



THE GOOD GUT GUIDE



orthoplex

GUT A LOAD OF THIS!

The gut is a complex system, yet it's one that you're constantly interacting with, as you eat and drink and perform your bodily functions. It's often considered too mundane or embarrassing to ask questions about. But the often-unspoken truth is that one in five people will suffer from some kind of digestive discomfort or disorder. So, have you ever asked yourself how this system is – or isn't – working, to support your overall health?

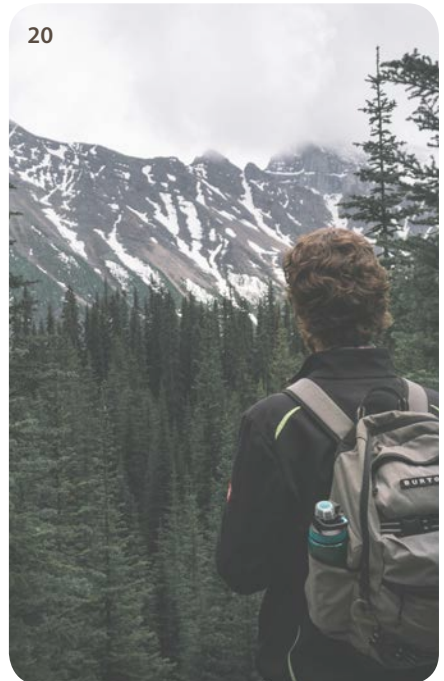
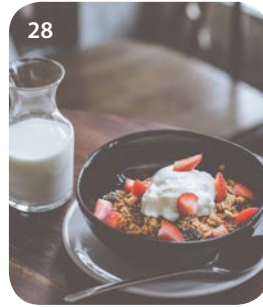
Consider your gut as the gateway to the rest of your body – it's where the external environment meets your internal ecosystem and where you digest not only your food, but also your experiences. As gut issues have become more prevalent amongst the population, including an increased number of people experiencing food intolerances, today's modern fast-paced lifestyle may hold clues to the cause. Contributing factors include convenience-led, processed food choices; a disconnection from the art of eating; and more perceived stress in life. The good news is, diet and

lifestyle changes can help you restore or maintain gut health and prevent any pesky problems further into the future.

Experiencing digestive discomfort can be distressing and potentially debilitating, depending on the severity of your symptoms. With so much information already available and increasing amounts of research being conducted into this area, it can be an overwhelming rabbit hole to dive into in the search for answers! While there's a great deal yet to be discovered, the consensus is that a happy, healthy gut helps to achieve and maintain a happy, healthy body.

This booklet has been designed as a resource to support you on your journey to better gut health, providing some information on the influence of the gut, and simple strategies for optimising your internal environment. The information in this booklet is generic in nature, so please consult your healthcare practitioner before making any diet or lifestyle changes.





{ contents }



26



14




46



40

WHAT'S INSIDE

- 02 Gut a Load of This!
- 06 Uncovering the Mysteries of the Microbiota
- 08 A Gut Feeling
- 09 What's Up With 'Leaky Gut'?
- 10 IBS Explained
- 10 Tell-Tale Signs
- 11 Key Culprits
- 14 Gut Your Glow Back
- 16 The Gut-Brain Connection
- 18 Bendy Benefits for Body and Brain
- 18 Yoga for Digestion
- 20 Gut-Friendly Travel Tips
- 22 Your Poo has the Clue
- 24 You Are What You Eat
- 25 Gut Lovin' Nutrients
- 26 Know your Probiotics from your Prebiotics
- 28 A Mindful Meal
- 30 Gut-full of Goodness - Recipe Collection




Did you know that there's a whole world of microorganisms residing in your gut? The term used to describe this vast, yet microscopic community is 'microbiome' or 'microbiota' which collectively refers to all the microbes – including bacteria, viruses and fungi – that exist in and on the human body. A whopping 95% of these microbes reside in your gastrointestinal tract, predominantly in the large intestine.

To put this population into perspective, there are ten times more bacterial cells in your body (40 trillion), specifically contained in your gut, as opposed to human cells (only 30 trillion) – meaning, you're more bacteria than human!

Diving deeper into the gut microbiota, there are around 1,000 different species of known bacteria, each playing a different role in your body – but only a couple of hundred predominate. The collective weight of these bacteria can be up to 2 kilograms!

The composition of the colony in your gut is as unique as your fingerprint. One third of gut bacteria is common to most people, while the other two thirds are individual to you.

While some strains of bacteria are harmful, many others are extremely beneficial and necessary to keep your body healthy.



When the number of harmful bacteria outweighs the number of friendly bacteria in the gut, an imbalance called dysbiosis can occur.

So, it makes sense that in order to be at your healthiest, you need to ensure that your good bacteria are kept happy, healthy and as abundant as possible!

The gut microbiota is a complex field of ongoing research in the medical community and is constantly under the microscope. Findings uncovered by new scientific investigations have greatly improved our understanding of the microbiota, and its systemic influence in the body.

Studies have explored and identified links between gut health and the immune system, mental health, autoimmune diseases, endocrine disorders, weight, skin conditions and even cancer.

Poor gut health not only relates to digestive discomfort, but can also restrict essential energy and nutrient supplies to other bodily organs and systems, compromising their function. For example, the gut houses 70-80% of your immune system, so this can take a hit when the gut isn't performing properly. Essentially, the gut microbiota acts like another organ in your body, regulating health and disease.

