

# 6 Simple Things You Can Do Today To Help Repair Your Gut

Current food intolerances, and the development of new ones, are directly tied to the health of your gut. In addition to figuring out which foods and chemicals that you're currently intolerant to, it's critical to understand the role of the gut and the impact of your actions on its health.

## Guard the Castle

The gut is the gatekeeper of the body. Imagine a castle... the surrounding walls, gate, and guards would all have the same job. Remember in movies when the castle walls or gates are breached by the enemy? It always means big trouble for the castle, the same is true of our bodies when the gut is breached.

We have more interaction and direct impact over the health of our gut than we do with any other organ or system in our body, so let's get to know it a bit.

The castle wall of our gut is just one cell layer thin, as big as a tennis court, and covered in sewage. With over 100 million neurons and more neurotransmitters than the brain, the gut is considered our second brain, and works nearly independent of our first brain. In addition to being a complex chemistry microlab, it's also home to trillions of beneficial bacteria, and the focus of more than 70% of the body's immune system.

If you ask most people to give you symptoms of gut problems, they would say diarrhea, constipation, and gas to name a disgusting few. What you might not hear, but should, would be things like rashes, acne, dementia, arthritis, chronic fatigue, autoimmune disease, and yes... food intolerances.

## How did our guts become unhealthy in the first place?

Whether you believe in evolution or creation, you know that our genetics, and therefore our digestive system, has probably changed very little in the last 2,000 years. Our diet and lifestyle on the other hand, has changed dramatically.

- Less fiber
- More sugar
- More stress
- More wheat
- Medications
- Food additives
- GMO Foods

- Pesticides/Herbicides
- Antibiotics (directly & in the foods we eat)

What can you do TODAY to show your gut that you care?

## 1. Gluten

### **Plan: Cut Gluten Out Of Your Diet Completely For 30 Days**

If you are thinking about being tested for Celiac Disease, then get tested before you remove gluten since the test, or part of the test, will rely on exposure to gluten. If you don't plan on being tested for Celiac Disease anytime soon, then remove wheat, barley, and rye from your diet for 30 days... completely.

Gluten intolerance may affect up to 15% of Americans and even if you're not sensitive to gluten, it will still increase your intestinal permeability. Permea-who? The more permeable your gut is, the more unwanted stuff gets through and into your body.

Remember our castle wall is just one cell thick? Imagine the bricks in our castle wall laying tightly side-by-side and locked together like lego pieces. The epithelial cells of the gut lock together in much the same way and the locked spaces between the cells are called tight junctions.

Gliadin, a component of gluten, activates a protein called zonulin. The zonulin unlocks the tight junctions and allows the gliadin and other large molecules to pass between the cells and into our bodies. For people with celiac disease, the tight junctions seem to get stuck open longer. A great study from 2006 showed that gliadin activated zonulin, which increased intestinal permeability, even for those who did not have a gluten intolerance.

## 2. Probiotics & Fermented Foods

### **Plan: Take a 10+ billion probiotic and ferment your first batch of sauerkraut**

The gut has its own ecosystem that relies on friendly bacteria in variety of ways. These friendly bacteria (probiotics) produce vitamins, stimulate the immune system, ferment fiber, breakdown toxins, regulate hormones, and crowd out harmful bacteria and yeast.

We're not talking about a few bacteria doing a small job, we're talking about 500 species totalling 100 trillion or 10 times the amount of cells we have in our body. When this ecosystem is out of balance, we have big problems.

Taking antibiotics, or consuming meat and dairy from animals that have been given antibiotics, can reduce our probiotic population. Other things that can throw off the microbial balance in the gut include a yeast overgrowth, the overuse of NSAIDS (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) like aspirin and advil, exposure to molds, heavy metals, and low fiber.

Find a few good probiotics supplements with 10+ billion per serving and rotate them throughout the year.

Start fermenting your own food! It's cheap, much easier than you might think, FUN, and fermented foods are packed with good bacteria. \*\*\*We'll be sending you a follow-up article on fermentation in about 2 weeks.\*\*\*

### 3. Fiber

**Plan: Eat 25-40 grams of fiber per day**

The best place to get more fiber is from whole foods. Whole grains (not wheat, barley, & rye), nuts, beans, and vegetables all contain the fiber you're after along with a host of other nutrients.

Fiber comes in two forms, soluble and insoluble, and both play important roles in gut health. Insoluble fiber keeps things moving, while soluble fiber shuttles toxins and cholesterol out of the body and provides a food source for our friendly bacteria.

Don't get hung up on how much of each, just be sure to include a nice variety of high fiber foods in your diet. Psyllium is a popular fiber supplement that is cheap and contains both types of fiber, but can be hard for some to tolerate. Acacia is a soluble fiber supplement that is very well tolerated, and might be more suitable for people with existing issues like IBS.

