

DIGEST

Nutrient-Focused Solutions
for Digestive Healing

Why Start with the Gut?

Your Gut: The Gateway to Health

Did you know that **70%** of your immune system resides in the gut? It acts as the control center for immunity, producing key cells that protect you from illness and infection. When your gut is out of balance, your immune function can be compromised, leaving you more susceptible to disease

Gut Health and Brain Function

Your gut produces **75%** of the body's neurotransmitters, which are essential for regulating mood, energy, and mental clarity. This is why gut imbalances often lead to issues like brain fog, anxiety, or mood swings

Energy Connection

A healthy gut plays a critical role in energy production, influencing up to **40%** of your daily energy levels. The bacteria in your gut help break down food into energy-boosting nutrients, ensuring that your body functions at its best

The Gut as the Body's Control Center

Think of your gut as the international airport for all other systems in your body. When the gut lining becomes permeable (also known as **"leaky gut"**), harmful pathogens and toxins can pass through, affecting your entire body. Maintaining a healthy gut barrier is essential for keeping your body's "security guards" in place, protecting you from systemic inflammation and disease

Common Symptoms of Gut Imbalance

Gut dysbiosis happens when there's an imbalance of good and bad bacteria in your digestive system. Here are some of the most common signs that your gut might need healing:

Fatigue & Brain Fog

Your gut influences energy and cognitive function. If you're feeling constantly tired or mentally unclear, an unhealthy gut could be to blame

Mood Swings

Since the gut produces a large portion of your neurotransmitters, mood swings, anxiety, or irritability could signal gut imbalances

Food Intolerances

Experiencing discomfort with foods that never used to be a problem? Gut imbalances can cause new sensitivities, making your body react to familiar foods in unexpected ways

Joint Pain & Inflammation

Gut imbalances can lead to systemic inflammation, which may show up as unexplained joint pain or stiffness

Bloating

Frequent discomfort or bloating after eating could mean your gut bacteria are out of balance and struggling to break down food properly

Triggers: What Impacts Intestinal Permeability?

Poor Diet

A diet high in processed foods, refined sugars, and unhealthy fats can weaken the gut lining and promote inflammation.

Nutrient Deficiencies

Lack of essential nutrients like zinc, glutamine, and omega-3s can prevent the gut lining from repairing itself.

Stress

Chronic stress increases cortisol levels, which weakens the gut barrier and contributes to gut permeability.

Medications

Long-term use of medications such as NSAIDs, antibiotics, and acid blockers can erode the gut lining over time.

Low Stomach Acid

Low levels of stomach acid can lead to undigested food particles that irritate the gut lining and promote bacterial overgrowth.

Toxic Exposure

Toxins from pesticides, industrial chemicals, and household products can damage the gut barrier and increase permeability.

Infection/Dysbiosis

Imbalances in gut bacteria (dysbiosis), or infections like Candida or parasites, can break down the gut lining and trigger inflammation.

Food Allergies & Sensitivities

Undiagnosed food sensitivities or allergies can cause ongoing inflammation and damage to the gut lining.

How These Triggers Harm Gut Health

When the gut barrier weakens, harmful substances pass through, causing inflammation, autoimmune conditions, and other health problems.

Quick Tip:

Prioritize whole foods, manage stress, and supplement with nutrients like zinc and glutamine to protect the gut barrier.

Factors with a Bidirectional Effect on Gut Health

Gut health doesn't operate in isolation—many factors influence, and are influenced by, the state of your gut. Here are some key factors that have a two-way relationship with gut health:

Diet

A poor diet, high in processed foods and sugars, negatively impacts gut health. Conversely, an unhealthy gut can lead to cravings for unhealthy foods.

Mental & Emotional Health

Stress and emotional well-being directly affect gut function via the gut-brain axis. Similarly, gut imbalances can lead to mood swings, anxiety, and depression.

Stress Management

Chronic stress weakens the gut lining and increases gut permeability, while an unhealthy gut can exacerbate feelings of stress.

Sleep

Poor sleep negatively affects the composition of gut bacteria, and gut issues like bloating or discomfort can lead to sleep disturbances.

Exercise

While regular exercise supports gut health, overtraining can increase gut permeability, leading to inflammation.

How These Factors Interact with Your Gut

The connection between the gut and other systems is bidirectional—what affects your gut also affects your mental and physical health, and vice versa. Addressing these factors can help improve both gut health and overall wellness.

Quick Tip:

Balance your gut and lifestyle by prioritizing whole foods, managing stress, and maintaining a consistent sleep and exercise routine.

Getting Started:

Organize Your Kitchen Space

Creating a kitchen that supports gut health starts with a few simple strategies. Here's how to set yourself up for success:

- **Focus on Whole, Real Foods**

Keep fresh fruits, vegetables, high-quality proteins, and healthy fats easily accessible. The key is to stock your kitchen with foods that are as close to their natural state as possible.

- **Check Labels Carefully**

If you don't recognize or can't pronounce an ingredient, it's best to avoid it. Focus on foods with simple, recognizable ingredients that nourish your gut

- **Replace Inflammatory Ingredients**

Eliminate common inflammatory foods like refined sugars, processed oils, and artificial additives. Choose natural, whole-food alternatives that support gut health.

- **Make Healthy Foods the Easiest Option**

Arrange nutrient-dense foods like fresh produce, proteins, and healthy snacks in visible, easily accessible spots in your fridge and pantry.

- **Prioritize Variety and Color**

Aim to fill your fridge with a range of colorful vegetables and fruits to ensure a diverse intake of nutrients that support gut health.

