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FECAL TRANSPLANTATION

(EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP, NJ) Our society has historically flushed bodily waste down the toilet. But now, physicians have discovered that fecal matter has amazing healing properties.

John Santoro, DO, FACG, AGAF, FACOI, gastroenterologist at Atlantic Gastroenterology Associates (AGA) here, is one of 450 physicians in the country, and the first in southern New Jersey to perform a fecal microbiota transplantation (also known as a stool transplant).

Although the procedure was mentioned in medical literature in 1958, in the last several years it has only been used sporadically.

“We’ve been reading the literature and last summer went to a lecture by New York physician, Lawrence Brandt. Dr. Brandt is professor of medicine and of surgery at Einstein Medical Center, and chief of gastroenterology at Montefiore Medical Center. He explained the procedure in detail,” says Dr. Santoro. “We performed our first procedure in October at Atlantic Regional Medial Center.”

Fecal matter from a donor (usually a relative or close friend) is tested to rule out any common blood or gut diseases, while the recipient goes through the same kind of cleansing as prep for a colonoscopy. The doctor processes the donated feces into a liquid and infuses it into the recipient’s colon via a colonoscope tube or enema.

The perfect candidate for the transplant has a chronic and potentially fatal infection of *Clostridium Difficile* (Cdiff), which is usually found in hospitalized patients. These people have been treated with antibiotics that kill the “bad” bacteria along with the “good.” The healthy microbes in a fecal “match,” balance the bacteria and kill the infection.

According to a report by CNN, “A study done in March, 2012, reported a 91% cure rate after just one fecal matter transplant and a 98% cure rate when combined with an additional round of antibiotics. That study only included the sickest of patients.”

“Our patient had been suffering with Cdiff for six months,” explains Dr. Santoro, “she was being treated with Cdiff antibiotics, but traditional therapy failed. We did the transplant and she’s cured.”

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About Dr. John Santoro, DO, FACG, AGAF, FACOI

For the past 29 years, Dr. Santoro has had the role of teacher as well as physician as Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine at the University of Medicine & Dentistry, New Jersey School of Osteopathic Medicine. He is also Director of the Hepatitis

Treatment Center at Atlantic Gastroenterology Associates in Egg Harbor Township, NJ and speaks on the subject internationally.

Dr. Santoro is an avid researcher, with over 100 clinical studies to his credit. Published in medical journals, he is a recognized leader in diagnosis and treatment of gastrointestinal disorders.

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