UNCOVERING THE MYSTERIES OF THE MICROBIOTA

A GUT FEELING

How often do you experience digestive discomfort? An upset stomach is a key indicator of imbalanced gut function, as a healthy digestive system will have less difficulty processing food and eliminating waste. While it's not unusual to experience some digestive symptoms on the odd occasion, ongoing and long-lasting complaints may be a sign that something is not quite right. Signs may include:

Gas

Bloating

Nausea

Heartburn

Diarrhoea

Abdominal Pain

Constipation

Vomiting

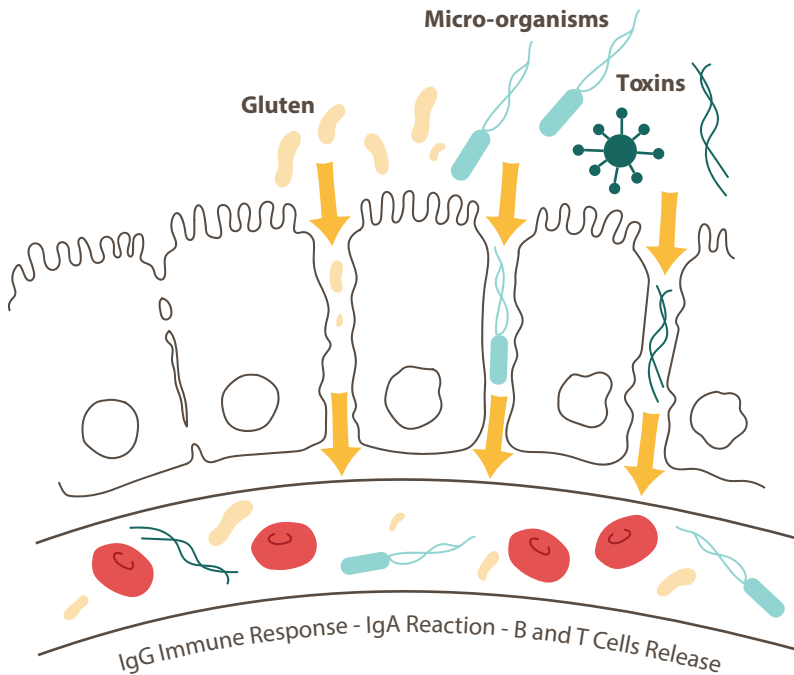
Some common digestive disorders that can be acute or chronic include:

- Gastro-oesophageal reflux (GORD)
- Peptic Ulcers
- Gastroenteritis
- Lactose Intolerance
- Coeliac Disease or Gluten Intolerance
- Candida Overgrowth
- Small Intestinal Bacterial Overgrowth (SIBO)
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)
- Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) such as Crohn's Disease or Ulcerative Colitis

WHAT'S UP WITH 'LEAKY GUT'?

The food you eat is broken down in the digestive tract and the nutrients are absorbed through the gut lining into the bloodstream, where they're transported to the rest of the body. The gut wall also operates as a barrier, protecting the body from harmful substances by blocking their passage. This is controlled by small gaps in the intestinal walls.

A 'leaky gut' refers to increased intestinal permeability. That is, when the cells lining the gut pull apart, they allow the leaking of inefficiently digested food proteins, bacteria and toxins, into the blood stream where they're not supposed to be. This can then create inflammation in other areas of the body. Inflammation in the body is considered to be the precursor to disease, making it important to address any signs of inflammation in the gut. This can be done, in part, by healing and sealing the gut lining.



**Nutrient
Malabsorption**

Autoimmunity

**Food
Intolerance**

**Blood-Brain
Barrier Breach**

**Systemic
Inflammation**

IBS

EXPLAINED

Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) is a chronic gastrointestinal disorder experienced by one in five Australians.

However, IBS can often be used as an 'umbrella' term for a collection of unpleasant and unexplained digestive issues that may be a result of other underlying conditions and require further investigation.

This unpleasant condition is characterised by abdominal pain, bloating, nausea and constipation, diarrhoea or both. IBS is more likely to be experienced by women than men and those who suffer seem to have 'sensitive stomachs' that can be easily upset.

The cause of IBS is unknown and often unique to the individual. However, it's commonly triggered and exacerbated by diet and certain foods, emotional stress, infection and even changes to daily routine, leading to variations in the bacterial composition of the gut and its functioning. Research has shown that IBS also involves changes in nerve function, particularly the way pain sensations are processed.

While IBS doesn't necessarily cause lasting damage or lead to the development of serious bowel conditions, symptoms are not exclusive to IBS and can be indicative of other illnesses. Talk to your healthcare practitioner if you think you are experiencing IBS.

TELL-TALE SIGNS

Aside from the usual suspects – such as gas, bloating and unusual stool patterns – the following are other tell-tale signs that something's up, down in the gut.



