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# Protecting the Human Superorganism

SRA Webinar  
January 24, 2017

**RODNEY DIETERT**  
**PROFESSOR OF IMMUNOTOXICOLOGY**  
**DEPARTMENT OF MICROBIOLOGY AND IMMUNOLOGY**  
**CORNELL UNIVERSITY**  
**RRD1@CORNELL.EDU**



Cornell University

# DISCLOSURE

## Present:

Cornell University - Professor (1977 - present)

Dutton Penguin Random House - Author (2015 - present)

The GutBiome Institute -

Microbiome Certificate Program Instructor (2016 - present)

## Previous:

Springer - Book Series Editor (2010-2016)

CDC - Tetrachloroethylene (PERC) Peer Review Evaluator (2013-2014)

EPA - Integrative Science Assessment for Lead -

Drafting Consultant (2009-2010)

Burleson Research Technologies (BRT-Labs) - Consultant (2006-2010)

# Acknowledgements

Thanks to:

- Society for Risk Analysis
- Dr. Ellen Silbergeld, Johns Hopkins School of Public Health
- Peg Coleman, Coleman Scientific Consulting
- Janice Dietert, Performance Plus Consulting

# OUTLINE

1. Introduction
  2. The Noncommunicable Disease Epidemic: A Major Target
  3. Superorganism Ecology and The Completed Self Hypothesis
  4. Microbiome-Immune Co-Maturation
  5. The Microbiome as our Gatekeeper
  6. Superorganism Safety – Drugs, Chemicals, Food Components, Pathogens
  7. Microbial Biomarkers and Rebiosis
- Summary

# 1. Introduction

## Scientific Challenge

If you could pick ONE sign that best distinguishes a lifetime of health from one filled with disease  
.....what would that be????

[Challenge was issued for an invited paper for a special issue of the physics journal *ENTROPY*]

My Answer  
(upon waking from a dream)

**Self completion  
of the  
human-microbial  
superorganism**

2014 documentary film  
Wellcome Trust screening  
– Jan. 30, 2015

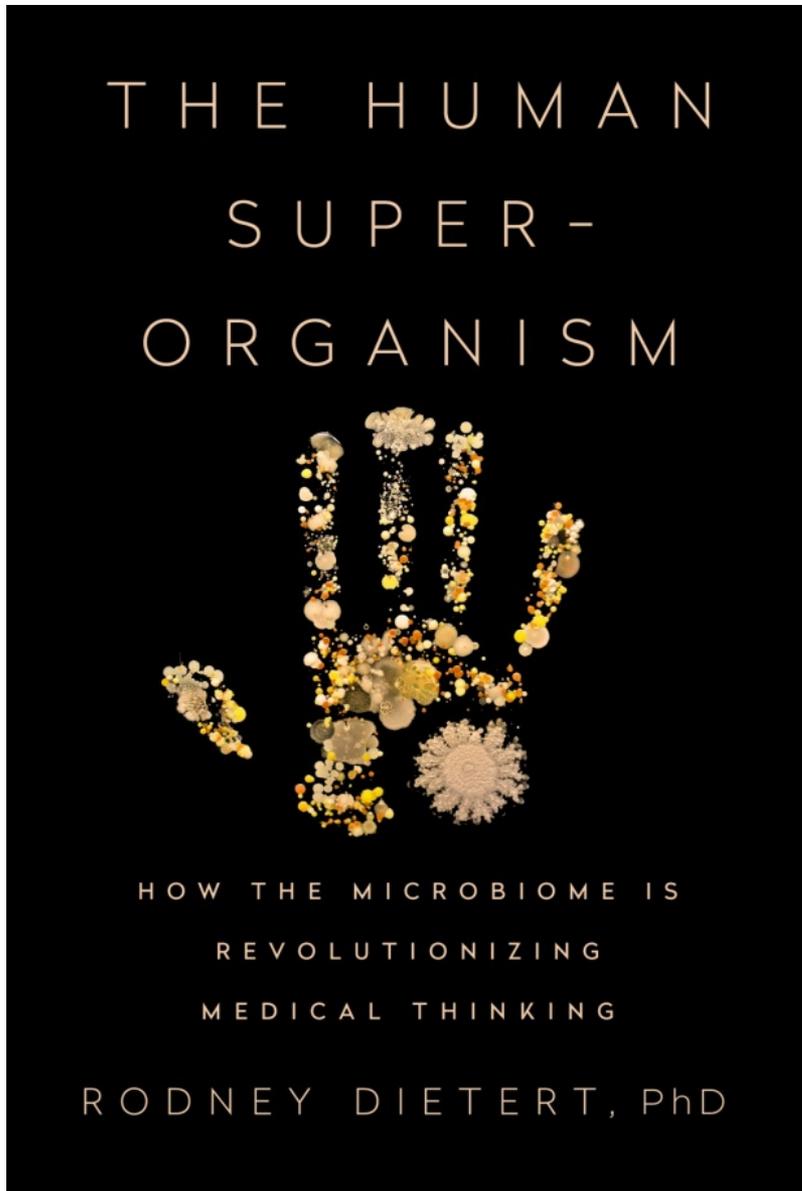


"WE ARE IN THE MIDST OF THE LARGEST  
EXPERIMENT IN HUMAN HISTORY."  
PROF. SUE CARTER  
BIOLOGIST & BEHAVIOURAL NEUROBIOLOGIST

**MICRO****BIRTH**

REVEALING THE MICROSCOPIC EVENTS DURING CHILDBIRTH  
THAT COULD HOLD THE KEY TO THE FUTURE OF HUMANITY

"MICROBIRTH" AN ALTO FILMS PRODUCTION WITH ONE WORLD BIRTH  
MUSIC COMPOSED BY KIM HALLIDAY PRODUCED & DIRECTED BY TONI HARMAN AND ALEX WAKEFORD  
[MICROBIRTH.COM](http://MICROBIRTH.COM)



## Rodney Dietert: The Human Superorganism

THU, JUL 21, 2016 (00:00)

Rodney Dietert

SHARE   

PARTNER

[Harvard Book Store](#)

Professor **Rodney Dietert** suggests that the origin of asthma, autism, Alzheimer's, allergies, cancer, heart disease, obesity, and even some kinds of depression may have a lot to do with the microbiome. He reads from his book, *The Human Superorganism: How the Microbiome Is Revolutionizing the Pursuit of a Healthy Life*.

## Nature | Books and Arts (Review Including The Human Superorganism)

- **Microbiology: Mob rule**
- [Adrian Woolfson](#)

Nature 536,146–147 (11 August 2016)

doi:10.1038/536146a

Published online 10 August 2016

## **2. The Noncommunicable Disease Epidemic: A Major Target**

Previously called “chronic diseases”  
Abbreviation used for noncommunicable  
diseases and conditions:  
**NCDs**

# Question?

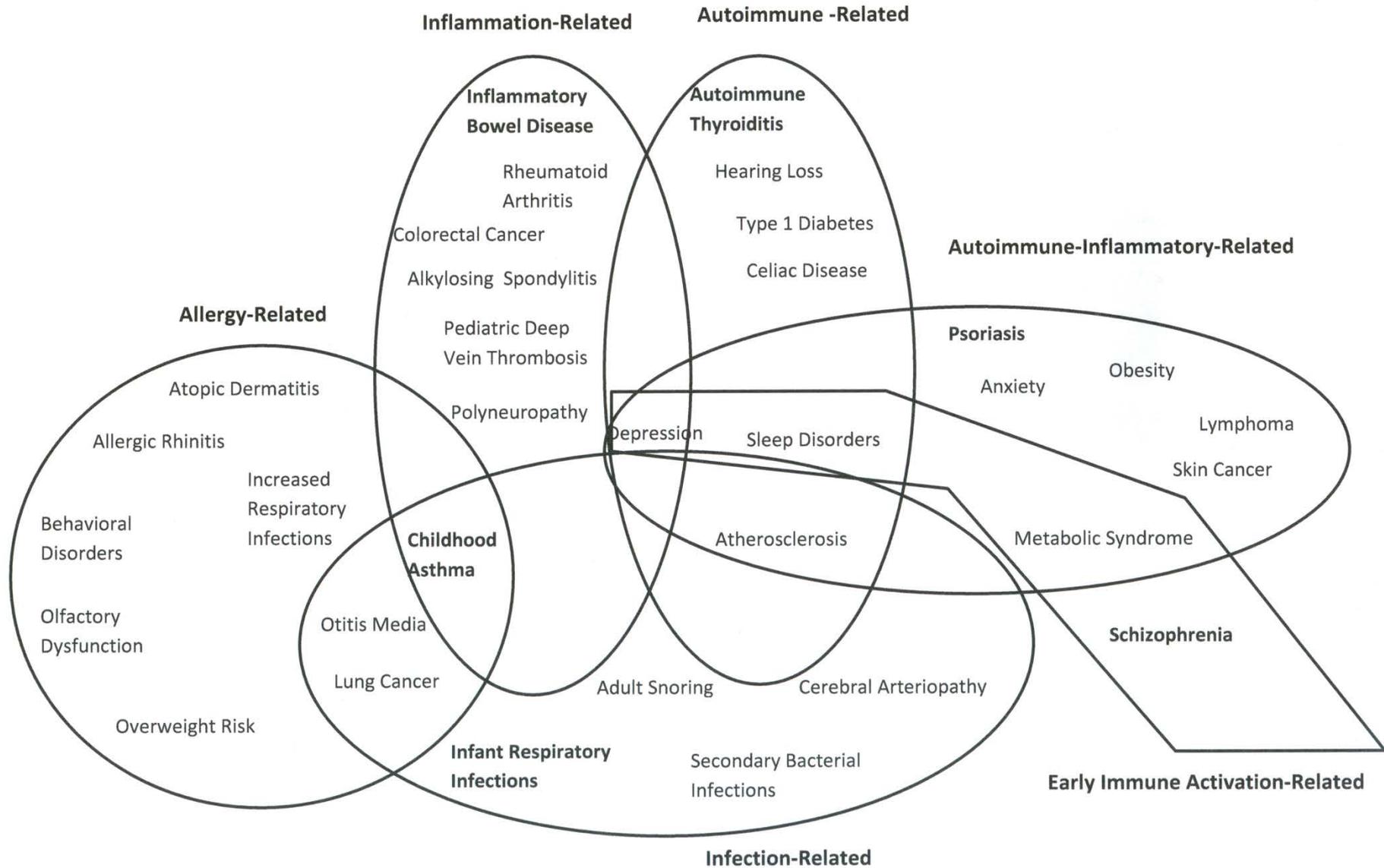
- Allergies (food/asthma/rhinitis/dermatitis)
- Cancer
- Obesity
- Diabetes
- Cardiovascular disease
- Arthritis
- Autism spectrum
- ADD/ADHD
- Celiac disease
- IBD (Crohn's, UC)
- Lupus
- Autoimmune thyroiditis
- Depression
- Osteoporosis
- Frailty
- Dementia
- Alzheimer's disease
- Parkinson's disease
- Hypertension
- Sleep disorders
- PCOS
- COPD
- Chronic kidney disease
- Psoriasis
- Multiple sclerosis

## **2. The Primary Health Target of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

### **Reducing the Risk of Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs)**

- **NCDs now account for 75% of deaths globally** (CDC, Division of Global Health Protection (DGHP), Feb.4, 2016)
- **Estimated to Cost 48% of Global GDPs by 2030** (WEF-HSPH, 2011)
- **NCD deaths are occurring at earlier ages in developing countries** (Baldwin and Amato, Global burden of NCDs, Population Reference Bureau, 2012)
- **Increased burden of NCDs based on: Years of Life Lost, Years Lost due to Disability, and Disability-Adjusted Life Year (DALY)** (Jakovljevic and Milovanovic, Front. Public Health, 23 April 2015).
- **Adolescence is the last best chance against NCDs** (Baldwin and Amato, Global burden of NCDs, Population Reference Bureau, 2012)
- **Issues of available healthcare and caregivers** (Abuosi et al., BMC Pediatr. 15:185, 2015)
- **45.3% of all US adults age 65 and above have two or more chronic diseases: a 20% increase from the previous decade.** (WEF-Harvard, 2011)

# Non-Communicable Diseases Cluster Together



# A Pattern of 32 Interlinked NCDs for Obesity

Cancer (12 different types)

