

STRANGE BUT TRUE

Weird but not always wonderful, these quirky health insights could benefit your wellbeing, says Helen Foster

Poo might save your life

Imagine, you go into hospital with a severe stomach upset and your doctor calls your siblings, parents, spouse or children and asks them to donate faeces which is then mixed with water and transplanted into your system via an enema.

Within 24 hours you're feeling better. It sounds gruesome, but Professor Thomas Borody from the Centre for Digestive Diseases in Sydney is just one of the doctors around the world using the technique to treat conditions caused by an infection by the superbug *Clostridium difficile* (CD).

It works because the faeces contains good bacteria that rebalances the bacterial flora "and it makes antibiotic-like molecules which eradicate the bacteria causing illness", he says. Eventually Borody would like to see it as the first line of treatment for infection with CD. "This is a serious infection. In the US, for example, 300 people a day die of it. Yet a single shot of this treatment cures 97 per cent of sufferers," he says. ●