Sugar Cravings



Unintentional weight loss or gain



Sleep disturbances or constant fatigue



Skin irritations like eczema



Autoimmune conditions and suppressed immunity, including frequent illness and infection



Food allergies, intolerances and sensitivities



Anxiety and depression



Mood swings and irritability



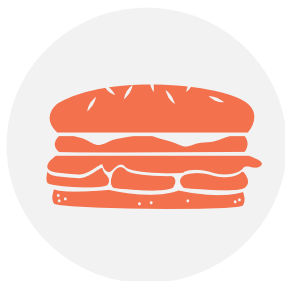
Poor memory and concentration

KEY CULPRITS

By now you may be asking yourself what's behind your bad belly? A number of factors can contribute to poor gut health. Some main ways the gut becomes damaged include:

Damaging Diet

A highly processed Western diet – packed with artificial ingredients, such as preservatives, additives and artificial and refined sugars – is not doing any favours for your gut health! These can all kill off good bacteria in your gut and cause inflammation in your body.



Sleeping

Your gut follows a circadian rhythm – that's the body's sleep-wake cycle. Lack of sleep, shift work and eating late at night can all disrupt your body clock which can negatively affect your gut bacteria, changing the composition in favour of those associated with weight gain, obesity and type 2 diabetes.

Decreased Dietary Diversity

The gut microbiome is just like any ecosystem in the natural environment: it thrives on diversity. An essential factor in adaptability and wellness, a lack of microbial diversity is common in disease. The food you eat populates and diversifies the bacteria in your gut. So, it's no surprise that if you eat the same food over and over, you reduce the variety of bacteria and this can impair your health. Specifically, it may promote good bacteria when consumed in moderation.





Struggling with Stress

Stressful events can cause an onset of, or exacerbate, digestive disorders. Stress can increase gut sensitivity, reduce blood flow to the digestive tract and alter the bacterial composition there – this can reduce friendly bacteria and increase harmful bacteria. Just experiencing digestive discomfort can be a source of anxiety in itself – and psychological stress can decrease your pain threshold which can make physical symptoms all the more challenging.

Environmental Exposures

Exposure to environmental toxins including chemicals, pesticides, pollution and cigarette smoke can increase inflammation of the digestive tract and reduce diversity of the microbiota. Cigarette smoking is one of the primary risk factors for Inflammatory Bowel Disease. In fact, smokers are twice as likely to have Crohn's Disease. Conversely, ditching the cigarettes can improve gut diversity and overall health.



Overuse of Antibiotics

While antibiotics certainly have their place in medical treatment, unfortunately the majority of antibiotics prescribed are broad-spectrum which target a wide variety of bacteria; this affects both good and bad strains in your body.

One course of antibiotic treatment, even for short term use, can lead to changes in the composition and diversity of the microbiome that can last for as long as two years! While most bacteria return after one to two months, some groups never recover to previous levels. Antibiotic use also increases the number of resistant strains of bacteria. Taking probiotics before and after antibiotic treatment, along with feeding your microbiota fibrous foods, will encourage your happier gut-residents to re-populate.



Booze and Your Belly

Alcohol is toxic in large quantities, and chronic consumption can cause gut dysbiosis, disrupting the balance of good and bad bacteria. It can also contribute to inflammation and leaky gut by having an astringent effect on the gut lining.

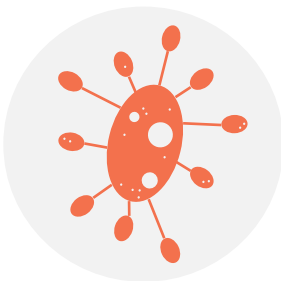
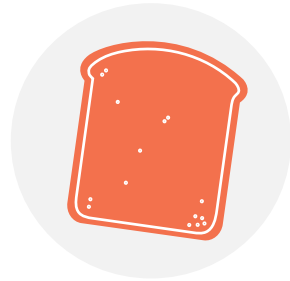


Staying Stagnant

Lack of physical movement alters gut bacteria and can cause constipation, while regular physical activity promotes the growth of beneficial gut bacteria. Just another reason to move your body!

Sneaky Sugars

Refined sugar, prevalent in packaged food, is responsible for feeding bad bacteria in your gut and preventing the growth of the good guys. One common sneaky sugar to watch out for is high-fructose corn syrup. While it's best to ditch all additional and unnecessary sugars, if your sweet tooth just won't be silenced, switch to alternatives like fresh dates which contain sugars, but also provide the body with fibre, antioxidants and other nutrients.



Pesky Pathogens

Pathogens such as *E. Coli*, *Salmonella*, *H. pylori*, *Giardia* and worms can be contracted by eating infected food or water. Some are opportunistic, that is, when the immune system is compromised or there is a change to good bacteria in the gut, their numbers increase, and symptoms develop. A good example of this is *Blastocystis hominis*. These freeloaders can nestle into the gut wall and disrupt its function.



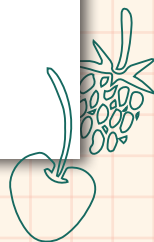
GUT YOUR GLOW BACK

Your gut can bounce back from digestive distress if given the right environment. To do this successfully, it's imperative to identify and remove your individual triggers. However, there are a few universal tips and tricks that can provide relief to most.

Bear in mind, any treatment – including diet and lifestyle changes – should be personally tailored to you, based on an assessment of your individual symptoms. Your healthcare practitioner can design a plan specific to your individual needs and should be consulted before implementing changes to your dietary habits.