Psoriasis

Polycystic ovarian syndrome

Heart disease

Multiple sclerosis

Asthma

Alzheimer's disease

Depression

Hypertension

Fatty liver disease

Infertility

Rheumatoid arthritis

Sleep disorders

Deep vein thrombosis

Stroke

Hearing loss

Gastroesophageal  
reflux disease

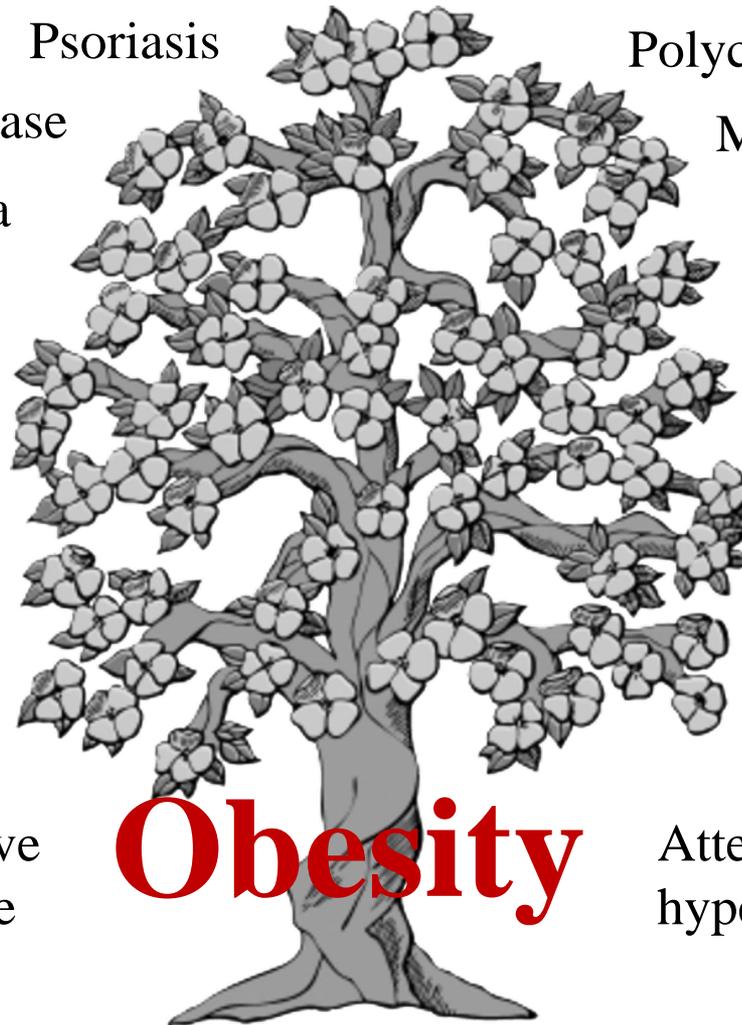
Gout

Chronic kidney disease

Chronic obstructive  
pulmonary disease

**Obesity**

Attention-deficit  
hyperactivity disorder



# Misregulated Inflammation

is

A tie that binds noncommunicable  
diseases and conditions (NCDs)  
together

And

A feature of gut microbial dysbiosis

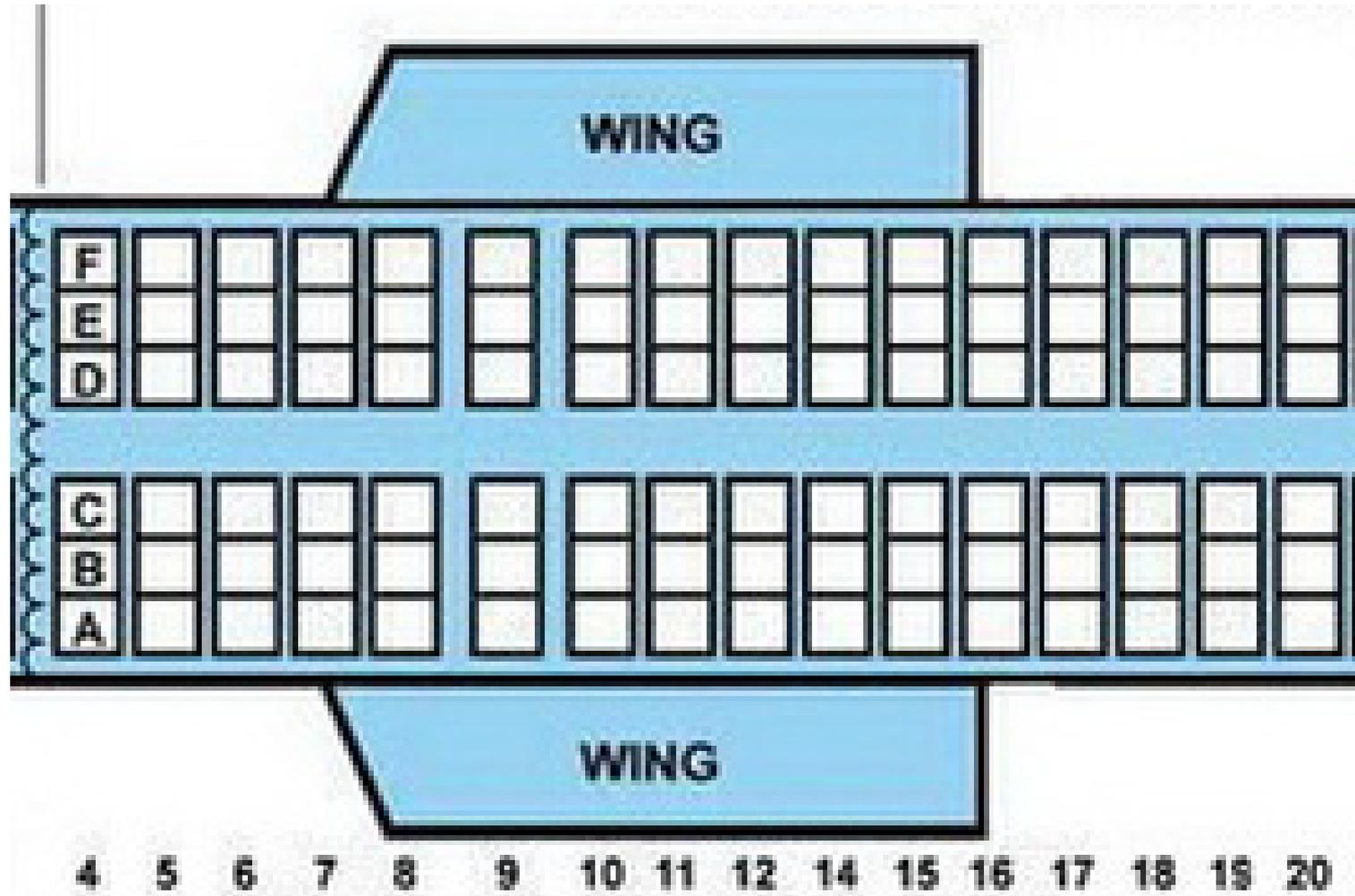
Lipid mediators connected to immune-microbial signaling  
prove critical in effective control of tissue inflammation.

See: Serhan et al. The resolution code of acute inflammation:  
Novel pro-resolving lipid mediators in resolution. *Semin Immunol.* 2015 Apr 6.  
pii: S1044-5323(15)00012-3.

# **The Hidden Cost of Microbiome and Immune Dysbiosis Driven NCDs**

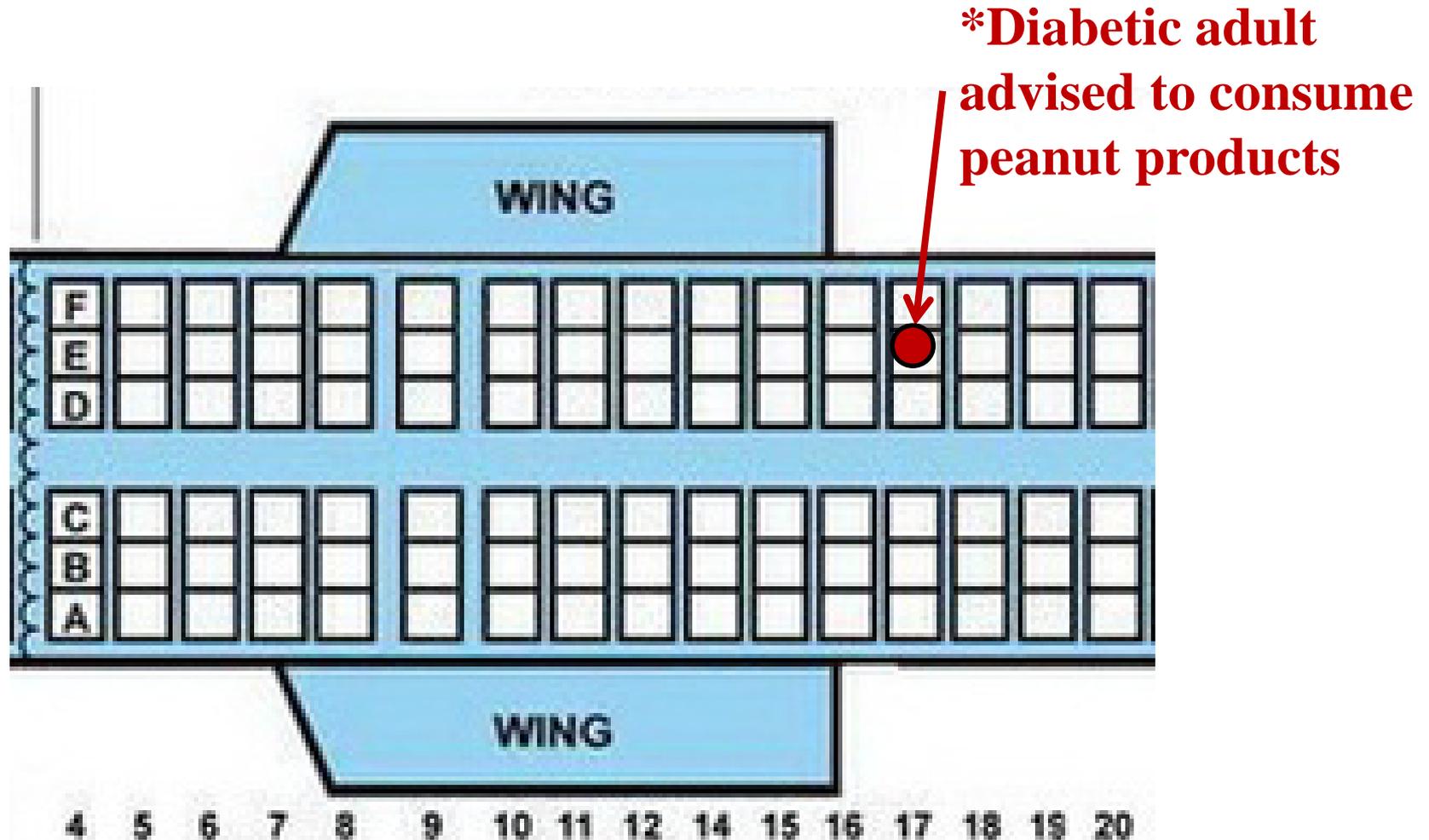
**Societal change - Isolation**

# Leaving on a Jet Plane



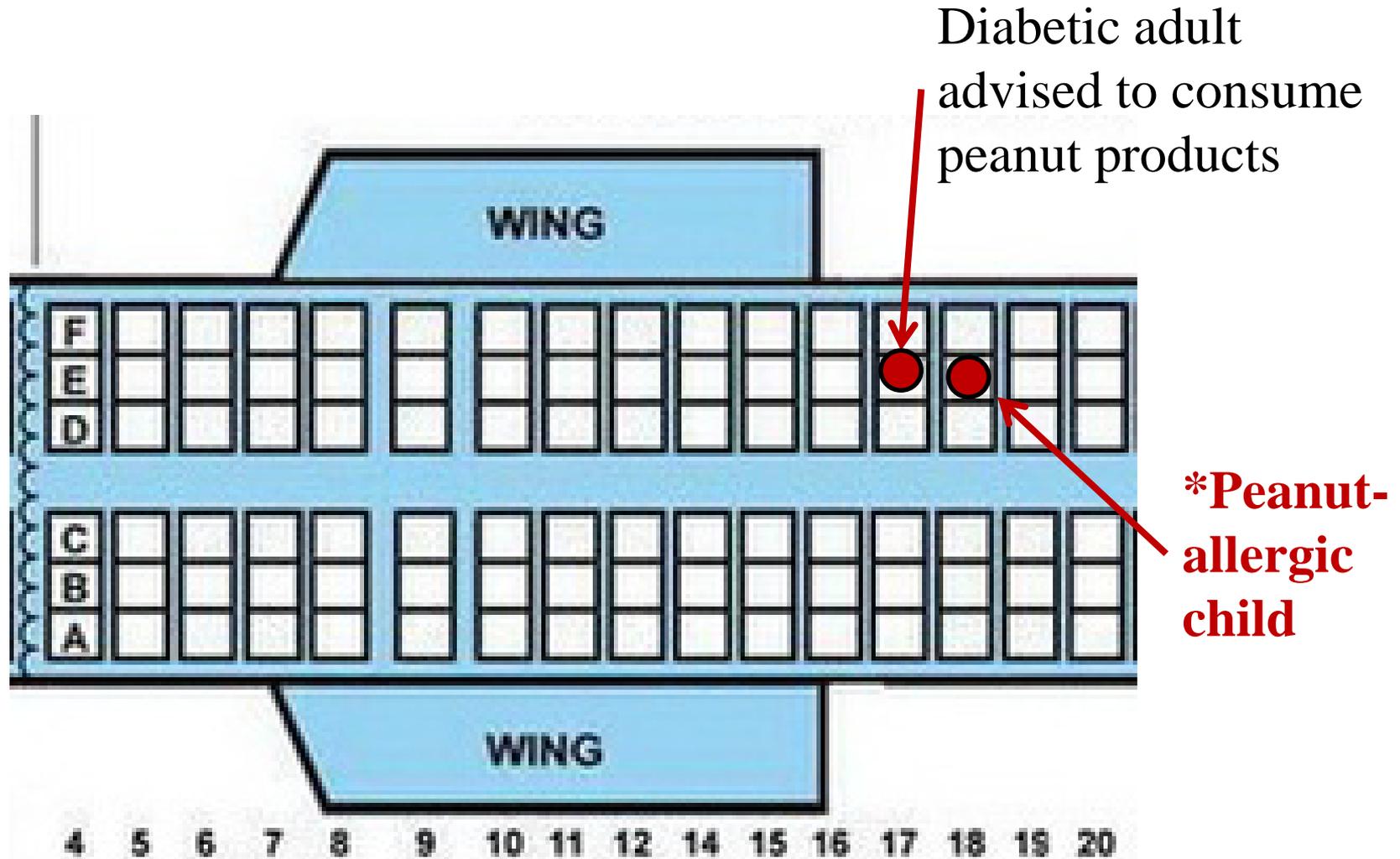
See: Dietert R., *The Human Superorganism*, 2016 (Dutton Penguin Random House)

