

# 8 WAYS TO CURE AN UNHEALTHY GUT & RESTORE TO OPTIMUM GUT HEALTH



Is your gut healthy? If not how would you know? This guide has the latest secrets to help cure your gut so you can Get Well, Be Well and Live Well.

In the past, gut health has been taboo in Western medicine where historically the intestine has been considered simply, in functional terms, a digestive system.<sup>1</sup> This contrasts with Asian medicine that has long respected the gut as a key organ in good health. But with more people in the Western world suffering from gastrointestinal (GI) tract issues and associated chronic pain and undernourishment, the importance of gut health to overall health is now more widely researched and acknowledged.

Having spent over twenty years researching obesity and how our brain controls food intake, University of Cambridge geneticist and principal researcher Dr. Giles Yeo is an expert on the gut. "Our gut is so much more than just a simple 'food to poop' tube," says Dr. Yeo about this complex organ often called the

'second brain'.<sup>2</sup> Covered in a mesh of nerves and containing trillions of bacteria, the gut plays a crucial role in our immune function. The gut also regulates metabolism, blood sugar levels, and food intake by releasing hormones that tell our brain how much food we have eaten and when we are full. The longer food takes to digest, the further it passes down the GI tract, which triggers the satiety message to the brain.

The human gut microbiota refers to all the bacteria contained in the gastrointestinal tract (GIT). While some bacteria are harmful, good bacteria assist your immune system, food digestion, nutrient absorption, hormone balance, inflammation control, and disease resistance. Keeping the right balance between 'good' and 'bad' microbes can be tricky when aspects of everyday life can deplete your good microorganisms. Highly processed food, antibiotics (both prescribed and in our food supply), hygiene habits, exposure to healthy air and sunshine, environmental toxins, and chronic stress all affect the health of our gut.

When you have an imbalance between good and bad bacteria, you might suffer from stomach conditions such as irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). Scientists also think imbalances are linked to autism, anxiety, depression, and chronic pain. Specific types of gut bacteria are linked to cholesterol build-up in your blood vessels and to chronic kidney disease.

## WHAT ARE THE MAIN SYMPTOMS OF AN UNHEALTHY GUT?



### 1. Upset stomach

A healthy digestive system processes the food we eat, absorbs nutrients and eliminates waste efficiently without causing pain. So, if you have the

following symptoms, an unhealthy system could be the cause:

- constipation or diarrhea
- lower abdominal pain relieved by passing stool or gas
- hard, dry or small stool
- foul-smelling gas or offensive breath
- a sense of fullness during a meal or the feeling your bowels don't empty completely.



### 2. Unexplained weight gain or weight loss

An imbalance of good and bad bacteria can affect your body's

ability to absorb nutrients, regulate blood sugar, and store fat. An unhealthy gut can affect metabolism as well as the messages of hunger or satiety sent from gut to brain that guide our appetite. Weight gain may be caused by insulin or leptin resistance (leptin is the satiety hormone) or by overeating driven by reduced nutrient absorption. Even when we're eating enough food, we can still be undernourished. A diet of highly processed foods may meet or exceed our energy (calorie) requirements but not our nutritional needs for normal body functions.



### 3. Sleep issues and chronic fatigue

An unhealthy gut may be a factor in sleep problems such as insomnia or poor-quality sleep, which can cause chronic fatigue. Did you know that our gut produces 70% of the neurotransmitter serotonin, the chemical that regulates mood and plays an important role in sleep? Not just a poop tube indeed!



### 4. Mood changes

If you suffer with mood changes and there seems to be no obvious reason, an unhealthy gut could be the problem. In his book *The Inflamed Mind*, Cambridge University neuroscientist and neuropsychiatrist Professor Edward Bullmore discusses the link between the immune system response of physical inflammation and mental health problems such as depression and anxiety. In the past, medicine has been strongly influenced by the notion that mind and body are separated by the blood-brain barrier. But now, scientists know that inflammation in the body can cross the blood-brain barrier. They know our gut microbiome can influence health through the brain-gut-microbiome axis.<sup>4</sup> So, maybe your mood is affected by an inflamed gut and not just a matter of the mind.