- ☒ Remove processed foods
- ☒ Cut down on sugar, caffeine and alcohol
- ☒ Reduce exposure to environmental toxins





- ☒ Incorporate an array of fresh, whole foods into your diet
- ☒ Increase your intake of warm, cooked vegetables
- ☒ Enjoy slow cooked lean meats
- ☒ Add more healthy fats to your meals
- ☒ Drink plenty of clean water – at least 8 glasses a day
- ☒ Consume fermented foods or take a probiotic
- ☒ Increase prebiotic and fibrous foods
- ☒ Move your body regularly
- ☒ Get plenty of sleep
- ☒ Eat at the same times each day
- ☒ Practice mindful eating and chew your food thoroughly
- ☒ Eat smaller, more frequent meals to avoid overloading your gut
- ☒ Engage in stress-relief practices





THE GUT-BRAIN CONNECTION

The gut is often referred to as the 'second brain' and is lined with 100 million nerve cells. Ninety per cent of the body's chemical messengers responsible for modulating mood are produced in the belly.

Your gut is not only responsible for digesting the food you eat, but also the emotions and experiences you process every day. No doubt you've heard common expressions such as, a "gut feeling" or "gut instinct"; making a "gut-wrenching" decision; or having "butterflies" in your stomach when you're nervous? These are more than just a figure of speech.

The gut and brain are constantly in communication with one another – connected via the two-way superhighway of the vagus nerve, also known as the gut-brain axis. Along this pathway, messages are relayed from the depths of your digestive tract up to the highest regions of your brain. The vagus nerve is part of your body's parasympathetic nervous system, associated with 'rest and digest' – as opposed to the sympathetic nervous system responsible for the body's 'fight or flight' response.

Did you know that gargling, singing, left nostril breathing and slow, deep belly breathing can all improve the function of your vagus nerve?!

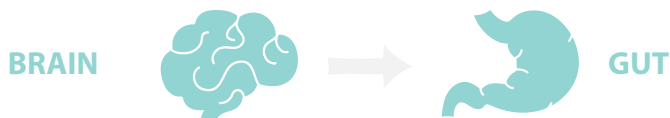
If you're experiencing digestive disorders, it's not unusual to experience disruption to your mood and mental cognition too. Stress and mental health can affect your gut, and vice versa – the health of your gut can affect your state of mind.



Serotonin, one of the main chemicals found in your brain that contributes to feelings of happiness and wellbeing, is actually primarily produced in your gut. This important chemical is believed to influence a variety of physical and psychological functions, including mood, social behaviour, appetite and digestion, sleep, memory and sexual desire and function.

Studies have shown that altered gut microbes have a direct influence on the levels of this chemical which can subsequently alter mood and behaviour. Furthermore, a damaged gut leads to inflammation which can have systemic, far reaching effects for your body, including your brain:

- Brain fog
- Anxiety and depression
- Mood swings and irritability
- Poor memory and concentration
- Cognitive dysfunction



Physical, mental and emotional stress can directly affect your gut. Your body perceives stress as a potential threat – whether it's real or imagined doesn't matter – and it responds by activating your sympathetic nervous system's 'fight or flight' response.

In doing so, it switches off the parasympathetic nervous system that's required for normal gut function – including blood flow, motility and gastric secretions. Digesting your food is not considered a priority for your body at this time. The main concern is conserving and redirecting energy to those functions required to deal with the stress at hand. Think faster breathing, heart rate and heightened sense of awareness and muscle tension.

When you experience stress – including low-grade chronic stress – your body also produces and releases hormones from your adrenal glands. The two main stress hormones, cortisol and adrenaline, make the body alert and prepared to face the threat. When they're being constantly pumped around your body, they can also negatively impact the composition of your gut bacteria.

{ exercise }

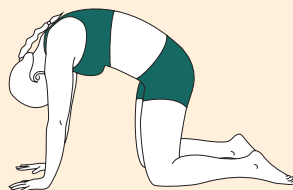
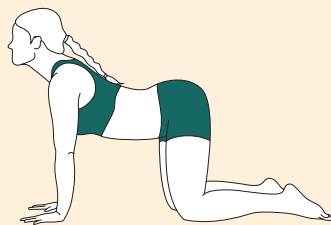
BENDY BENEFITS FOR BODY AND BRAIN

The practice of yoga brings you back into your body, making you mindful of the present moment and helping to soothe stress which, coupled with the physical movements, can help improve gut function.

The aim of yoga is not to be the most flexible member of the class, but rather, it is to quiet your mind. All the tools of yoga – the poses (asana), breathing (pranayama), and meditation (savasana) – are aimed at calming your mind and body and balancing your emotions. Concentrate your mind in the same way a musician becomes absorbed in a piece of music or a child focuses on colouring in. Outside a yoga class, you can use mantra or simply focus on an object, internal or external, to help your concentration.

Yoga for digestion

Yoga can be a useful tool to relieve digestive discomfort such as gas, bloating and indigestion. Practice these poses a few hours after a meal, rather than on a full stomach, to help cleanse and stimulate digestion.



Cat cow

Inhale as you drop your belly button toward the earth and lift your heart and hips to the sky into Cat Cow pose. Spread across your shoulders and sitting bones. Exhale as you round your upper back toward the sky, dropping your gaze to your navel and pressing your hands and knees into the earth in cat pose. These poses massage your organs as you alternately compress and lengthen the digestive organs.