# Leaving on a Jet Plane



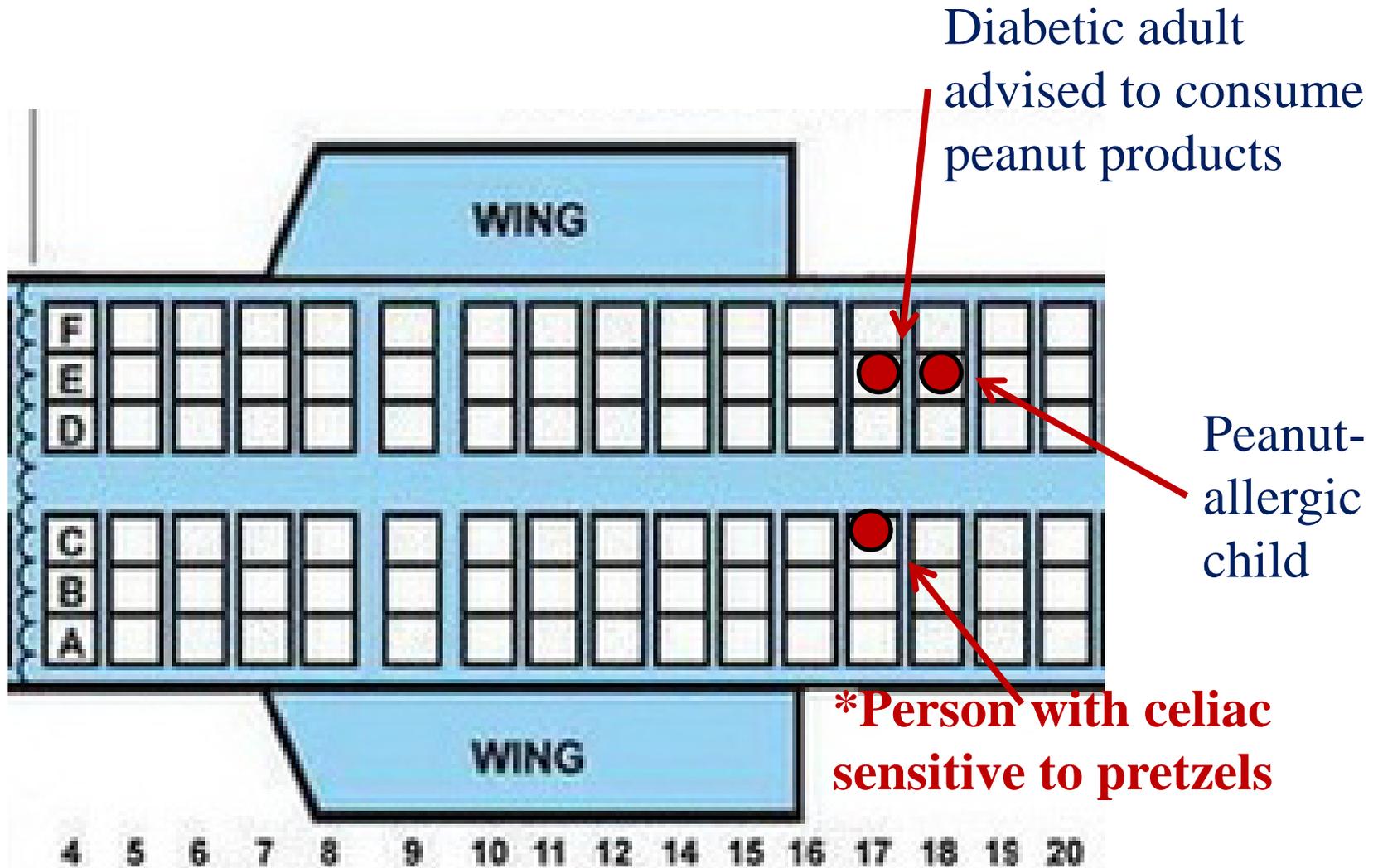
See: Dietert R., *The Human Superorganism*, 2016 (Dutton Penguin Random House)

# Leaving on a Jet Plane



See: Dietert R., *The Human Superorganism*, 2016 (Dutton Penguin Random House)

# Leaving on a Jet Plane

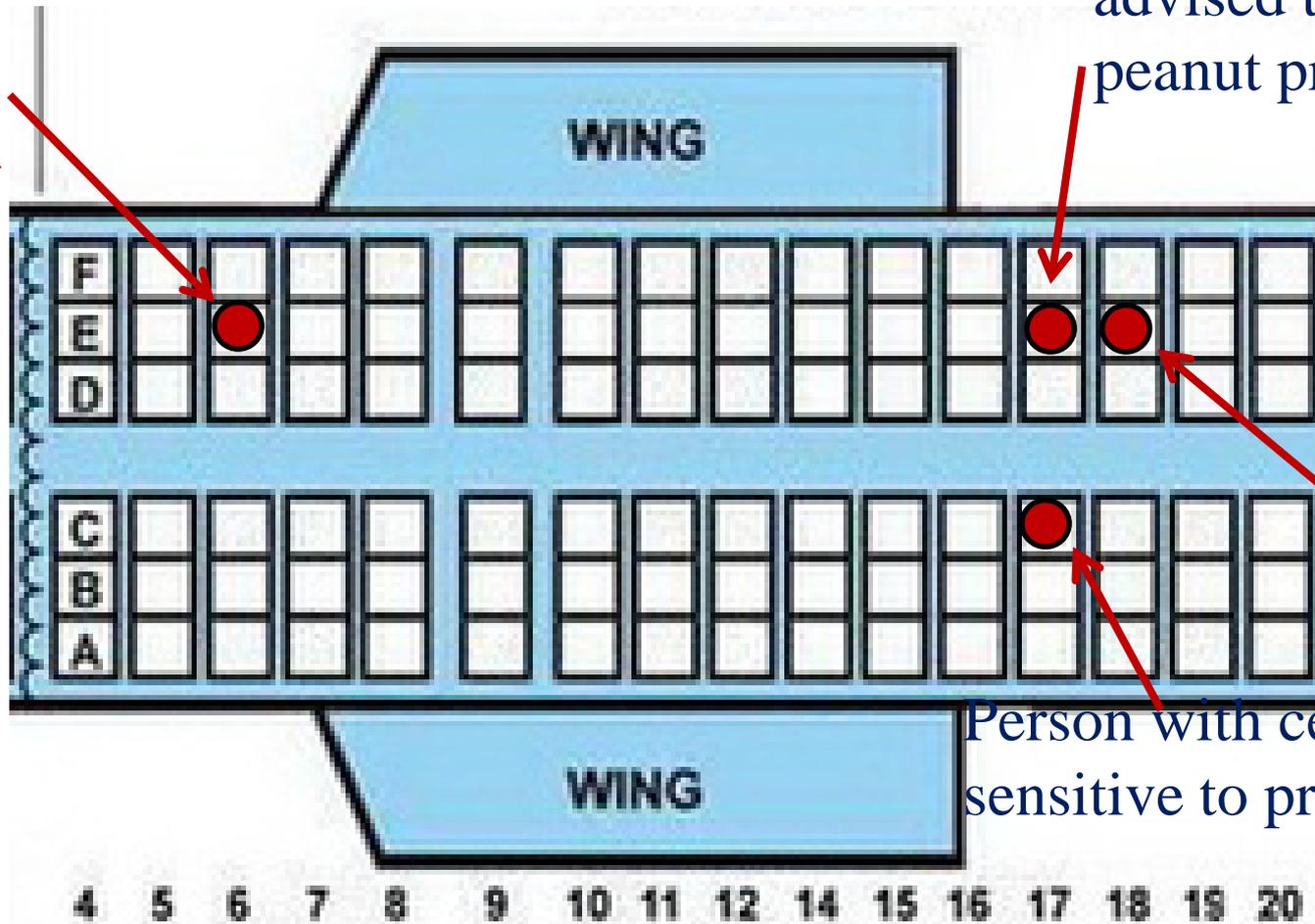


See: Dietert R., *The Human Superorganism*, 2016 (Dutton Penguin Random House)