### 5. Food intolerances

Unlike food allergies, which involve an immune system response to trigger foods, food intolerances are characterized by difficulty in digesting certain foods. Lack of diversity in gut bacteria may cause food

intolerances, recognized by symptoms of bloating, gas, acid reflux, nausea, abdominal pain, and diarrhea when trigger foods are eaten.

## HOW CAN YOU RESTORE YOUR GUT TO OPTIMUM HEALTH? AT INTEGRATED WELLNESS WE SUGGEST THESE 8 WAYS TO CURE YOUR UNHEALTHY GUT.



### 1. Drink water to stay hydrated

Up to 60% of your body weight is made up of water, making hydration vital to good health. Water is used in metabolic processes and in the

circulatory system to supply nutrients and energy for these metabolic processes. Water flushes your digestive system, helps prevent constipation and makes it easier for your liver to filter toxins.

Research also shows water can help keep your weight in a healthy range. Those hunger pangs might not be hunger at all – you might just be thirsty. Remember too that by the time you feel thirsty, you're already dehydrated. Drinking caffeinated drinks triggers more trips to the bathroom, so you lose valuable water from your body.

Water is even more important before, during and after exercise. The amount of water you need depends on your metabolism, exercise intensity, and sweat rate, as well as temperature conditions. Fortunately, North American tap water contains calcium, magnesium, and sodium that your body needs. But tap water also contains contaminants, some added like chlorine and fluoride and others naturally occurring. A high-quality water filter, that is not reverse osmosis, can remedy this problem.

Remember also that the best time to drink is in between meals, not during meals. Too much water or ice water will interfere with your digestion and reduce your ability to break down the foods for absorption.



### 2. Make time for sleep

Sleep is more than a well-deserved rest at the end of a long day. While we sleep, our body carries out cell repairs and growth. Sleep is also important to gut health. A study published in the journal PLOS One looked at the relationship between sleep deprivation and gut health.<sup>5</sup> Researchers found that microbiome diversity was positively linked with increased sleep efficiency and total sleep time, and negatively affected by waking up during sleep. Research suggests it could be a two-way process with sleep having a beneficial effect on gut biodiversity and, in turn, gut health helping us sleep better.

The National Sleep Foundation recommends 7 to 9 hours of sleep for adults (7 to 8 hours if you're over 65), preferably going to bed before midnight to take advantage of the peak levels of melatonin, the hormone our body produces to help us sleep.<sup>6</sup> Try to avoid screen use for two hours before bedtime and use a warm light setting after dark. Reducing caffeine consumption, especially in the evening, and having a regular sleep routine can also improve sleep quality.



### 3. Reduce daily stress

While our stress response prepares us for danger, chronic stress induced by modern lifestyles is a constant state of red alert that can affect mental health and the gut microbiome. The gut lining can also be damaged, allowing harmful substances to leak into your bloodstream. In a symbiotic process, restoring gut bacteria through dietary changes and nutritional supplements, including probiotics and prebiotics, helps keep levels of the 'stress hormone' cortisol in check. Increasing your activity level promotes more diverse gut bacteria and helps alleviate stress. Alternatively, try meditation, yoga, socializing with family and friends, or nature walks.



#### 4. Avoid highly processed foods

Less than 20% of Americans consume a healthful diet, which should include multiple daily servings of vegetables and fruits along with lean protein sources. Most Americans now consume most of their calories from processed foods, with the consequence that more than one-third of adults in the U.S. are classified as obese.<sup>3</sup> Highly processed foods decrease good gut bacteria. A diet high in added sugars can decrease the good microbes in your gut and increase the bad. This imbalance can cause sugar cravings, which can damage your gut further. Highly processed foods are also low in the vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants your body needs to function properly, and low in fiber, which feeds good gut bacteria, helps us feel full, and helps bowel function. Highly processed foods increase the risk of disease. Highly processed foods contain sugar, salt, saturated fat and trans-fat, which increase our risk of obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and some cancers.

Some sugars are easy to detect – the refined sugar in table sugar, fizzy drinks, and sweet cakes, for example, or the fructose in canned fruits and processed and pasteurized fruit juices. Less obvious sugars include simple carbohydrates such as white flour, bread, pasta, and most crackers. These foods are quickly digested resulting in a surge in blood sugar and insulin response that over time can lead to insulin resistance, type-2 diabetes, weight gain, and obesity. High amounts of refined sugars such as high-fructose corn syrup have also been linked to increased inflammation in the body and chronic diseases.

