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Summary

The gut microbiome in IBD

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IBD | Gut Microbiota

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The gut microbiota is altered in IBD and represents a source of new treatments, particularly through live biotherapeutic products and metabolites that restore anti-inflammatory signals.

KEY POINTS

- The speaker presented evidence that the gut microbiome plays a key role in IBD pathogenesis, including studies showing that microbiome alterations precede diagnosis by several years and that colonizing mice with IBD patient microbiome increases colitis susceptibility.
- A study of approximately 800 patients at Saint-Antoine hospital showed decreased microbiome diversity in IBD, with reductions in short chain fatty acid production, bile acid transformation ability, and tryptophan metabolite (indole) production.
- Six initial FMT trials for ulcerative colitis remission induction showed mostly positive signals, with four out of six positive and effect sizes of 25 to 30 percent remission, though studies were small with high procedural heterogeneity and limited maintenance data.
- The speaker disclosed co-founding Excellium Biosciences and reported that a phase one study of Faecalibacterium prausnitzii (a depleted anti-inflammatory bacterium in IBD) was published recently, showing interesting results in Crohn's disease small intestine, with a phase two trial ongoing for postoperative recurrence prevention.
- The field is moving from FMT toward more scalable and standardized products including bacterial consortia, single strains, and metabolites such as short chain fatty acids, bile acids, and tryptophan metabolites.
- In the Q&A, the speaker expressed the view that microbiome-based therapies, being homeostatic rather than immunosuppressive, should be used primarily to maintain remission rather than induce it, and that personalized approaches based on individual microbiome profiles would make sense given the variability among patients.

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