Why an Organized Kitchen Matters for Gut Health

An organized kitchen makes it easier to choose healthy options, helping you maintain better eating habits that support long-term gut health.

Quick Tip:

Store prepped meals and snacks in clear glass containers for quick access to healthy choices throughout the week.

Prioritize:

- **Diverse, Nutrient-Rich Foods:** Focus on a variety of fruits and vegetables that are rich in nutrients, which provide essential support for gut health.
- **Healthy Fats:** Include fats like olive oil, avocado, and fatty fish, which help reduce inflammation and promote healing.
- **Probiotics & Prebiotics:** Add in fermented foods and fiber-rich vegetables that promote a balanced gut microbiome.
- **Hydration:** Ensure adequate water intake to support digestion and help eliminate waste.
- **Healing Nutrients:** Incorporate foods like bone broth, leafy greens, and wild-caught fish, which provide the nutrients your gut needs to function optimally.

Minimize:

- **Highly Processed Foods:** Reduce consumption of processed foods with artificial additives that can disrupt digestion and gut balance.
- **Artificial Ingredients:** Avoid artificial sweeteners, colors, and preservatives, as they can negatively affect gut health and overall wellness.
- **Added Sugars:** Limit added sugars, often hidden in packaged foods, which contribute to inflammation and gut imbalance.
- **Diet Products:** Be cautious of products labeled "low-fat" or "zero-calorie," as they often contain harmful artificial ingredients.
- **Synthetic Ingredients:** Stick to whole, naturally grown options rather than heavily processed or synthetic products that offer little nutritional value.

Probiotics, Prebiotics, & Fiber

Probiotics

- **What are they?**

- Live beneficial bacteria that help maintain a healthy balance in your gut microbiome, supporting digestion and immunity.

Dietary Sources: Fermented foods like kimchi, kefir, miso, natto, and raw milk

Prebiotics

- **What are they?**

- Non-digestible fibers that fuel beneficial gut bacteria, helping to support a healthy intestinal environment and boost immune function.

Dietary Sources: Chicory root, Jerusalem artichokes, garlic, onions, leeks, oats, dandelion greens, inulin

Fiber

- **Types:** *Soluble and Insoluble*

- **Why it's important:** Adequate fiber intake (30-50g/day) supports digestive health, blood sugar balance, and toxin elimination. Different types of fiber help bind and remove toxins and promote regular bowel movements.

Dietary Sources: Oat bran, lentils, berries, flaxseed, chia seed, psyllium, beans, citrus fruits, and root vegetables

Suggested Supplements for Digestive Health

These supplements can help support digestion and gut healing while you make long-term lifestyle and dietary changes

Digestive Support

- **Betaine HCl:** Supports stomach acid production for better digestion.
- **Digestive Enzymes:** Helps break down food and absorb nutrients more efficiently
- **Ox bile:** Aids in fat digestion and nutrient absorption
- **Bitters:** (*dandelion, artichoke leaf, chicory, milk thistle*) : Stimulates digestion and bile production

Healing and Sealing

- **L-glutamine & L-arginine:** Supports gut lining repair and reduces inflammation
- **Aloe Vera:** Soothes and repairs the gut lining
- **Omega-3s:** Helps reduce inflammation and supports overall gut health
- **Antioxidants:** (zinc, vitamin C, tocopherols): Protects cells from damage and promotes healing

Re-balancing

- **Probiotics:** Restores the balance of healthy bacteria in the gut
- **Prebiotics:** Feeds the good bacteria to help them thrive
- **Soluble Fiber:** Promotes smooth digestion and helps regulate bowel movements
- **Insoluble Fiber:** Supports regular digestion and keeps the digestive system running efficiently

5 KEY STEPS TO COMPLETE DIGESTIVE HEALING:

1. Identify and Remove Triggers: Address dietary, lifestyle, and emotional stressors that negatively impact gut health

2. Heal and Seal the Gut Lining: Focus on nourishing and rebuilding the integrity of the gut lining with supportive nutrient

3. Nourish Beneficial Bacteria: Feed the "good" gut bacteria while reducing the growth of harmful microbes that can lead to imbalance

4. Reduce and Balance Inflammation: Implement strategies to manage inflammation and support a healthy immune response in the gut

5. Support Holistic Gut Health: Address all lifestyle factors, including sleep, exercise, and stress management, to optimize overall gut function

The 5R Approach

- **Remove**: Eliminate the factors harming your gut—things like processed foods, allergens, and bad bacteria. This step helps create the foundation for healing
 - ***Tip***: An elimination diet can help identify which foods are causing issues, while herbs like oregano and berberine can help clear harmful bacteria
- **Replace**: Support your digestion by adding back what's missing—like digestive enzymes and stomach acid. These help your body absorb nutrients more effectively
 - ***Tip***: Supplementing with digestive enzymes or HCl can aid in smoother digestion and nutrient absorption
- **Reinoculate**: Restore the balance in your gut by introducing beneficial bacteria through probiotics and feeding them with prebiotic-rich foods
 - ***Tip***: Foods like sauerkraut, kefir, or a probiotic supplement can help increase beneficial bacteria in your gut
- **Repair**: Nourish and strengthen your gut lining with essential nutrients like L-glutamine, zinc, and omega-3s, which support the body's natural healing process
 - ***Tip***: Bone broth, zinc-rich foods, and L-glutamine supplements can help repair the gut lining
- **Rebalance**: Maintain your gut health long-term by focusing on lifestyle factors like stress reduction, adequate sleep, and regular exercise
 - ***Tip***: Practices like meditation, daily movement, and prioritizing sleep support gut health in the long run.