# Leaving on a Jet Plane

**\*Asthmatic  
child -  
dog  
allergy**

Diabetic adult  
advised to consume  
peanut products



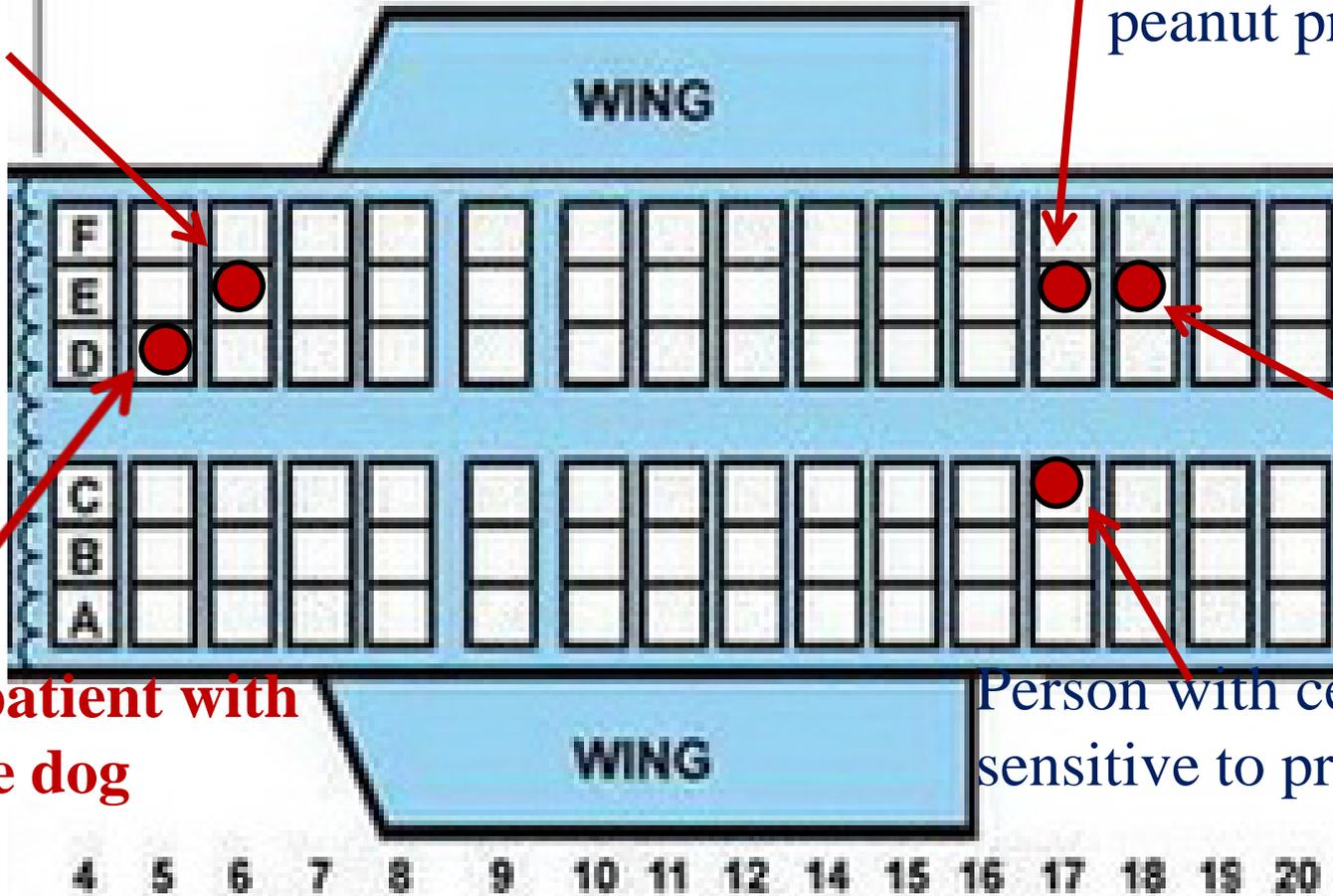
Peanut-  
allergic  
child

Person with celiac  
sensitive to pretzels

# Leaving on a Jet Plane

Asthmatic  
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Diabetic adult  
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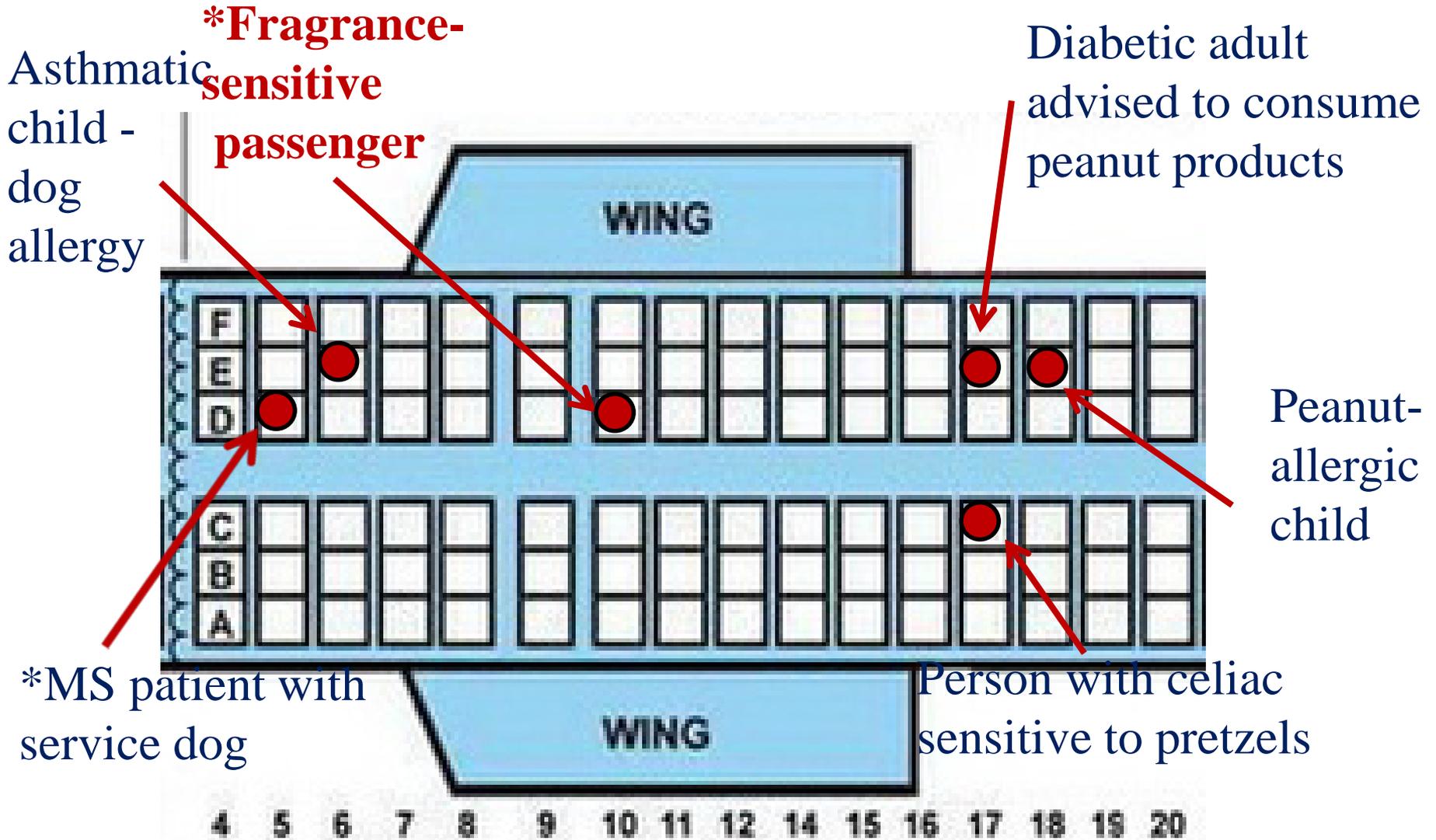


Peanut-  
allergic  
child

**\*MS patient with  
service dog**

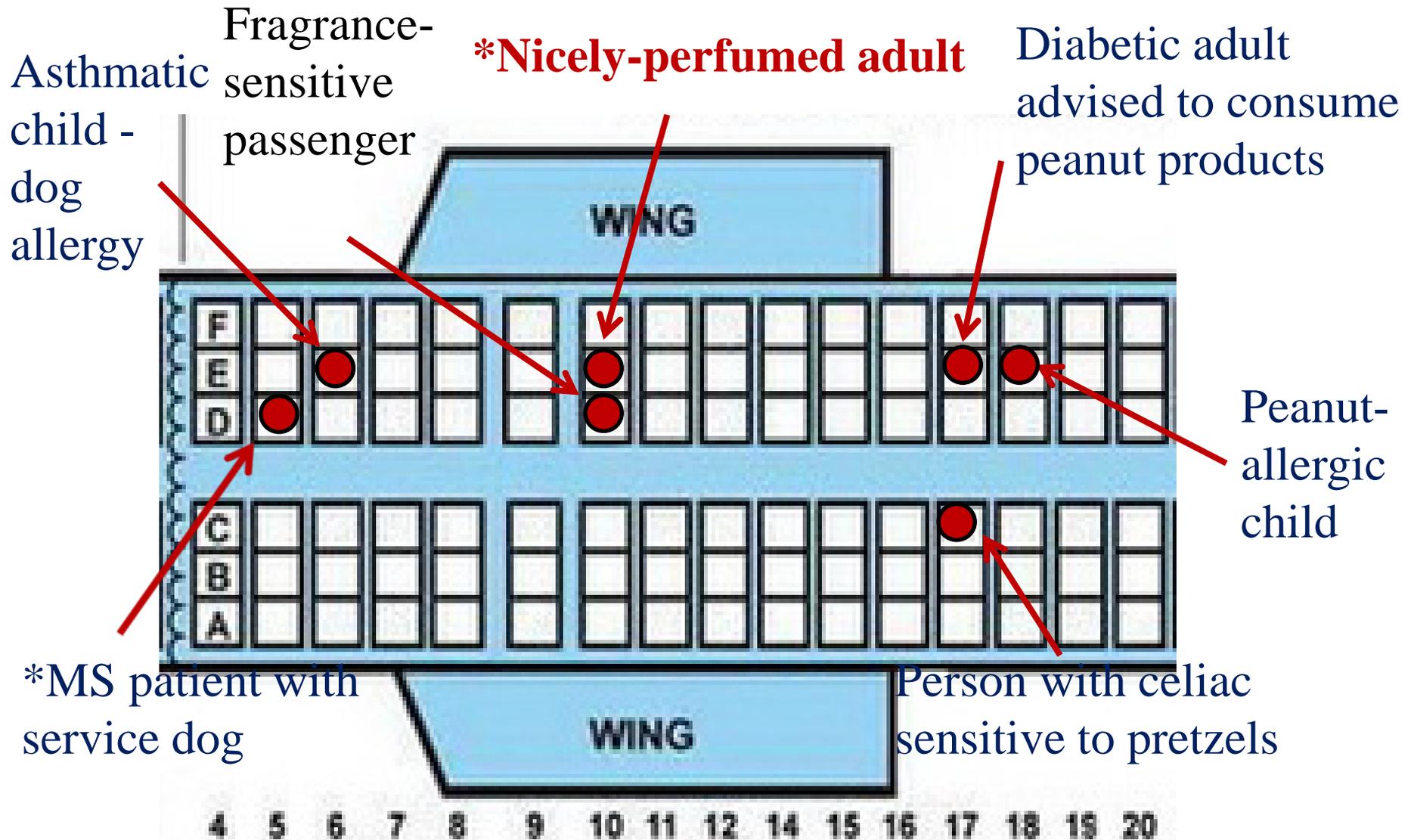
Person with celiac  
sensitive to pretzels

# Leaving on a Jet Plane



See: Dietert R., *The Human Superorganism*, 2016 (Dutton Penguin Random House)

# Leaving on a Jet Plane



See: Dietert R., *The Human Superorganism*, 2016 (Dutton Penguin Random House)

