authentic, and enlightening. The latest episode features special guest, Dr. Michelle Leary-Chang. Listen on your favorite podcast app or watch on the the [Big Bold Health YouTube Channel](#).

There Are Plant-Based Diets and There Are Plant-Based Diets

A plant-based diet is best overall for people and planet, right? Mostly right—but it still depends on the diet. While growing plants is easier on planetary ecosystems than supporting and cleaning up after food animals, the

preparation of plant foods has considerable bearing on their effects on humans. The Nurses' Health Study is a large research project that has been minutely examining lifestyle and other influences on long-term wellness in women, and it has become a kind of nutritional portrait artist, depicting how different approaches to plant-based diets shape up over time. These investigations have discovered that plant-based diets can be divided into two very basic types:



- A high-quality "healthful" type, characterized by unrefined whole foods—vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds, grains, legumes, tea/coffee, and oils—with little in the way of refined grains, sweets, and fruit juices.
- A lower-quality "unhealthful" type, providing more in the way of refined grains, potatoes and fries, sweets/desserts, sweetened beverages, and fruit juices.

A March 2019 study found that these two approaches have distinctly different effects on [body markers of inflammation](#), energy metabolism, and body adiposity. While biological aging is associated with a tendency to gain weight and body fat (especially around the belly) and display a more pro-inflammatory immune face to the world, compared to women who did not follow the healthful plant-based diet pattern, those with a more healthful approach were more successful in resisting these age-related changes. They showed lower insulin levels (reflecting better glycemic control), better balance between beneficial and not-so-beneficial fat tissue markers (adiponectin and leptin, respectively) and lower levels of the key inflammatory marker high-sensitivity C-reactive protein (hsCRP), and researchers felt that higher phytonutrient density and the higher quality of fats and carbohydrates in the healthful plant-based diet contributed to these differences. This study also noted that women who began to improve their diets often seemed to build on these efforts over time, gradually gaining more and more metabolic benefit over those whose dietary habits remained the same or worsened.

A related study published in May 2019 additionally saw that each degree of greater alignment with the healthful pattern resulted in [greater resistance to weight gain](#) over time; while most gained around one-half to one pound per year, each step in stricter observation of the healthful diet limited weight increases by almost one-half pound on average per year, while each degree of following the unhealthful pattern was associated with greater-than-average weight gain. Previous Nurses' Health studies have also found the healthful diet [protective against coronary heart disease](#) as well as [against type 2 diabetes](#) compared to the unhealthful style of plant-based eating—which was actually associated with increased risk for each of these serious conditions.

Whether or not these results surprise you, they add significantly to the notion that, for long-term function and enjoyment of life, less-processed plant foods win out on just about every definition of wellness.

A Well-Suited Microbiome Couple

The bacteria *Akkermansia muciniphila* is known for its ability to break down mucin and how greater gut abundance of it relates to reduced incidence of inflammatory bowel disease and obesity. Research has discovered an interesting partnership between this lone gut representative of the Verrucomicrobia phylum and a commensal species from the Clostridial cluster XIVa of butyrate producers called *Anaerostipes caccae*. *Anaerostipes* produces short-chain fatty acids from certain trisaccharides, and while it possesses no mucin-degrading enzymes, it can [interact with *A. muciniphila*](#) to genetically upregulate that species' production of these proteins, thereby increasing its capacity to release the saccharides *Anaerostipes* likes.



Another interesting finding came from a study comparing mice populated with gut microbes from human infants that were either healthy or allergic to milk. Mice not previously allergic to milk but provided the 'allergy' microbiome had severe reactions to

milk, while those supplied the 'healthy' microbiome did not—and analysis of gut microbial gene expression in these two populations discovered that the presence of *A. caccae* was the [key factor modulating](#) this heightened milk sensitivity. Previous animal research suggests that species from this subgroup of Clostridia may inhibit the development of nut allergy by inducing immune cells' production of [interleukin-22](#), a cytokine that appears to reduce gut permeability and thereby limit introduction of nut allergens into circulation.

Subsequent study should help clarify whether this mutually beneficial relationship also exists between other mucolytic and butyrogenic microbial species in the intestines.

It's Great to See New Faces at the Thought Leaders Consortium!



Every year, hundreds of health conferences fill the calendar. Professionals who are seeking ways to keep their perspectives fresh and their skills sharp must make tough choices about the most optimal way to commit their time and resources. Dr. Jeff Bland understands the reality of the situation. Dr. Jeff Bland also believes that the annual Thought Leaders Consortium conference is an event that stands apart from the pack and offers an experience that can't be matched or duplicated. Watch this brief video message to learn more about the uniqueness of this extraordinary meeting. See you in Seattle this October?

[Conference Overview](#)

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[2019 Schedule](#)

[Registration Website](#)

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