Processed meats that are cured, smoked, salted, and fermented have been classified as carcinogenic by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), the cancer agency of the World Health Organization.<sup>7</sup>

These meats include hot dogs, ham, bacon, sausages, and most lunch meat.

Highly processed foods contain harmful artificial ingredients for long shelf life and appealing taste, highly processed foods contain artificial preservatives, colorings, and flavorings. Our bodies don't need unpronounceable chemicals or high-fructose corn syrup, maltodextrin, and all the other unrecognizable corn derivatives that are mostly GMO. The longer the ingredients list, the more removed the food is from nature.

The World Gastroenterology Organisation (WGO) promotes awareness of the worldwide prevalence and optimal care of gastrointestinal and liver disorders. While many people believe their diet is causing their symptoms, especially those who suffer with GI issues, medical practitioners often lack relevant knowledge on diet and nutrition to be able to help. The WGO says symptoms can be treated with dietary changes and provides a guide, [Diet and the Gut](#), for health providers. A nutritionist or dietician can assess an individual's nutritional status and create a dietary plan that avoids nutritional deficiencies.<sup>9</sup>

To help people make healthy dietary choices, nutrition experts at the Harvard School of Public Health have created a Healthy Eating Plate based on a whole food, plant-based diet with reduced meat and dairy consumption.<sup>8</sup> Results from the ongoing American Gut Project that analyzes stool samples suggest that a more diverse plant-based diet makes for a more bacterially diverse gut.<sup>11</sup>



#### 5. Take prebiotics or probiotics

Including prebiotic and probiotic foods or supplements in your diet can improve gut health by helping your good bacteria

multiply. Like your good gut bacteria, probiotics are live organisms. They help maintain or restore balance in the gut microbiota and may boost your immune system. In some studies, probiotics show potential in fighting colorectal cancer. Fermented foods such as yogurt, tempeh, miso, kimchi, sauerkraut, and kefir are useful dietary sources of probiotics.

Prebiotics provide “food” for probiotics, helping to maximize the growth of these helpful bacteria. Dietary sources of prebiotics are found in bananas, onions, garlic, leeks, asparagus, artichokes, and soybeans as well as whole grain foods. Be careful to use organically grown and non-GMO foods to avoid harmful damaging chemicals.

Supplements may be easier to take than specific foods but make sure you take a beneficial, high-quality supplement recommended by a qualified healthcare provider. On the topic of ‘biotics’, avoid antibiotics where there is an alternative effective treatment – antibiotics kill good bacteria as well as bad. Integrated Wellness provides a variety of supplements including prebiotics and probiotics that will help you get started on your healing path. [Call 801-292-9355](tel:801-292-9355) or click [HERE](#) to schedule a consultation and order a blood analysis to find out what vitamins are best for you to start taking right away.



### **6. Start a customized nutrition plan or detox**

With so much advice available on what foods to eat for good health, it can be confusing to know what to do for the best.

You may wonder if there’s such a thing as a superfood or what foods can help you feel more energized. Is a plant-based diet right for you? Who needs a low FODMAP diet? Do you suffer from food intolerance or the effects of too much sugar? How can you find out what foods to cut from your diet and what foods to include?

A qualified nutritionist can create a customized nutrition plan based on your health symptoms, medication, current diet, and blood analysis. Diets such as the Mediterranean diet are commonly known to have health benefits, but environmental and genetic factors affect our hormone levels and how we process food. Everyone is different, which is why a nutrition plan needs to consider your individual health criteria, lifestyle, genes, and microbiome.

While the liver is the body’s frontline detox organ, the microbiome plays an important role in detox as well. Modern lifestyles can overload these incredible purifiers. A build-up of mercury, lead and aluminum has been linked to heart disease, thyroid problems, breast cancer, and neurological problems, including Alzheimer’s disease and autism. Your body is exposed to toxins daily through antiperspirants, body sprays, hair perms and colors, pesticides, dental fillings, and even foods – fish absorb heavy metal and chemical pollutants in rivers and oceans. While acute aluminum poisoning is rare, research highlights chronic toxicity as a potential risk.<sup>10</sup> A detox program can support your liver and microbiome. Integrated Wellness offers a variety of detox programs to give your body a jumpstart. Click [HERE](#) to find out more about our popular detox programs and how you can get started today.



