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Naturopathic Medicine People of 2015

by Jacob Schor, ND, FABNO

Not too long ago, while reading the Sunday paper, my wife Rena pointed out an article on human biome researcher Rob Knight and said, "Look, at Harvard they are giving people frozen poop pills instead of fecal transplants!"¹

"Duh, that ND in Portland, Mark Davis, the poop guy, is already doing that in his practice," I said.

"That figures; Mark's one brilliant guy," she responded.

I count myself lucky to know Mark Davis. Actually I count myself lucky to know quite a few naturopathic doctors who are just as interesting, people who I hold in great affection as friends and in great esteem as colleagues.

This article is a short update on what several of these doctors have been up to.

Mark Davis, ND



Let's go back to Davis, the poop guy. He is a guy who keeps himself busy; he sits on the board of the Fecal Transplant Foundation (FTF), is the chair of the Fecal Microbiota Transplantation (FMT) committee for the C Diff Foundation (<http://cdiffoundation.org>), and has just recently been added to the editorial board of the *Natural Medicine Journal*.

Davis's clinic, the Good Life Medicine Center, is an integrative medicine clinic where NDs, acupuncturists, and others work together. The clinic has an herbal apothecary, a movement studio and classroom, a hydrotherapy suite, a lab, and a herbal café in the works. (Though given his fecal specialty, I question the wisdom of the last project, though the potential advertising slogans might make it hard to resist.)

For those new to FMT, it is literally the transplantation of fecal microbiota from one person to another. Microbes are sourced from the stool of a healthy person and transplanted into a sick person. Davis became fascinated with FMT while in naturopathic medical school, but no one in Oregon was using this process at that time. He had to seek guidance from world experts in FMT, including Tom Borody, MD; Alex Khoruts, MD; and Thomas Louie, MD.

FMT helps create a healthy gut ecosystem to properly regulate the immune system. Davis is confident that FMT offers benefit for people with infectious and autoimmune colitis, inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), and irritable bowel syndrome (IBS); evidence is emerging that FMT may benefit people with MS, diabetes, metabolic syndrome, and other conditions.

Davis is the first physician in North America (as far as he knows) to have run a donor-bank driven FMT program serving people with inflammatory bowel disease. He and a small group of clinicians are performing research advancing the use of FMT through using frozen material and centrifuged/encapsulated material. He's been preparing encapsulated FMT, and frozen FMT caps since early 2014.

To me, Davis is the quintessential Portland hipster. He's got four kids, Asher, 9; Jaia, 7; and twins Isaac and Daphne, almost 3 years old, and lives in what he describes as "a somewhat intentional community with the children, their mothers, wonderful neighbors, dogs, chickens, orchards and herbs."