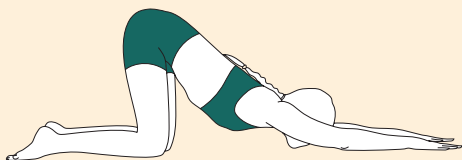
Half lord of the fishes

Twists help improve digestion. Half Lord of the Fishes cleanses the digestive system. While holding the twist, blood flow to the digestive organs is reduced, so when you release, there is an influx of fresh blood to the digestive organs. Like twisting a cloth, this pose helps wring out toxins.



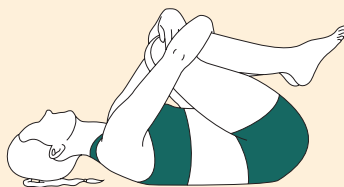
Seated forward fold

By placing a bolster or pillow on your thighs, allow your tummy to rest upon it when you fold forward, this pose allows for digestive massage. Take a full inhale, so the bolster or pillow resists against your belly, causing a compression. On the exhale, the compression is released, creating new blood flow to the area.



Extended puppy pose

Come onto your hands and knees. Then keeping your hips where they are, walk your hands forward. Release your head onto the floor or a block and allow gravity to open your heart. This pose can relieve cramps after a large meal.



Wind relieving pose

This pose is good for sluggish digestion or trapped wind. Slowly bend one knee, bringing it into the chest, followed by the other knee, exhaling as the knees draw into the chest, and inhaling as they move back to the ground.



GUT-FRIENDLY TRAVEL TIPS

While you might have a burning desire to see the world, travelling can wreak havoc on your gut health – there's nothing like a burning belly or backside to taint your travel memories! Normal daily routines, cycles and habits are often disrupted during travel. Changes in environment, sleep patterns, food and water, along with jet lag, dehydration and exposure to unfamiliar germs and bacteria can all throw your microbiota out of balance.

As a result, it's common for travellers to experience constipation or diarrhoea. You might have even heard of Bali Belly, Delhi Belly and Montezuma's Revenge as suffering from an upset stomach is particularly common when visiting these exotic locations. Tourists also run the risk of picking up a gut bug, such as a pathogen or parasite which can further disturb gut function (and holiday-making!).

As one of the primary areas of the body that comes into contact with the external environment, it's important to be mindful about what you're exposing your gut to when you're in a foreign country.

Pack the following in your travel tool kit to make the most of your adventure – without the nasty side effects for your gut:

1 Take *Saccharomyces boulardii* and probiotics

This strain of yeast helps to ward off traveller's diarrhoea by populating the intestines with good bacteria, and provides protection against pathogens, while probiotics will also bolster beneficial bacteria.

2 Prepare your immune system prior to departure

Increase your intake of Vitamin C to strengthen your immune system to provide defence against unfamiliar germs.

3 Avoid contaminated food or water

Ensure meat is cooked properly and avoid eating the skin of fruit and vegetables. Wash your hands thoroughly and make sure they are completely dry before eating or preparing food. Eat at reputable and clean restaurants. If you're not sure about the safety of the water supply, avoid drinking or brushing your teeth with it. Also avoid any drinks containing ice. Instead, buy bottled water, or boil tap water before drinking it.

{ top tips }



Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of clean water



Eat fibre from whole grains, fruits and vegetables



Move your body to keep your bowels moving



Get enough rest to keep your immune system strong and microbiome happy



Have healthy food on hand

YOUR POO HAS THE CLUE

While you probably don't give much thought to this mundane bodily function, it's an essential part of the digestive process – and the state of your stool is actually a key indicator of gut health. Use this guide to answer some questions you might be too embarrassed to ask!

How often should you poo?

The average frequency is 1-2 times daily, however people with healthy digestion may have a bowel movement anywhere between every second day, to up to 3 times a day. Any less can indicate constipation. You should be able to pass your poo easily, within minutes (up to 10-15 minutes max).

Did you know?

Most people poo around the same time every day.

What is considered a normal poo?

Although the 'end product' is unique to each individual, there are a few characteristics that indicate a healthy, or unhealthy, poop. According to the Bristol Stool Chart, a healthy stool sits somewhere around the 3 – 4 mark. Any lower is considered constipation, and anything higher is considered diarrhoea. The colour should be any shade of brown – although green is also normal in people that eat heaps of greens!

Chronic constipation can obstruct the bowels, while chronic diarrhoea can make it difficult for a person to absorb the necessary nutrients from food. Both may be signs of a more serious condition and should be raised with your healthcare practitioner if they persist.



BRISTOL STOOL CHART

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| 1 | | Separate, hard lumps; hard to pass; constipated; nuggets; pebbles; rabbit droppings |
| 2 | | Sausage-shaped but lumpy; somewhat difficult to pass; bunch of grapes |
| 3 | | Sausage with cracks on the surface; near-perfect poop; corn on the cob |
| 4 | | Sausage; snake; banana; smooth; soft; nut butter consistency |
| 5 | | Soft blobs with clear-cut edges; easily passes; chicken nuggets |
| 6 | | Fluffy pieces with ragged edges; mushy with ragged edges; mushy stool; porridge |
| 7 | | Watery; no solid pieces; liquid; gravy |

YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT

Since your diet influences your gut microbes, you really are what you eat! The composition of your microbiome can change by the season, the week or even the meal. If you eat a diverse array of fresh fruit, grains and vegetables, your gut will reflect that. One of the best ways to diversify your diet is to eat fruits and vegetables that are in season. Below are some gut-friendly produce and when to find them.