# **3. Superorganism Ecology and The Completed Self Hypothesis**

# Multiple Microbial Bubbles and Filters

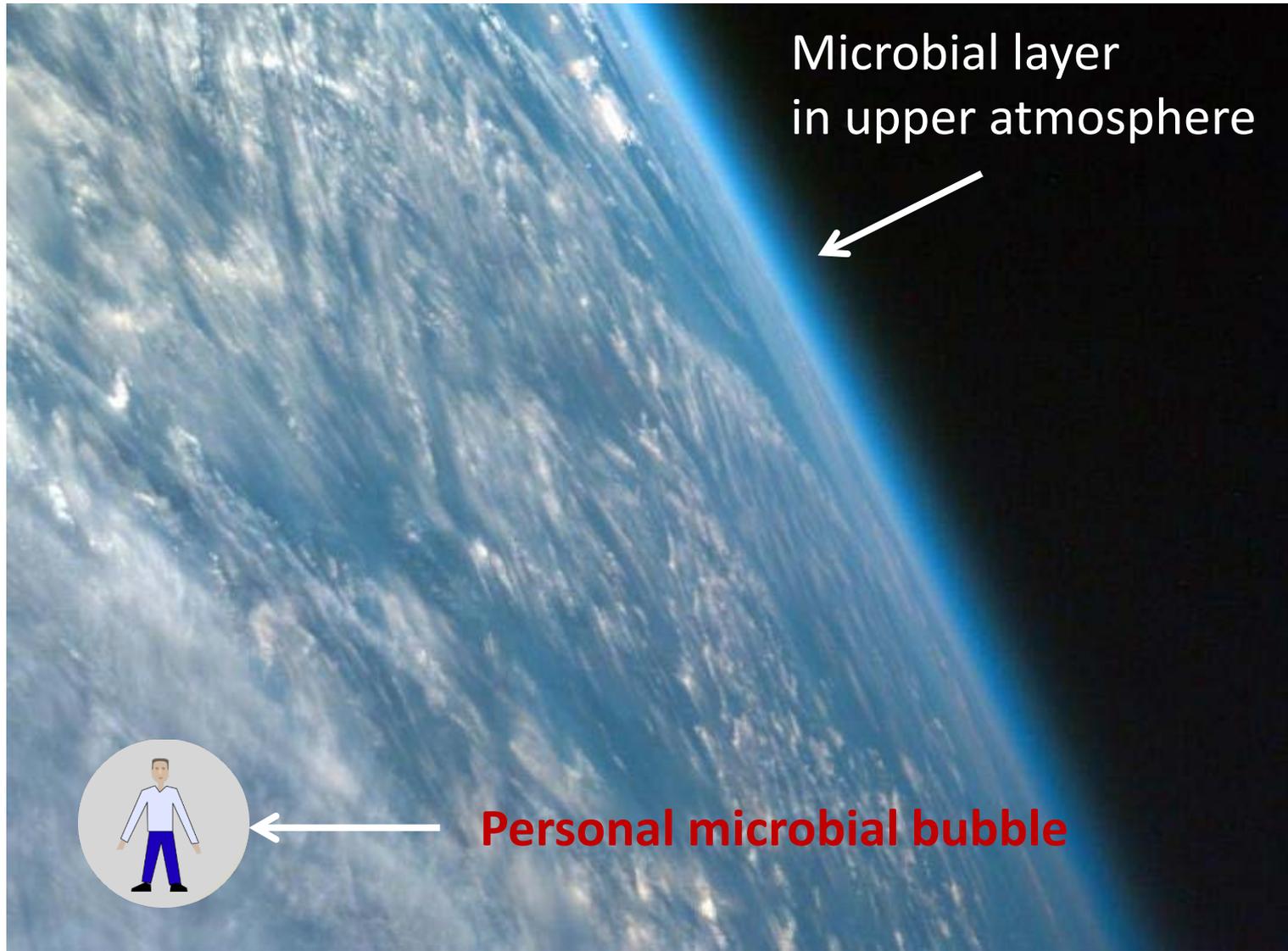


Image  
from  
NASA.gov

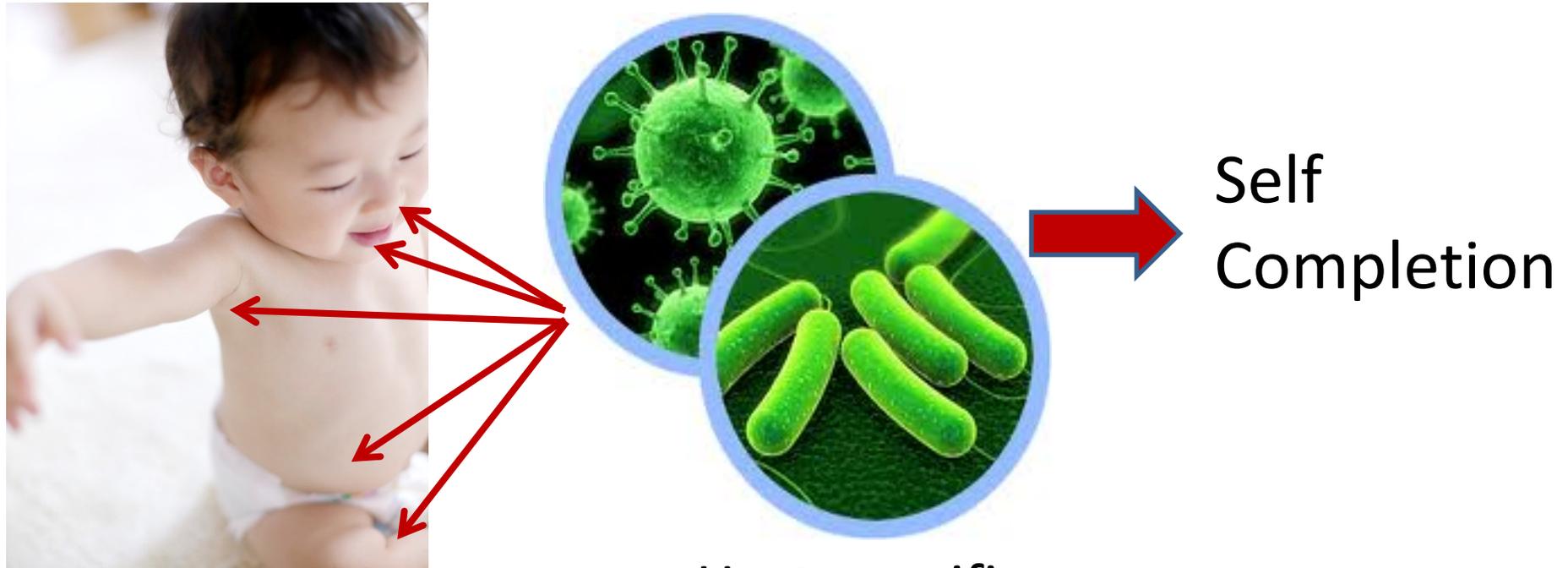
See: DeLeon-Rodriguez et al. PNAS USA 2013; 110 (7 ): 2575–2580; Yang et al., Int J Syst Evol Microbiol. 2010 Apr;60(Pt 4):776-9. ;

# Archaea – also in your gut





# Self-Completion - The Completed Self



Host-specific,  
Family-sourced microbiota

See: Dietert and Dietert, *Entropy* 14(11), 2036-2065, 2012 and  
Dietert, *Birth Defects Research Part B*. 101(4): 333-340, 2014;  
Dietert, R. *The Human Superorganism*, Dutton (Penguin Group/Random House), 2016

# Ramifications of Self Incompleteness

Microbiota are seen as an “Integral Organ”

If they are missing, it's analogous to  
a form of birth defect.

*e.g.*, Clarke et al.,

Minireview: Gut microbiota: the neglected endocrine organ.

Mol Endocrinol. 2014 Aug;28(8):1221-38.

Brown JM, Hazen SL. The gut microbial endocrine organ:

bacterially derived signals driving cardiometabolic diseases.

Annu Rev Med. 2015 Jan 14;66:343-59.

Evans et al. The gut microbiome: the role of a virtual organ in  
the endocrinology of the host.

J Endocrinol. 2013 Aug 28;218(3):R37-47.

# Microbiome Activities and Functions

- **\*Second brain: serotonin, dopamine, noradrenalin, GABA, catecholamines, acetylcholine\***
- **\*Regulation of hepatic metabolizing enzymes\***
- **\*Immune maturation and homeostasis\***
- An important endocrine organ
- Bile acid metabolism (affecting lipid metabolism, fat-soluble vitamins, and intestinal barrier function)
- Regulation of HPA axis
- Production of epigenetic regulators (e.g., SCFAs)

Swanson, H.I. Drug Metab Dispos. 2015 Aug 10. pii: dmd.115.065714.

Mayer et al., J Neurosci. 2014 Nov 12; 34(46): 15490–15496. ; Brown and Hazen,

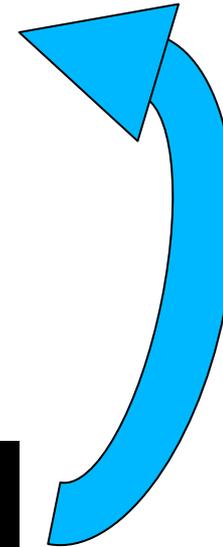
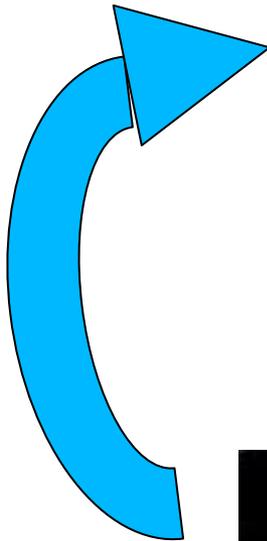
Ann Rev Med 2015, 66: 343-359 ; Clarke et al., Mol Endocrinol. 2014 Aug;28(8):1221-38.

# Brain – Who's Running the Show?

**Neurobehavior**  
**Kin recognition**  
**Mating behavior**



**Food preferences and cravings**



See:  
Lize et al.,  
Trends Ecol Evol.  
2013 Jun;28(6):325-6;  
Alcock et al.  
Bioessays  
36(10):  
940-949  
2014; Stilling et al.  
J Neurovirol. 2016;  
22(1):14-21.

# Gut Bacteria as a Source of Brain Chemicals

Type of bacteria	Neural messengers
<i>Bacillus</i>	Dopamine, norepinephrine
<i>Bifido-bacterium</i>	Gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA)
<i>Enterococcus</i>	Serotonin
<i>Escherichia</i>	Norepinephrine, serotonin
<i>Lactobacillus</i>	Acetylcholine, GABA
<i>Streptococcus</i>	Serotonin

Sources: T.G. Dinan et al, J. Psych. Res. 2015;63:1–9  
and L. Sanders, Science News 2016; 189(7):23

# **4. Microbiome-Immune Co-existence and Co-maturation**

# Managing the Human Ecosystem for: Effective Immune Maturation and Tolerance and a Diversified Microbiome

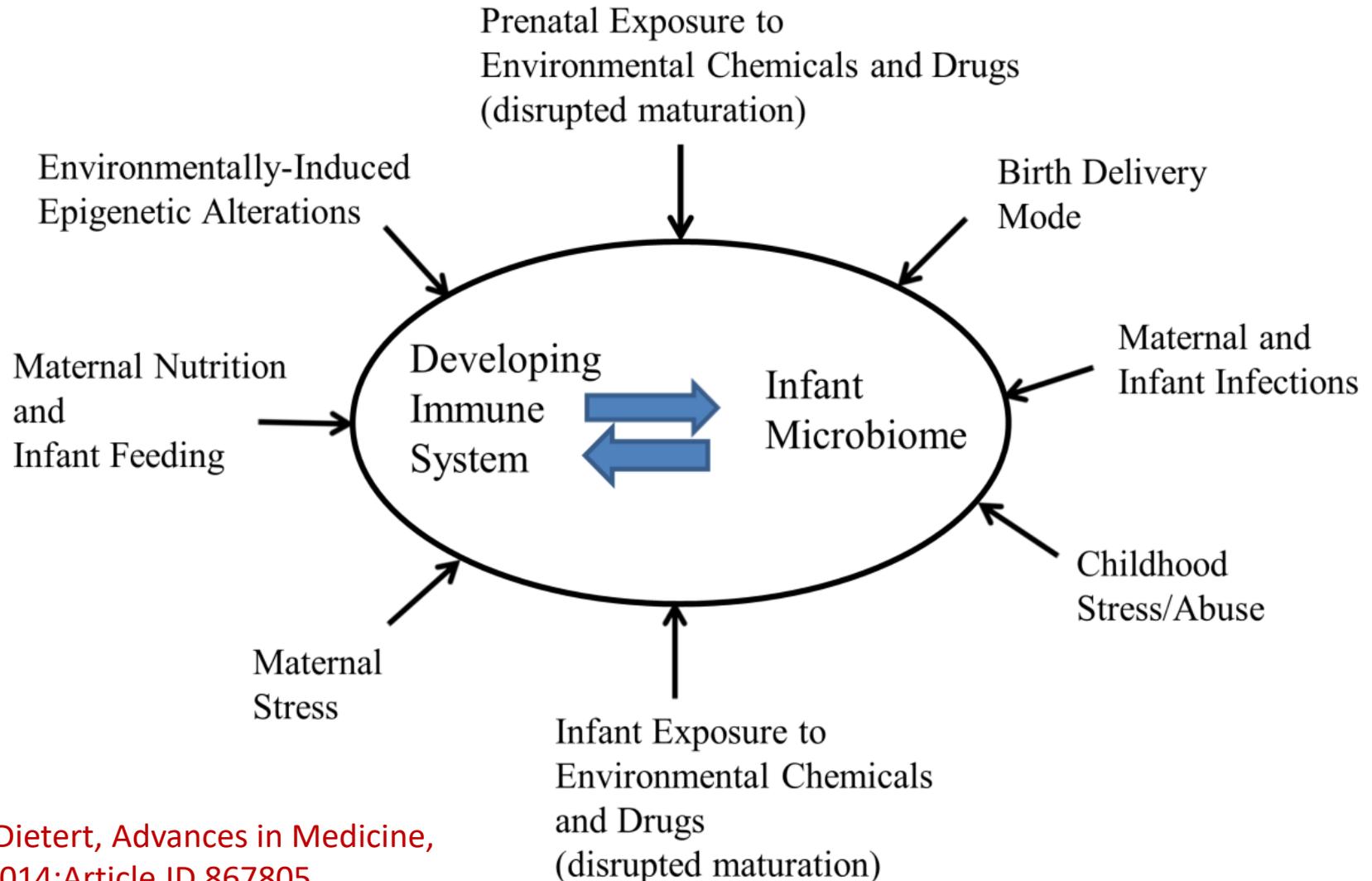
Ineffective Microbiome-Mediated  
Immune Maturation



Effective Microbiome-Mediated  
Immune Maturation



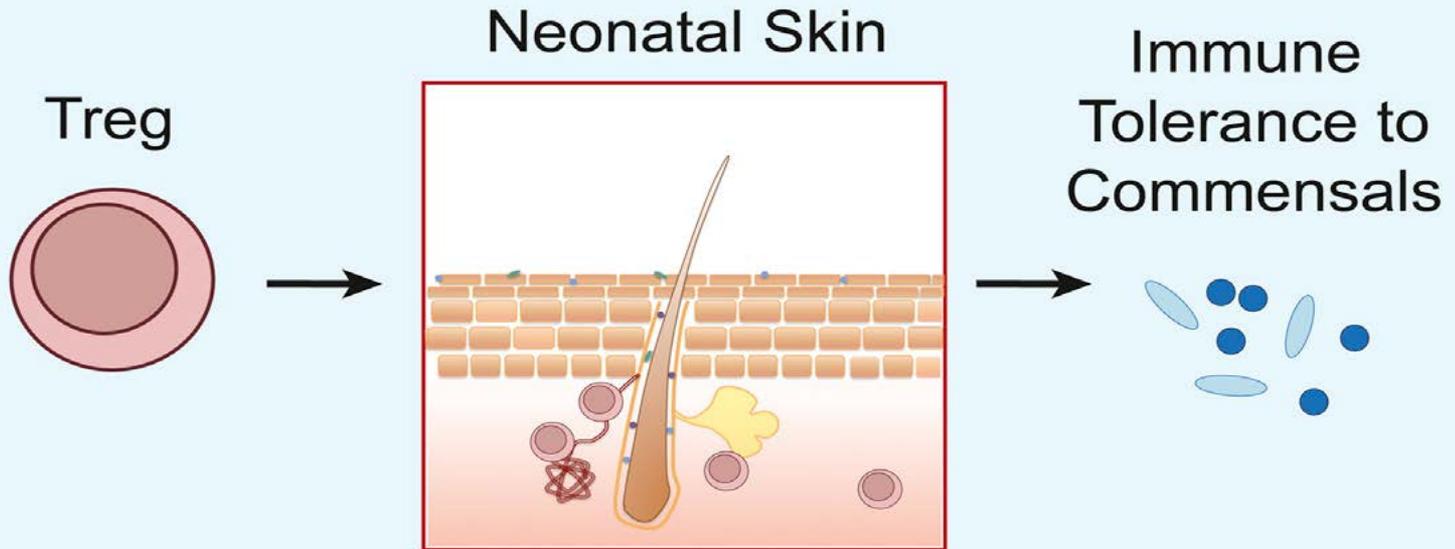
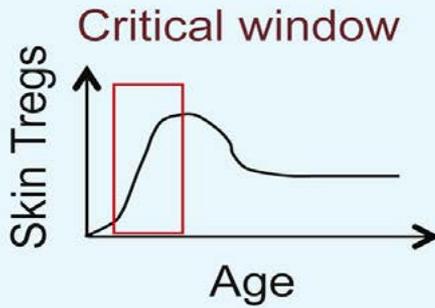
# Developmental Immunotoxicity (DIT) in the Context of The Completed Self Model for the Human-Microbial Superorganism