Remember to drink plenty of water each day. Fiber and water go hand in hand.

### 4. Sugar

**Plan: Remove all refined sugars from your diet for 30 days**

In the 1700's, the average person ate between 4-7 pounds of sugar in a year, and now we are up to 150 pounds per person each year! That's 5 to 9 grams per day compared to 187 grams. How can we expect our bodies and our digestive systems to tolerate that amount of change? While this amount of sugar is harming us in a variety of ways, this paper is focused on the gut.

Yes, we love our sugar! Do you know what else loves sugar? Yeast loves sugar. Yeast feeds and thrives on the same sugar we love to eat. This allows the yeast to occupy more than their share of gut space, leaving less room for our friendly bacteria... not to mention causing yeast related health issues of their own.

Reduce the sugar, starve the yeast.

## 5. Reduce Your Stress

**Plan: Meditate 10 minutes per day for 30 days.**

Our second brain is extraordinarily sensitive to stress. When a tiger is chasing us, it's imperative that the body slows or shuts down digestion. It's an 'all hands on deck' situation for survival. However, when the body uses that same wiring to handle chronic stress, we have problems.

The stress-gut connection is so important and involved, that we could fill pages discussing just the hows and whys, but let's skip right to the whats... intestinal permeability (what gets through the lining), gut motility (how well muscles mix and move contents), visceral sensitivity (increased stomach or intestinal pain), gastric secretions, and mucosal blood flow. Stress related issues can have a compounding effect. For example, toxins can build-up when things aren't moving and more readily make their way through a compromised gut lining.

Research has discovered (we should say "confirmed") that even small amounts of daily meditation can reduce stress and a whole lot more. Meditation positively affects gene expression, cellular aging, and physically change the brain by increasing areas associated with learning, memory, emotion regulation, perspective, compassion, and sense of self... and decreasing the area associated with stress.

Mediation is not just for monks and hippies, and there are many ways to do it. If you spend some time on youtube, you will find a variety of helpful videos... just find one that works for you.

Here are a few tips and a couple suggested videos

- Choose a time and space where you won't be interrupted.
- Sit in a chair with your feet flat on the floor and hands in your lap, or sit on the floor with your legs crossed. Either way, sit with your back straight.
- Use a timer, so you don't have the urge to keep looking at a clock.

- Observe your breath, but don't try to control it.
- When your mind wanders, just be aware of it and guide it back to your breath, mantra, or whatever intended focus is.
- Don't try too hard! This is key! Your mind will wander again and again and again. It's completely normal and you will still get the benefits. Meditation is NOT pass/fail.
- Don't have any expectations.

<http://www.doctoroz.com/videos/deepak-chopra-meditation>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yMz\\_UagXkFk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yMz_UagXkFk)

## 6. Supplement Omega-3, Glutamine, and Digestive Enzymes

**Plan: omega-3 2,000mg/day, glutamine 5 grams/day, and a broad spectrum digestive enzyme before each meal.\*\***

Omega-3 fatty acids work directly with the anti-inflammatory pathways of the body. The omega-3 called EPA competes with the pro-inflammatory omega-6 oil, AA (arachidonic acid). Both the pro-inflammatory and anti-inflammatory pathways use the same 3 enzymes (COX-1, COX-2, and LOX) to convert either EPA or AA. In addition to competing for the attention of those enzymes, the two fatty acids also compete for storage space in the cells.

The average American has two problems in the essential fatty acid department. They are not consuming enough omega-3 and they take in far too much omega-6, usually in the form of corn or sunflower oil.

Glutamine is an amino acid that is extremely important when it comes to gut repair. This is no one trick pony. Glutamine helps with cell division and volume, it's an antioxidant which acts to protect and coat cell walls, improves water absorption in the gut, and seems to increase the amount of nutrients absorbed from food. Many health experts recommend up to 30 or 40 grams per day, but you should of course consult your health professional.

There are several reasons why digestive enzyme levels can drop below optimal levels, for example we typically lose about 1/3 of our ability to produce digestive enzymes by age 40. Taking a broad spectrum digestive enzyme will help ensure food is broken down way nature intended. We don't want partially digested food making it's way into our bodies and partially digested food is, well... partially digested and the nutrients are not absorbed.

## Summary

Your gut is AMAZING! Your gut directly and indirectly affects your health and well-being in a multitude of ways. Your actions have an enormous impact on the health of your gut, and therefore your life.

Taking a few easy steps to improve the health of your gut can make all the difference. Get started today and good luck!!! After you talk to your doctor of course.

## Disclaimer

\*\*Statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This information is meant only for educational purposes; it is recommended to consult your doctor before starting any new supplements, or changing your health regime or lifestyle.