### **7. Try nutritional IV therapy**

Our immune system is highly effective at recognizing foreign substances and sending troops of white cells to fight off the invaders. But sometimes,

our immune system becomes confused and wrongly identifies our own cells as foreign, attacking them with antibodies. This is more common in autoimmune responses where the immune system may attack thyroid cells, for example, or gut cells in response to dietary gluten or other triggers.

Nutritional IV therapy can provide nutritional elements to help correct deficiencies, reduce inflammation, and help to balance a hijacked immune system. A blood analysis provides a broad range of information including cardiovascular health, blood sugar metabolism, liver and kidney function, blood cell status, hormone levels, and nutritional deficiencies. Dietary supplements of vitamins, antioxidants, amino acids and anti-inflammatories can speed up post-exercise muscle recovery, reduce inflammation, improve metabolism, relieve nausea, boost the immune system, support brain function, and reduce brain fog.

While our nutritional needs are best met through the food we eat, when the digestive system is functioning optimally, supplements can make up for variations in the quality and availability of fresh foods. For example, non-organic agriculture can leave soil depleted of minerals. Foods shipped long distances and stored inadequately will be depleted of vitamins, such as B-complex and C vitamins especially. Food processing and cooking methods affect nutrient availability and absorption. Likewise, medication and how and when we eat. At different life stages, our needs vary; women who are pregnant or menopausal have higher needs for folic acid and calcium respectively. Nutritional supplements can also help treat stress and anxiety that affect gut health. But when the gut is inflamed and not digesting or absorbing well, using Nutritional IV therapies for a time can help to quickly restore deficiencies need to heal and balance the system. Integrated

Wellness offers a variety of IV options from detoxing, to hydrating, immunity boosting, restoring and brain boosting or recovery with power and endurance options. Click [HERE](#) to find out more about what nutritional IV options we have.



### **8. Are you ready to take the first steps to restore your gut and improve your health?**

You may have already decided you want to make changes to improve your health. You're aware of the key role of the gut microbiome in overall health. But it can be hard to make changes on your own. No matter how many times we read about what's good for us, taking the first steps can be harder than we think. With so much information online, where do you start and who do you trust? How do you know what the best program is for you and what support will you have to achieve optimum health?

At Integrated Wellness, we treat clients as individuals, and our holistic approach means you get the care and guidance you need. Our expert healthcare professionals consider your medical history, symptoms, lifestyle, and blood analysis to help you improve your gut health so you can enjoy better sleep, easier weight management, improved energy and mood, and lower risk of chronic disease. We give you a simple, whole food plan designed to repair your gut, identify food sensitivities and give you maximum results. You can enjoy real food without counting calories.

# SEE WHAT OUR PATIENTS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT OUR HEALTHY GUT PROGRAM:

"Before going through the healthy gut program, I was functioning at 10%. I'd have to lay down after work, and I'd have to stay in bed all weekend to recover from my work week before I could even think about facing Monday. Now I feel close to 100% most of the time, so I'm overall 90% improved. I feel well on a regular basis. Traveling used to feel impossible. Now I can help family members in need, I can go out to lunch with friends, and help others rather being stuck in bed."

**-SARAH**



"Before going through the healthy gut program, really ever since I was a little girl, I could never eat without being in pain. To now eat without pain is a total blessing. It has improved my life overall. Now I have energy, I think clearly, and I feel well as a whole. Thank you, Integrated Wellness."

**-MAKAYLA**



"Before starting my healthy gut program and NMT treatments I was suffering with a severe mental illness. I was on a ton of medications; I was depressed and very overweight. After going through my program, I was off all my medications and slowly started to get my weight

off. After we addressed my microbiome. I dropped weight like crazy. I lost a total of 50 pounds and I feel great. Thank you, Integrated Wellness."

**-ASHLEY**



We're Utah's top functional medicine experts. We reverse chronic pain and illness to help you live your best life. Our highly trained team of experts includes a medical

doctor, nurse practitioner, physical therapist, and chiropractic physicians that work together to bring you the most powerful treatments available.

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Call now or text **"guthealth"** to **801-292-9355** to schedule, or go to **[www.bountifulwellgroup.com](http://www.bountifulwellgroup.com)** to schedule.

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