# Examples of Neonatal “Critical Windows” Involving the microbiome and immune system

- Modulation of proliferative burst of invariant Natural Killer T cells (iNKT cells) in the gut –(determines risk of G.I. inflammatory disease)
- Neonatal timed influx of FoxP3+ T regulatory cells (Tregs) into the skin (determines tolerance to skin commensals)





From: Scharschmidt et al. A wave of regulatory T cells into neonatal skin mediates tolerance to commensal microbes. *Immunity* 43, 1011–1021, 2015

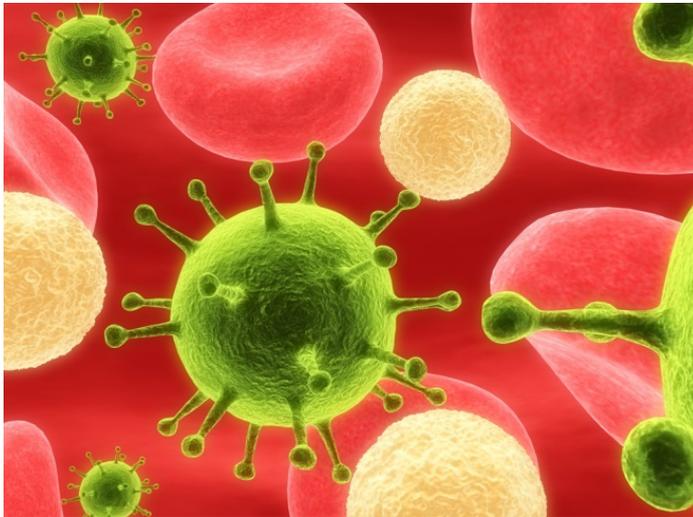
# **5. The Microbiome as our Gatekeeper**

# Responses of the Microbiota to Environmental Exposures

Environmental  
pollutants  
(*e.g.*, metals, organics)

Diet

Drugs



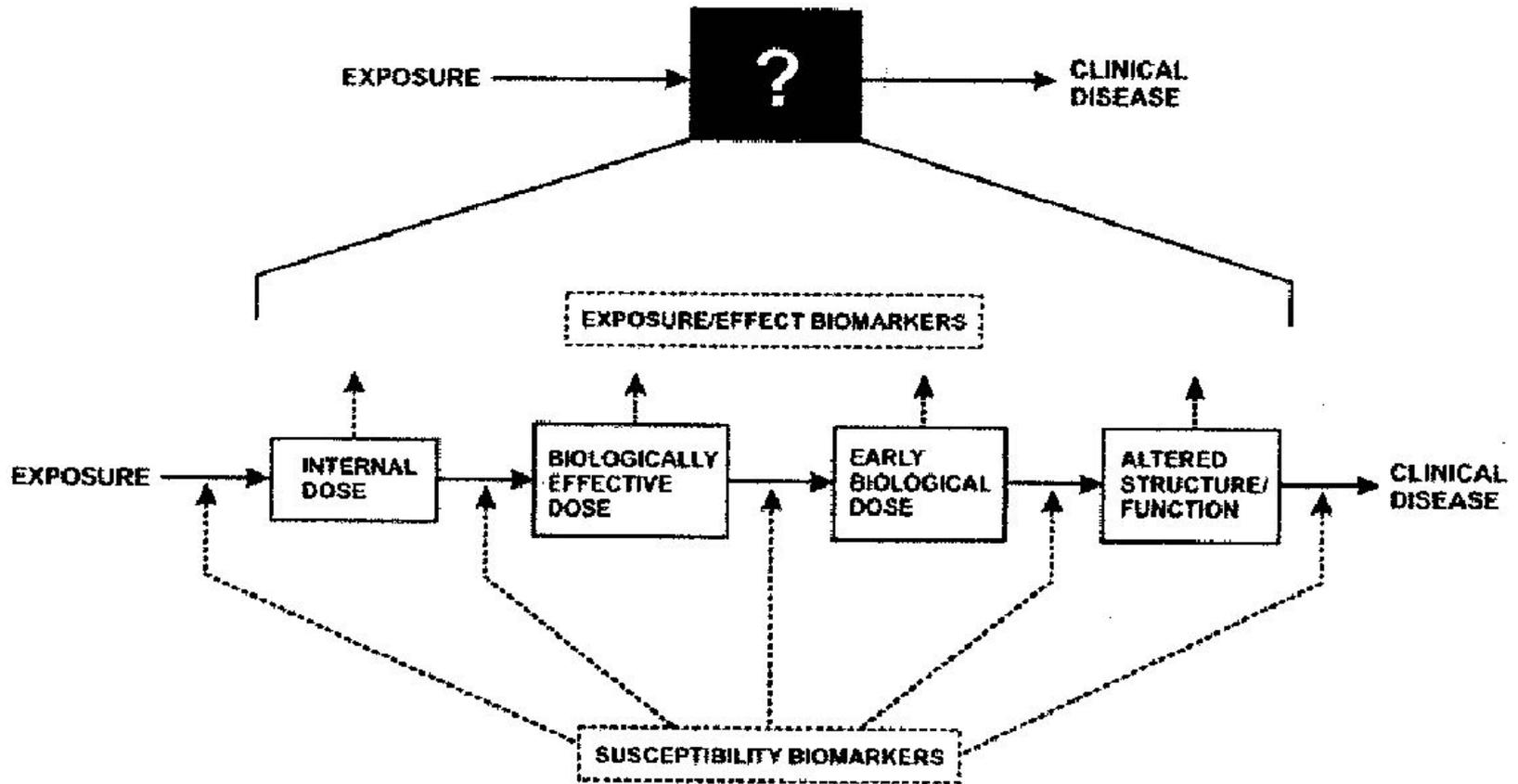
1. Sequestration
2. Avoidance/Exclusion
3. Metabolism
4. Specific Signaling
5. Selective Microbe Death
6. Selective Microbe Expansion
7. Translocation

Adapted from: Dietert R. The microbiome in early life: self-completion and microbiota protection as health priorities. Birth Defects Res. Part B. 101(4): 333-340, 2014.

# Gut Microbiota and Xenobiotics

- Increase or decrease drug available for absorption
- Directly metabolize drug
- Inhibit detoxification
- Biotransform common food components, drugs, and xenobiotics
- Generate aryl-hydrocarbon receptor agonists
- Covert a pro-drug into an active drug
- Respond to one drug/xenobiotic by inactivating host enzymes for an unrelated drug
- Regulate host metabolism

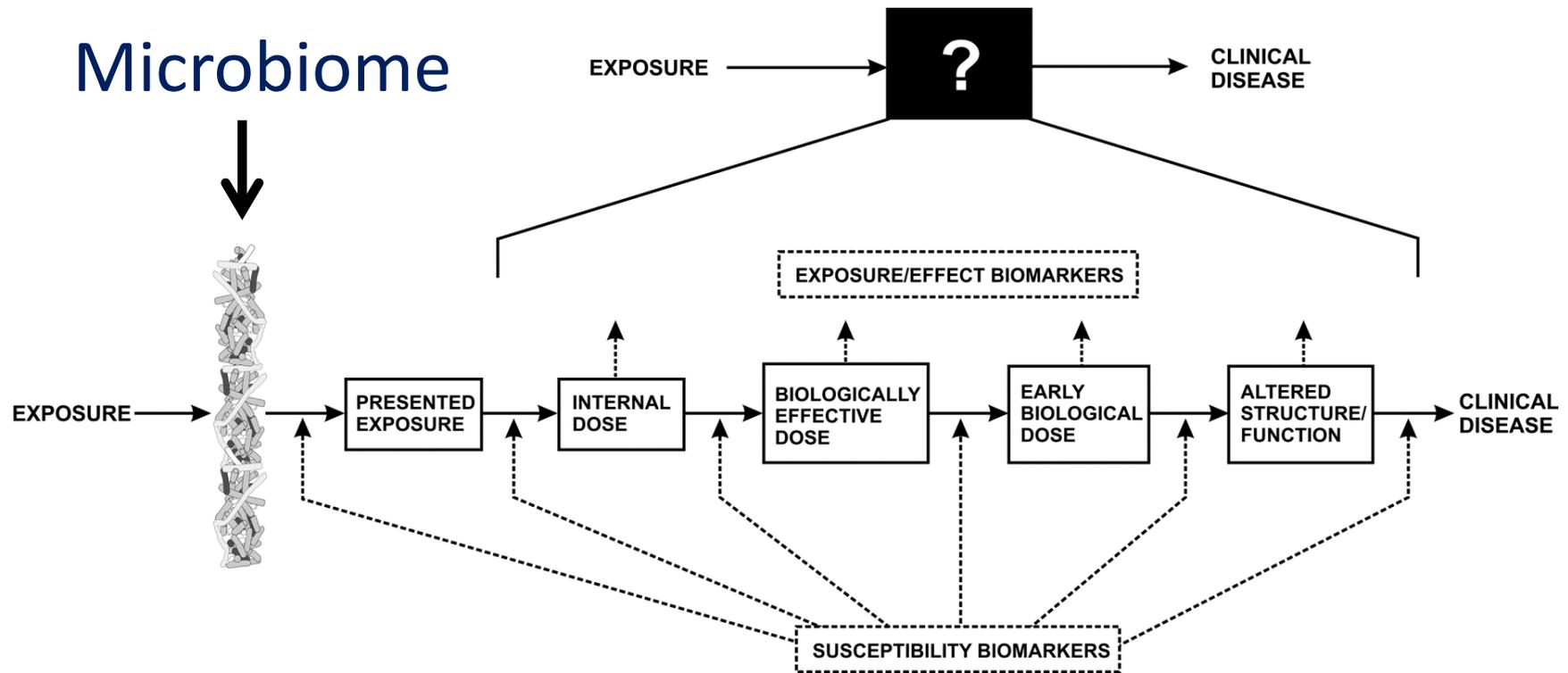
# Current Biomarkers Model for Health Risk Assessment (1987)



