**Commentary**

Secretory immunoglobulin A (SIgA) is the dominant immunoglobulin in external secretions that bathe mucosal surfaces (respiratory and intestines) and is a vital component of the immune systems "first-line of defence" against pathogenic microorganisms, viruses and bacteria. The daily production is weight and age dependent with the maximum production level being reached at the age of 7-10 which then declines with age. (60+)

SIgA production is both beneficially and adversely affected by a number of diverse factors including stress, emotions such as frustration and anger, nutrients, commensals, pathogens and inflammation.

**Low Levels of SIgA**

SIgA key function is to bind to invading micro organisms and toxins and entrap them in the mucus layer or within the epithelial cells, so inhibiting microbial motility, agglutinating the organisms and neutralising their exotoxins and then assist in their harmless elimination from the body in the faecal flow. SIgA also 'tags' food as acceptable, so low SIgA leads to increased sensitivity to foods.

Several studies link stress and emotionality with levels of SIgA. Production is adversely affected by stress, which is mediated by cortisol levels. This could result in inadequate production of SIgA in response to a mucosal infection. Reduced SIgA levels may be associated with sub optimal adrenal output, in which case an adrenal stress index test would be recommended.

**High levels of SIgA**

Elevated levels in saliva are associated with an immune response to stimulation by infections and inflammatory reactions. High levels of SIgA production may indicate an infection of the digestive system, in which case a Comprehensive Stool Analysis with parasites would be recommended.