BACTERIA: ENEMIES OR ALLIES?

A bacterium is a living microorganism made of a single cell.
Invisible to the naked eye, it is present everywhere: in the air, water, soil, on our skin… and especially in our intestines.

→ We live with them constantly.

The majority of bacteria are beneficial

Contrary to common belief, most bacteria are not dangerous.
Many are even essential to our health.

Some bacteria:

- Help digest food
- Produce vitamins
- Protect against harmful microbes
- Support the immune system

→ Without them, our bodies would function much less efficiently.

Why are they often misunderstood?

Because a **minority** of bacteria can cause infections, such as:

- Strep throat
- Urinary tract infections
- Food poisoning

→ These bacteria are the exception, not the rule.

Well-known and easily detected microorganisms

Bacteria can be observed under a microscope and are easily detected with standard tests (blood, urine, stool…).

→ Medicine therefore has effective ways to identify them and, if necessary, treat them with antibiotics.

Antibiotics: useful but to be used with caution

Antibiotics kill bacteria and are essential in some situations, but their use must be careful. However:

• They also destroy beneficial bacteria
• Overuse promotes bacterial resistance
• They do not work against viruses

→ The goal is not to eliminate all bacteria, but to maintain balance.

A question of balance

We often hear about “good” and “bad” bacteria, but the reality is more subtle.
Some bacteria are beneficial… up to a point.

In our bodies, bacteria coexist in balance and interact with the immune system.
They regulate each other.

But this balance can be disrupted by:

• Stress
• Poor diet
• Antibiotic use
• Weakened immunity

→ When this happens, some bacteria can multiply excessively and become problematic.

Example:
Escherichia coli (E. coli) normally lives in our intestines and contributes to digestive balance.
However, if it moves to the urinary tract or overgrows, it can cause an infection.

→ It’s not always the bacteria itself that’s the problem, but its quantity or location.

The microbiome: our invisible ecosystem

The microbiome is the collection of microorganisms (mainly bacteria, but also viruses, fungi, etc.) living in our body, mainly in the intestines.

Its roles include:

- Digesting food
- Producing vitamins
- Protecting against harmful microbes
- Supporting the immune system

→ It's like an internal ecosystem of good bacteria that keeps us healthy.

The intestinal microbiome is sometimes called a "second brain."
We are not alone in our bodies—we are a living ecosystem.

Maintaining bacterial balance

Health depends on balance, so we must nourish and protect beneficial bacteria.

Simple tips:

- Eat fiber-rich foods (vegetables, fruits, legumes)
- Include fermented foods (yogurt, kefir, sauerkraut…)
- Drink enough water
- Sleep well
- Reduce stress
- Avoid unnecessary antibiotics

→ A balanced microbiome = a stronger immune system.

Bacteria and immunity: a subtle alliance

The immune system doesn't work alone.
Bacteria in the microbiome:

- Train the immune system
- Help it distinguish danger from safety
- Limit colonization by harmful microbes

A disrupted microbiome can be associated with:

- More frequent infections
- Inflammation
- Digestive issues
- Certain chronic diseases

Key takeaway

Bacteria are not our enemies.
They are an integral part of the balance of life—and of our inner balance.

→ The key is not absence, but harmony.

Frequency-based approach

In a frequency-based assessment, the right question is:
“Is there an active bacterial infection?”
not:
“Is there a bacterium present?”

Joy, Love, and Harmony,
Cathy