From:  
National Research Council,  
Environ Health Perspect,  
74: 3-9, 1987



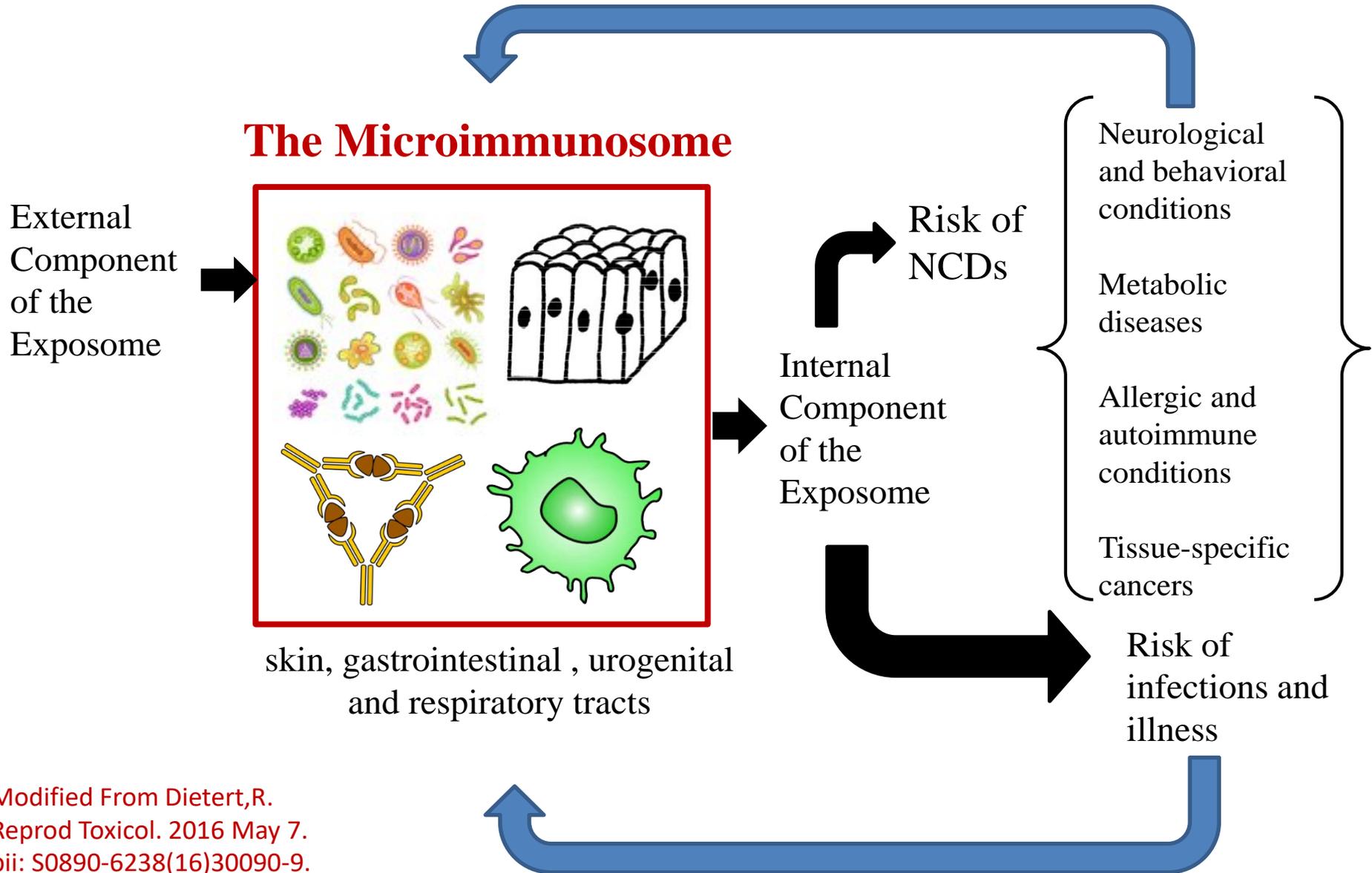
# The Microbiome Filters Virtually All Exposures and Directly Participates in Epigenetic Alterations



## Proposed New Environmental Health Assessment Model

Adapted from: Dietert and Silbergeld, *Toxicol. Sci.* 2015 Apr;144(2):208-16.

# The Microimmunosome and the Exposome



# Microbiome Status

- Can make an environmental chemical or drug more toxic or be protective of our cells against toxicity
- Can determine whether a drug has efficacy and/or toxicity in a given patient
- Can determine the physiological response to certain foods
- Can affect vulnerability to certain infections

# **6. Superorganism Safety**

**environmental chemicals**

**drugs**

**food additives**

**pathogens**

# FACTORS

## Gut Microbiota Affect Xenobiotic Metabolism and Internal Dose

- Affect host drug metabolism
- Decrease absorption of drug by metabolizing it
- Biotransform xenobiotics
- Convert a prodrug to an active drug
- Increase availability of drug by inhibiting host detoxification
- Biotransform common food constituents
- Generate aryl-hydrocarbon receptor agonists
- Produce a drug metabolite that inactivates a host enzyme
- Increase the duration of drug action
- Increase drug toxicity
- Metabolize a drug to a teratogen
- Decrease and increase the mutagenicity of food-pyrolysis products

From: Klaassen and Cui, Drug Metabolism & Disposition 2015; 43(10 ): 1505-1521

# **Environmental Chemicals**

## **Arsenic**

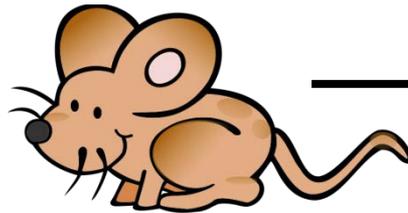
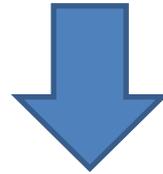
**The state of the gut microbiome can determine actual biological impact of arsenic ingestion.**

- Sulfur-reducing gut bacteria can convert arsenic into one of its most toxic forms. The amount and balance of microbes affect arsenic metabolism.

See: Rubin et al. Arsenic thiolation and the role of sulfate-reducing bacteria from the human intestinal tract, *Environ Health Perspect*, 122:817-22, 2014.

# Environmental Chemicals (2): Cadmium

Cadmium (as Cl in drinking water)



Decreased thickness  
of inner  
mucus layer

Reduced genes/capacity  
to produce SCFAs

Dispersal to  
tissues  
is elevated once  
gut barrier is  
compromised

Colonic TNF- $\alpha$   
and  
inflammation  
elevated

Reduced overall  
gut bacterial growth.  
Altered Bacteroidetes  
to Firmicutes ratio.

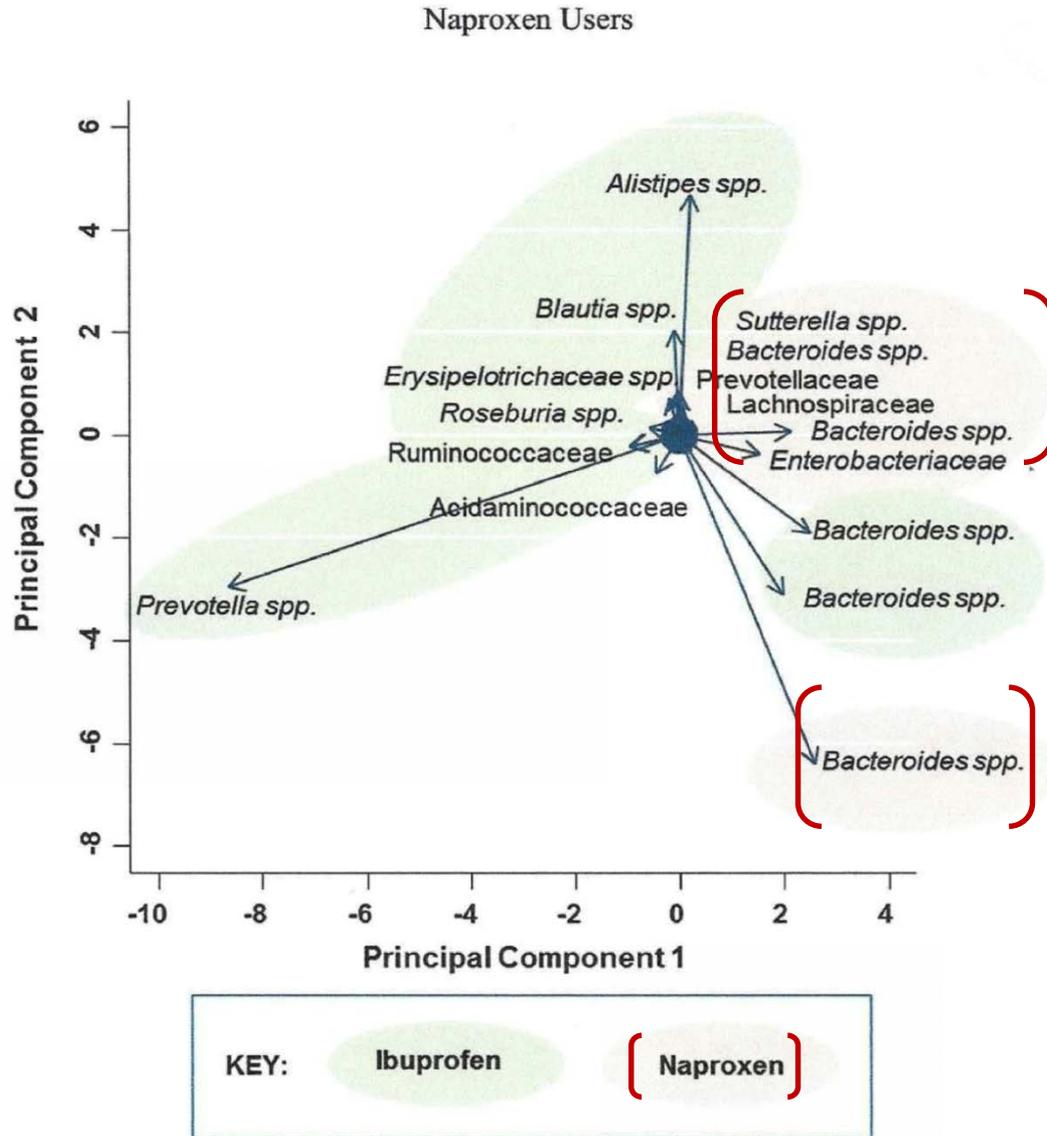
# Drugs: Digoxin

- narrow efficacy/toxicity range
- gut microbiota determine actual delivered dose
- adverse outcomes – ineffective drug administration or potentially lethal toxicity
- *Eggerthella lenta* determines outcome

See: Haiser et al. Gut Microbes, 5:233-38, 2014.

# Drugs: NSAIDs

FIGURE 5. Principal Component Analysis Biplot of Bacteria to distinguish Ibuprofen Users from

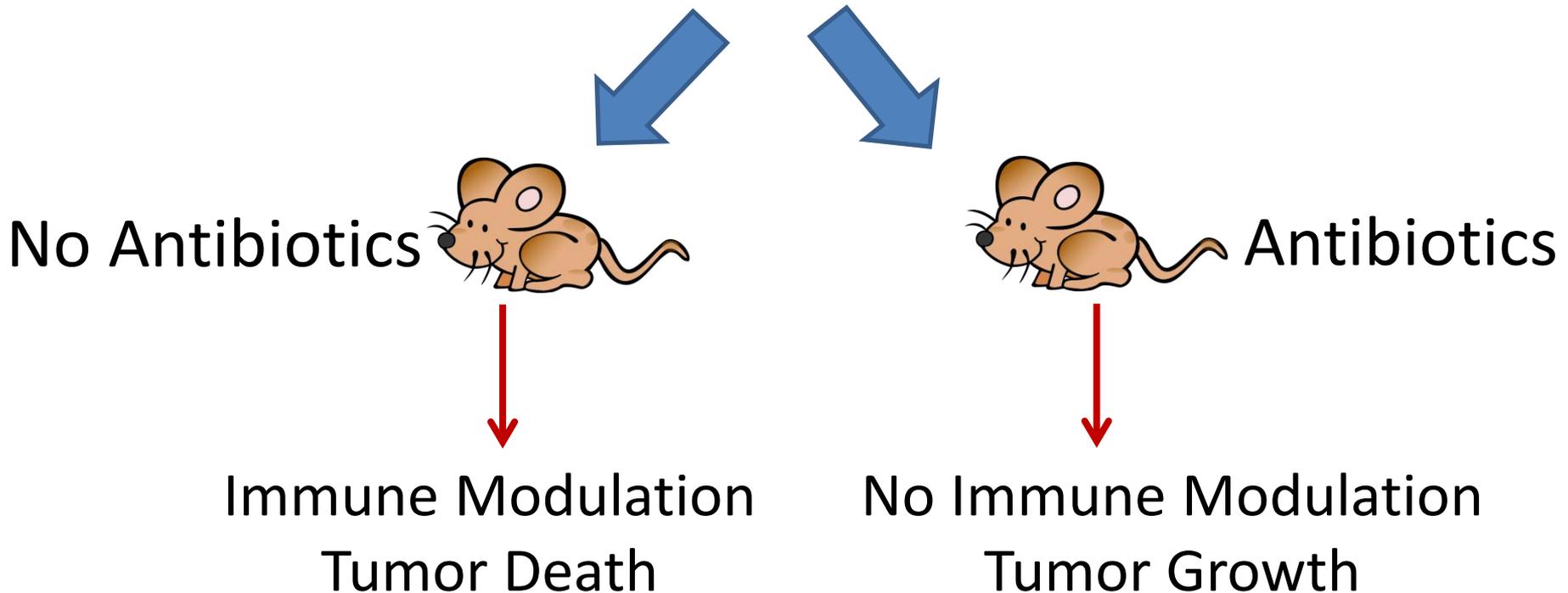


**Different NSAIDs  
Produce  
Different Types  
of Microbiome  
Disruption**

Adapted  
from:  
Rodgers and  
Aronoff,  
Clin.  
Microbiol.  
Infect.  
(Oct. 2015)  
doi:  
10/1016/  
j.cmi.2015.  
10.003