Seasonal Fruit & Veggie Chart

Product	Gut Benefits	SPRING	SUMMER	AUTUMN	WINTER
Apples	Soluble fibre promotes stool bulk and movement				
Jerusalem Artichoke	A prebiotic that increases good gut bacteria and bowel movement				
Asparagus	A prebiotic that feeds good bacteria, contains B vitamins and antioxidants				
Banana	Potassium and magnesium aids against gut inflammation				
Beets	High in fibre that promotes healthy gut bacteria and movement				
Broccoli	High in fibre and magnesium for gut health				
Fennel	Has antispasmodic properties that relax the digestive tract				
Papaya	Contains digestive enzyme papain which aids protein digestion				
Pineapple	Contains digestive enzyme bromelain which aids protein digestion				

GUT LOVIN' NUTRIENTS

VITAMIN D

Regulates and maintains your gut microbiota, increasing resistance to inflammation and a potential breakdown of gut lining and promoting protection against nasty pathogenic microbes.

GLUTAMINE

An amino acid required to repair the gut mucosal lining, preventing and repairing intestinal permeability. Found in all animal proteins and most plant proteins (if combined accurately), and in abundance in bone broth.

GINGER

Good old ginger! Ginger improves blood circulation around the body, reduces feelings of nausea and flatulence, promotes the removal of toxins through sweating, and is also a potent anti-inflammatory.

VITAMIN A

Can help bolster the mucous barrier in your gut which traps bacteria and pathogens, in turn supporting your immune system and preventing it from over-working.

TURMERIC

Another potent anti-inflammatory and antioxidant, this spice also enhances liver detoxification pathways to aid in the removal of any toxins and pathogens in your body.

VITAMIN C and ZINC

Both are required for collagen synthesis and the repair of all body tissues. Vitamin C and Zinc are also required for healthy white blood cell formation, helping your body's immune system fight off harmful pathogenic invaders.

QUERCETIN

An antioxidant, shown to reduce intestinal permeability, seal the gut wall, reduce inflammation and improve its barrier function and prebiotic activity.



{ info }

KNOW YOUR **PROBIOTICS** FROM YOUR **PREBIOTICS**

Both 'biotics help to improve the functioning of the microbiota by increasing the abundance of bacteria in your belly. This results in a thicker gut mucosal wall. A healthier and stronger gut barrier lowers inflammation throughout the body, while the bacteria aid digestion. Incorporate probiotic and prebiotic foods into your diet – it's easier than you might think!





PROBIOTICS

Populating your gut with good bacteria, probiotics crowd out unwanted bugs and create a healthier balance and internal environment. You can increase your probiotic intake through:

Supplements

Everyone's microbiota is unique and will benefit from different strains of good bacteria depending on your health issue.

Fermented Foods

A natural source of probiotics, these foods nourish the good bacteria in your gut. Examples include sauerkraut, kimchi, kombucha, kefir and natural yoghurt. Start with a small amount of these foods daily – one tablespoon with a meal as a side, and slowly build up to more.

PREBIOTICS

These provide food for the good bacteria in your belly. You can up your intake of prebiotics via:

Foods

Increase the variety of the veggies you're eating – particularly green veggies. Diversity results in a more varied range of beneficial bacteria, so add in some asparagus, artichoke, fennel, dandelion greens, chicory, garlic and broccoli.

Resistant starch found in sweet potato, brown rice and unripe bananas promotes the production of butyrate, a substance that is the preferred fuel source for gut repair, improving metabolism, reducing inflammation and nourishing the gut lining.

Fibre

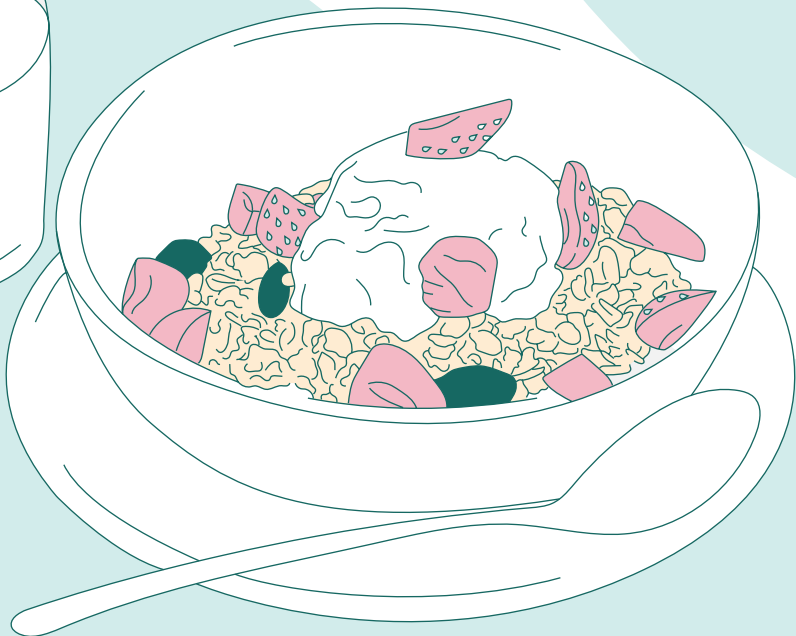
Feeds the bacteria, increasing their numbers and diversity. Increase your intake of whole grains, fruit and veggies.

