

What Your Body Has Been Trying To Tell You



BY SARAH HOOPER

Contents

The Gut-Brain-Immune
Connection 1

Baseline Nutrition and the
Role of Protein 2

How Your Gut Microbiome
Influences Everything 3

How I Work and What to
Expect 4

About Me 5



01 The Gut-Brain-Immune Connection

Your body works as an interconnected system. The gut, brain, and immune system are in constant communication, influencing each other in ways that directly affect how you feel, think, sleep, digest, and respond to stress. When one of these systems is out of balance, the others can also begin to struggle.

Your gut is often called the second brain for good reason. It houses its own nervous system, known as the enteric nervous system, and contains more than 100 million neurons. These neurons talk to your brain using neurotransmitters, the same chemical messengers that affect your mood and focus. In fact, the majority of your body's serotonin is produced in the gut. When the gut is not functioning well, it can send distress signals to the brain, contributing to anxiety, low mood, irritability, poor concentration, and fatigue.



.The immune system is also deeply tied to gut health. Around 70 percent of your immune cells live in the lining of your digestive tract. The balance of bacteria, fungi, viruses, and immune messengers here forms the foundation of your resilience. A disrupted or inflamed gut can lead to an overactive or confused immune response, often seen in conditions like food sensitivities, eczema, autoimmunity, and chronic inflammation.

When the gut is inflamed or imbalanced, it can also become more permeable. This is sometimes referred to as intestinal permeability. When this happens, substances that would normally stay within the gut can pass through into the bloodstream, triggering immune activation, systemic inflammation, and stress hormone release. Over time, this can impact mood, hormone regulation, nutrient absorption, and more.

Understanding these connections can help make sense of a wide range of symptoms that might otherwise feel disconnected. In my practice, I look at the story your body is telling across these systems.



02

Baseline Nutrition and the Role of *Protein*



Nourishment is foundational. As a naturopath, one of my roles is to help identify and correct underlying nutrient deficiencies that may be affecting your energy, mood, digestion, and overall wellbeing. In this guide, we are going to start with one of the most important and often overlooked building blocks: protein.

Protein provides the amino acids your body uses to build important neurotransmitters like serotonin, dopamine, and GABA. Without enough of these raw materials, it becomes harder to feel like yourself. You may experience more mood swings, more anxiety, or a lack of drive and joy.

When your diet is low in protein, or when blood sugar levels are spiking and crashing due to too much processed food, your brain and nervous system suffer. Prioritising protein-rich meals, good fats, and gentle fibre throughout the day helps your body regulate and build the chemistry it needs to function well.



03

How Your Gut Microbiome Influences Everything

“

The gut microbiome is not just a collection of bacteria. It is a dynamic ecosystem that speaks to the brain, regulates the immune system, and influences how we think, feel, and function every day.

-Sarah Hooper, The Neurodivergent Naturopath

Your gut microbiome is a vibrant internal ecosystem made up of trillions of microorganisms. These microbes live in your digestive tract and play an essential role in your health. A well-balanced microbiome helps regulate digestion, calm inflammation, support your immune system, and even influence your mood and brain function.

I know I mentioned a little about neurotransmitters before, but some species of gut bacteria produce or influence important brain chemicals such as serotonin, dopamine, and GABA. These chemicals affect how you feel, how you sleep, how focused you are, and even how you respond to stress. Your gut bacteria also help break down hormones, support detoxification, and maintain the integrity of your gut lining.

When your microbiome is in balance, it works quietly in the background to support your entire body. But when it becomes disrupted by stress, diet, illness, medications, or environmental triggers, things can begin to unravel. You may notice symptoms like brain fog, fatigue, poor mood, bloating, constipation, food sensitivities, or skin issues. This imbalance is often referred to as dysbiosis, and it can lead to low-grade inflammation and a ripple effect through your whole system.

The gut is also home to a large portion of your immune system. Around seventy percent of your immune cells are located in or near your gut lining. These immune cells constantly communicate with your gut bacteria to decide what to tolerate and what to fight. A healthy microbiome helps keep this system calm and wise. When it is out of balance, your immune system may become reactive or sluggish, which can show up as allergies, frequent infections, or autoimmune-type symptoms.

From a naturopathic perspective, the gut is often the place we begin when looking at the root causes of imbalance. Together, we explore what your gut might be trying to tell you. We look at stress, sleep, food choices, medications, and your health history. If needed, we can use functional testing to explore your microbial diversity and support it with herbs, foods, and lifestyle strategies tailored to your body.

What to Expect When Working With Me

Reaching out for support is a meaningful step, and I want you to feel cared for and truly seen. As a naturopath and counsellor, I work holistically to help you understand the messages your body is sending. Together, we gently explore your health story and begin building a clear, supportive path forward.

In your initial consultation, we take our time. I ask about your current concerns, your energy, digestion, sleep, mood, immune system, hormone patterns, and anything else that feels relevant. I also listen for the threads that connect these experiences, because symptoms rarely occur in isolation. Your story is an integral piece of the puzzle.

If needed, I may suggest functional testing to look deeper into areas like your gut microbiome, nutrient levels, or hormone balance. I combine these insights with evidence-based naturopathic care to create a plan that feels realistic, empowering, and individualised.

Your treatment plan may include nutritional strategies, herbal medicines, lifestyle changes, gentle nervous system support, and practical tools to help you feel better in your body. This is not about quick fixes. It is about tuning into your body's cues and supporting it in a sustainable way.

All sessions are currently online, so you can access care from the comfort of your own space. My approach is gentle but thorough, and my clients often describe feeling relieved, validated, and hopeful after our first session together.

About Me



Founder of The Neurodivergent Naturopath.

Hi, I'm Sarah Hooper, I believe that healing happens when families feel truly seen, supported, and safe to explore what's happening beneath the surface.

As a bachelor trained naturopath and counsellor I specialise in working with neurodivergent children and the families who love them. My practice blends science and soul. By using functional testing, nutritional biochemistry, and an understanding of the gut-brain-immune connection to uncover the real story behind symptoms.

Over the years, I've supported children with anxiety, sensory feeding challenges, eczema, immune overload, digestive issues, and more. But I don't just look at what's going wrong. I look for what's underneath. What makes sense in the context of your child's body, brain, and environment. What supports their unique nervous system, and what empowers you as a parent or carer.

I don't offer quick fixes. I offer care that listens. Plans that respect your child's individuality. Support that walks beside you every step of the way.

Sarah xo