# Drugs: Chemotherapeutics

Cyclophosphamide  
or Platinum salts

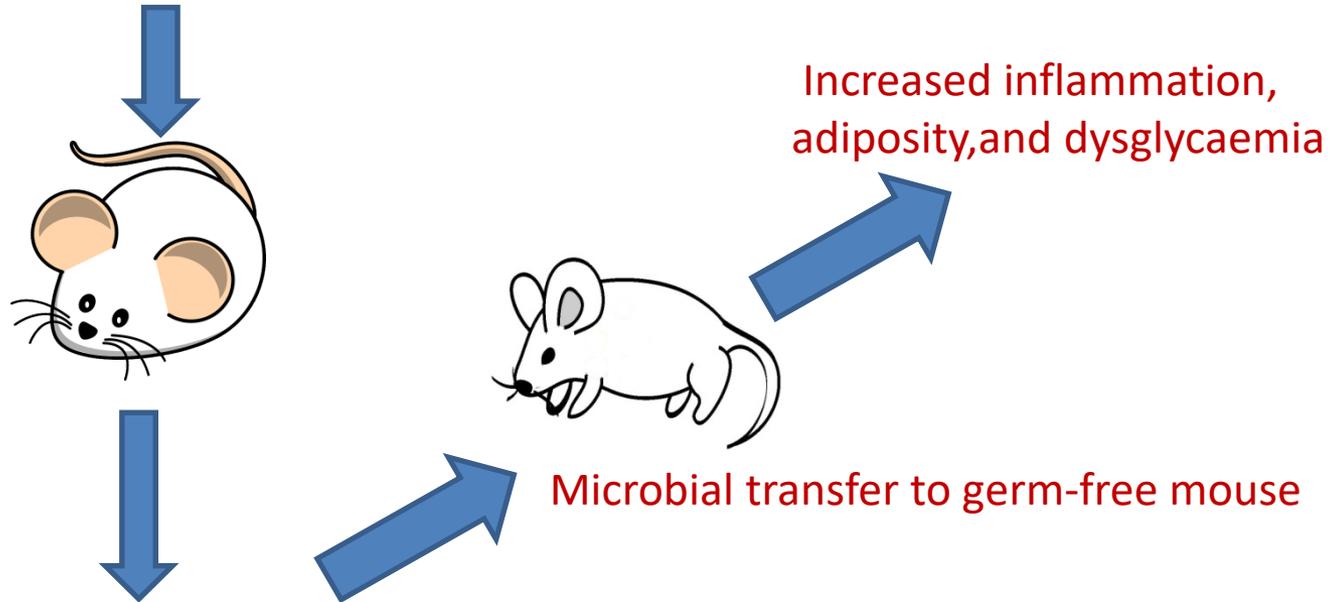


Viaud et al., Science. 2013;342:971–6; Iida et al., Science. 2013;342:967–70;;  
Viaud et al., Cell Death Differ. 2015 Feb;22(2):199-214.

# Food Additives

## Food Emulsifiers

Polysorbate 80 (PS80), Carboxymethylcellulose (CMC)

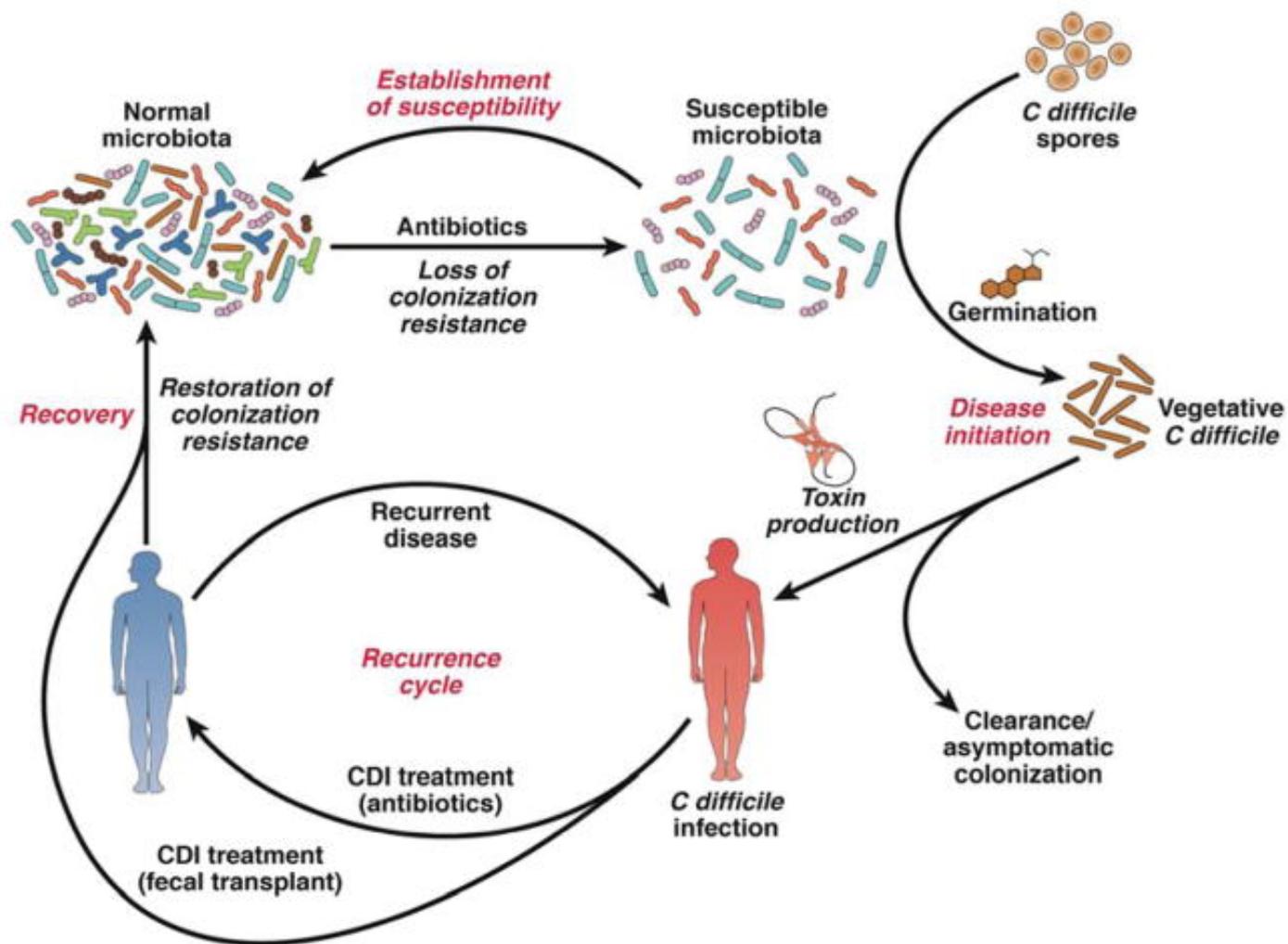


Blooms in mucolytic *Ruminococcus gnavus* and *Akkermansia muciniphila*;  
Decrease butyrate production;  
Enrichment mucosa-associated, inflammation-promoting Proteobacteria;  
Encroachment of bacteria toward epithelial lining producing leaky gut;  
Promotion of metabolic syndrome and colitis

See: Chassaing et al. *Nature*, 519:92-96, 2015;

Cani PD and Everard A, *Trends Endocrinol Metab.* 2015 Jun;26(6):273-4.

# Pathogens: Colonization Resistance to Protect Against Infections



From: Britton and Young Gastroenterology. 2014 May; 146(6): 1547–1553.

# Pathogens: Minimum Microbiota Necessary for Effective Colonization Resistance

- Metagenomic tools were used to construct a minimum consortium of gut microbiota that would protect mice from infection with the human enteric pathogen *Salmonella enterica serovar* Typhimurium (S. Tm).
- An installed combination of 15 specific gut bacterial strains were equivalent to a complete microbiome in effective colonization resistance.

# **7. Microbial Biomarkers and Rebiosis**

# Microbial Dysbiosis and Impending *C. Difficile* Outbreaks



Cliff, the original *C. Difficile* detection dog

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-2247688/Meet-Cliff-remarkable-super-sniffing-dog-detects-hospital-superbugs.html>

See: Bomers et al. A detection dog to identify patients with *Clostridium difficile* infection during a hospital outbreak. *J Infect.* 2014 Nov;69(5):456-61.

## **Biomarkers of the Microbiome are Already Being Sampled**



# Breathalizers Before Prescriptions?

Precision medicine should really focus on personalized patient information beginning with microbiome status.

Dietert, R. EC Pharmacology and Toxicology, 1.S1 (2015): S1-S3.-  
<https://www.ecronicon.com/ecpt/pdf/ECPT-01-000S1.pdf>

# Rebiosis is Not New

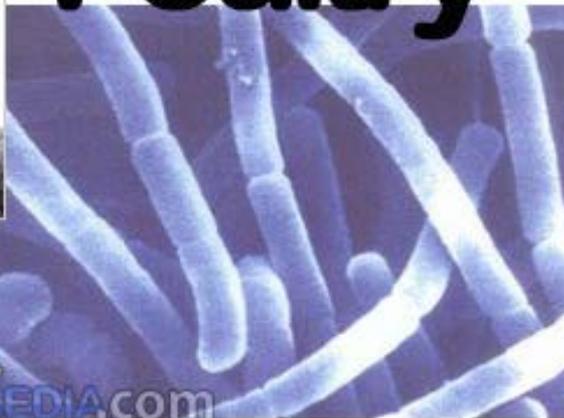
- Competitive exclusion (originally known as the Nurmi Concept) and colonization resistance against pathogens have been well known for decades.
- Used in the poultry industry since the 1970s for risk reduction of salmonellosis and to improve food safety.
- All age groups can benefit from rebiosis.
- It will be a major component of future human health maintenance and treatment of disease.

See: Dietert, R. *The Human Superorganism*, Dutton, 2016

# Using microbiota to block pathogens and reduce the risk of infections



## Poultry



### PRE {OR} PROBIOTICS?

They're both integral to a chicken's digestion and help them get more nutrients out of what they eat.



#### PREBIOTIC

Food that powers the good microbes in a chicken's gut. Supports the existing digestive bacteria.

#### PROBIOTIC

Adding probiotics means adding more beneficial bacteria to the existing population in the chicken's digestive tract.



#### FEEDING PRE & PROBIOTICS

- Supports egg production
- Supports feed efficiency
- Supports immune function
- Supports overall health of the flock



Years we've been championing pre and probiotics in poultry feed.



#### THE HEALTHY BALANCE BETWEEN GOOD & BAD BACTERIA IS EASILY DISRUPTED BY:

- Diet changes
- Extreme temps
- Dirty or lack of water
- Molting
- Transportation and handling
- Using antibiotics
- Stress (we can't stress this one enough...)

For more info on raising chickens, check out: [www.scoopfromthecoop.com](http://www.scoopfromthecoop.com)

At Nutrena®, we take the guesswork out of feeding chickens. In fact, there's over 90 years of research in every bag. So dig in! Visit [nutrenaworld.com](http://nutrenaworld.com)



Diabetes,  
Obesity  
Colitis,  
Asthma,  
Celiac disease

# Perinatal Period

From:  
Dietert and Dietert,  
*Healthcare*  
2015, 3(1), 100-129.

Diabetes, Obesity,  
Colitis, Asthma,  
Celiac disease



**Birth:**  
Vaginal  
vs.  
Cesarean



Risk of  
future  
generations  
for  
various  
immune  
dysfunction-  
promoted  
NCDs

microbiome  
adjustment  
as part of  
adult  
disease  
management

microbiome  
adjustment  
for pregnancy  
and to  
optimize  
microbiome  
seeding

healthy  
microbiome  
seeding  
plan

feeding  
the  
microbiota  
for optimized  
immune and microbial  
co-maturation

# Summary

- Failure to self-complete in the newborn may be the single greatest health risk across a lifetime. We need microbiome seeding on every birth plan and active management of our “second genome” (*i.e.*, seed, feed, protect).
- The immune system and the microbiome need to co-mature in a narrow window of development or persistent immune dysfunction and elevated risk of NCDs are likely.
- Safety needs to be based on the whole human. It is the superorganism that needs protection.
- Microbiome status is a pivotal factor in environmental health safety.
- Probiotic and prebiotic strategies offer a core component of future personalized healthcare.



# QUESTIONS



You can check out  
Alexander Fleming's  
Microbial Art  
at the link below

<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/painting-with-penicillin-alexander-flemings-germ-art-1761496/>

# *SRA 2017 Advancing the Science Webinar Series Continues:*



## *Microbiota Informing Next-Generation Risks & Benefits*

- 2. Dr. Michelle McGuire** (Washington State University), *Human Milk: Mother Nature's Prototypical Probiotic Food*, McGuire et al., 2015 (**March, TBD**)
- 3. Dr. Rodrigo Carvalho Bicalho** (Cornell University), *Bovine Milk Microbiota: Insights and Perspectives from -Omics Studies*, Addis et al., 2016 (**May, TBD**)
- 4. Anne Mendelson** (Culinary Historians of New York), *History of the Milk Wars*, Mendelson, 2011 (**July, TBD**)

A panel of microbial risk assessors will deliberate evidence of microbiota influences on risk & benefit for fresh unprocessed and pasteurized milk (**October, TBD**) prior to **exercises of analytic-deliberative process** at SRA workshop and round table panel symposium (**December 10-14, Arlington, VA**).