A MINDFUL MEAL

With today's fast-paced lifestyle, you may be guilty of trying to do more than one thing at a time, especially whilst eating. Caught up in your mind and out of touch with your body, you may find yourself inhaling your meals on the go, behind the wheel, in front of the computer or TV, with a phone in hand. Stopping to savour your food may be a rare luxury.

All this rushing around and multi-tasking can be perceived as another stressor by the body which triggers the internal 'fight or flight' response, eliciting the production of stress hormones which suppress your gut function. This can perpetuate digestive stress and symptoms, along with weight gain, not to mention detracting from the pleasure of eating.

Instead, allow yourself to take time out to sit down and eat your food – turning off distractions, like the TV, computer and phone. Give your full attention to the present moment when eating – focusing on what, and how, you're eating. This conscious consumption encourages digestion and increases not only nutrient absorption, but also the enjoyment you can elicit from your food.



To make your next meal a mindful one, try the following:

1. Before eating, ask yourself some questions – are you hungry, or looking to eat for another reason? Is what you're intending to eat going to serve your health and wellbeing? Are you able to give your full attention to eating right now? The answers to these questions may change your eating habits for the better.
2. Sit at a table to eat and put away or switch off any distractions.
3. Bring your awareness to your senses – what does your meal look and smell like? Your senses can kick-start the digestive process before you've even taken a bite by encouraging the production of saliva and gastric juices.
4. Take a moment to be grateful for the nourishing meal you're about to eat – you might simply pause to consider your good fortune to have food in front of you.
5. Eat slowly, chewing each mouthful really well before swallowing. Pause and put your cutlery or food down between bites and really focus on the tastes and textures you're experiencing.
6. Check in with your breathing and make sure you're not holding your breath, but drawing it down into your belly to relax your body and promote the passage of food.
7. Ideally, beverages should be consumed away from meals – 15-30 minutes either side. If you are drinking during your meal, sip rather than gulp your drink.
8. Eat only until you feel satiated, rather than stuffed. Bear in mind that it takes time – up to 20 minutes – for the gut to communicate to the brain when you're full. Pausing prevents overeating and digestive discomfort.





GUT-FULL OF GOODNESS

Recipe collection

Whether you need to soothe, stimulate, or re-populate your gut – there's a recipe to help you on your journey to a healthy gut.

Digestive Drinks

- Tummy Teas
- Fennel, Ginger and Lemon Balm Digestive Tea
- Golden Milk Anti-Inflammatory Latte

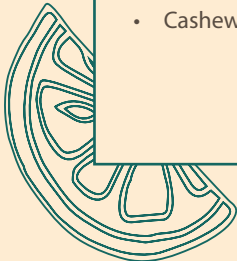
Stomach Soothing

- Chicken Soup
- Bone Broth

Gut Gummies

- Tulsi Jellies

Fermented Foods

- Coconut Kefir
 - Cashew Probiotic Yoghurt
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TUMMY TEAS

Teas are an easy way to introduce digestion-friendly ingredients into your diet. For centuries, across many different cultures, herbs have been brewed in tea and administered to alleviate ailments, including digestive disorders. Slip one of these gut-friendly herbs into your next sip:



ginger

Good for: Stimulating production of saliva, bile and gastric juices; drink before or with meal to aid digestion



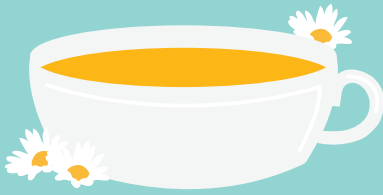
kombucha

Good for: Boosting good bacteria in the gut; contains probiotic properties from live cultures; home-brewed is best



fennel

Good for: Settling stomach pain, gas, bloating and cramps; aiding digestion; acts as a diuretic



chamomile

Good for: Calming acidity and nausea as well as anxiety and stress; preventing stomach ulcers; promoting sleep



peppermint

Good for: Soothing and calming the gut; reducing inflammation; relieving pain and discomfort from gas and bloating



liquorice root

Good for: Soothing and calming the digestive tract and supporting detoxification



lemon balm

Good for: Settling stomach pain, gas, bloating and cramps; aiding digestion; acts as a diuretic





FENNEL, GINGER & LEMON BALM

DIGESTIVE ELIXIR

'Tea-toxing' gives your digestive system a helping hand. Drink this elixir following meals to aid digestion. The sweet taste and soothing properties make it the perfect after-dinner treat!

Ingredients

2 tsp fennel seeds
1 tsp freshly grated ginger, skin removed (or a ginger tea bag)
1 tsp dried lemon balm (or tea bag)
500ml water

Method

1. Crush the fennel seeds to release their oils. Use a pestle and mortar or the back of a large knife. If you can't crush the seeds, skip this step – don't worry, the tea will still work out!
2. Remove the skin from the ginger root and grate.
3. Bring water to boil in a saucepan.
4. Turn down to low, add all ingredients and simmer for 10 minutes. You will get a light-yellow infusion.
5. To serve, pour through a tea strainer. Alternatively, turn off the heat and leave in the pan to steep further, and enjoy when you are ready.

Boost the Benefits

Add 1 tsp of glutamine powder to make your gut even more grateful!

