7 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 Feel Well, Stay Well, Live Well, and Thrive!

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Hello and Welcome!

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.[1] 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'. [2] 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 foods, 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 linking 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 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.

We may also lose weight if our ability to absorb nutrients from food is compromised by an unhealthy gut. Weight loss may also be caused by small intestinal bacterial overgrowth (SIBO)

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.[4] 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 PINNACLE PHYSICAL MEDICINE & REHAB 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, 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.

Water is key

- ✓ Drink plenty of water before, during, and after exercise.
- ✓ Drink water between meals, not during them. Too much water or ice will disrupt your digestion.

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. [5] 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 (7-8 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. [6]. 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. 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. Pinnacle Physical Medicine & Rehab provides a variety of supplements including probiotics that will help you get started on your healing path. Call 423-855-5053 or click HERE to schedule a consultation to find out what vitamins are best for you and your health journey and goals.

4. Reduce daily stress

1. 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 blood stream.

2. In a symbiotic process, restoring gut bacteria thought dietary changes and nutritional supplements, including probiotics and prebiotics, helps keep levels of the 'stress hormone' cortisol in check.

3. 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.

5. 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. [3] 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. [7] 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, 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.

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. [8] 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. [11]

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 energize. 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. [10] A detox program can support your liver and microbiome.

Pinnacle Physical Medicine & Rehab offers a free elimination diet guide that works by removing a variety of foods from your diet and then reintroduce them to see what food could be causing you problems. Although this guide is designed to pinpoint specific foods that can trigger headaches or migraines, it focuses on foods that could be the root cause of other symptoms you may have. This free guide is a great introduction to our wellness plans that gives you a head start in reaching your health goals.

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 Pinnacle Physical Medicine & Rehab, 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, and lifestyle 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:

"...I've been battling issues for probably the last 30 years and I've tried different supplements and different programs and nothing really ever worked. I've never been able to sustain those type of weight loss. I'm feeling a lot healthier, this is the first time in probably a good ten years where my blood pressure has been more in the normal range without medication. I highly recommend [this program] to anybody."

-JOE

Thank you!

We're Chattanooga's top chiropractic office. At Pinnacle Physical Medicine & Rehab we formulate custom treatment plans designed to find and treat the root causes of your problems. We take a holistic, whole body approach to your care so that you can achieve your health goals.

SCHEDULE A CONSULTATION TODAY TO FIND OUT HOW WE CAN HELP YOU LIVE A HEALTHIER, HAPPIER LIFE.

Contact us

This guide is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to cure, prevent, or diagnose any disease. Always consult a qualified health care professional before starting any new regimens or diet plans.

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