AYURVEDIC GOLDEN MILK

Also known as 'turmeric latte' after its key ingredient, this drink is highly revered in traditional Ayurvedic medicine for its healing properties.

Curcumin, the key compound in turmeric, is a natural anti-inflammatory and antioxidant. Drinking it warm with some healthy fat maximises the healing properties of curcumin and increases its absorption.

The benefits of this brew include reducing gas, bloating and IBS symptoms, aiding relaxation and supporting the immune system. It's traditionally consumed in small amounts to avoid overloading your digestive system. Feel like you're on a wellness retreat with every sip!

Ingredients

Almond/coconut milk (250ml or 1 cup)

¼ cup water for simmering (*to maintain liquid level from evaporation*)

3 cardamom pods, cracked

½ tsp ground turmeric

½ tsp fresh ginger, grated; or ¼ tsp ginger powder

½ tsp ground cinnamon or 1 whole cinnamon stick

¼ tsp ground black pepper

1 tsp maple syrup, raw honey, coconut sugar – or sweetener of choice!

Method

1. Add all ingredients, aside from the sweetener, to a small pot.
2. Simmer gently on low-medium heat (do not boil) for 10 minutes.
3. Stir through sweetener and add a splash of more hot water if required.
4. Strain and serve.







SOOTHING CHICKEN SOUP

FOR THE GUT

Nourishing, cooked foods are like a warm hug for the gut! This soothing soup supports the immune system which starts in the gut.

Ingredients

1L (4 cups) bone broth (you can make your own or buy good quality store-bought)
2 skinless organic chicken breast fillets, cut into 3 cm cubes
1 knob (¼ cup) fresh ginger, peeled and grated
2 carrots, thinly diced
2 celery stalks, thinly diced
1 leek, halved, thinly sliced
100g cauliflower (*grated or pulsed in a food processor until it resembles grains of rice*)
1 tsp apple cider vinegar
1 tsp ground turmeric
Pinch of salt and black pepper
Large handful of chopped coriander leaves
Greek or coconut yoghurt

Method

1. Combine the broth and ginger in a saucepan over medium heat and bring to a simmer.
2. Add diced chicken, reduce the heat to low and cover with the lid to gently poach for 10 minutes.
3. Add the apple cider vinegar, turmeric and black pepper.
4. Add the carrots, celery, leek and cauliflower and cook for another 5 minutes, or until the vegetables are tender.
5. Serve with a garnish of coriander leaves and yoghurt.

**If you need more liquid in the soup, just use more bone broth or you can add boiling water as you go.*

BONE BROTH

An easy-to-digest source of nourishment, bone broth is packed with vitamins and minerals, collagen and keratin, glutamine and gelatin – all of which support the gut. Healthy fats in the broth help to assimilate vitamins such as Vitamin D. Check out the tips for many ways you can make, store and use bone broth in your diet.

Ingredients

2-3kg beef bones, lamb bones, or chicken carcasses
A couple of handfuls of onions, leeks, carrots or celery – your choice!
1 tbsp black peppercorns
A few dried bay leaves
Fresh garlic, ginger, turmeric (optional)
Dash of apple cider vinegar or fresh lemon juice
(helps to extract the minerals from the meat bones)

Method

1. Place the bones and vegetables into a large stainless-steel cooking pot and cover with cold water. The water level should cover the bones by 5 cm while still leaving room at the top of the pan.
2. Cover with a lid and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer, lid on, for at least 6 hours for chicken and 12 hours for beef or lamb, skimming off any foam that rises to the top. The longer the bones simmer, the more nutrients are released. You can boil chicken carcasses for up to 12 hours and beef bones for 24 hours.
3. Strain the liquid and discard the solids. Use immediately or leave to cool before storing (in glass). Bone broth will keep in the fridge for several days or up to a week if you leave it undisturbed, as a layer of fat will form on the surface and keep it sealed from the air. Freezer friendly for up to 3 months.





Tips

- You can also make bone broth using a slow cooker – on high for 12 hours or more.
- Beef bones produce a lot of nutritious fat. As your broth cools this will form on the top. Skim this off and save it for roasting veggies! Stores for 3 days in the fridge or freezer.
- You can use your broth for cooking rice or quinoa; adding to soups, curries and stews (like our chicken soup for the gut recipe!); or even drink as a soothing bedtime brew!





COCONUT KEFIR

This probiotic beverage is made by fermenting coconut milk with kefir grains. Consuming these active cultures restores balance to your microbiome, stimulates digestion and improves your immune system.

Ingredients

4 cups coconut milk
(can be homemade or your favourite brand)
2 tbsp kefir grains
1 wooden spoon
1 cloth, coffee filter or paper towel
1 glass bottle with lid

Method

1. Transfer the coconut milk to the glass bottle container.
2. Add the kefir grains and stir with the wooden spoon.
3. Cover the mixture with the cloth or other cover (listed above).
4. Leave to culture at room temperature for 12-24 hours (depending on the desired consistency).
5. When desired consistency is reached, remove the kefir grains.
6. Secure lid to glass bottle and store in fridge.

Ways to enjoy your kefir

- Drink it straight up!
- Include it in smoothies
- Use it to make chia puddings
- Pour over muesli

CASHEW PROBIOTIC YOGHURT

Making your own yoghurt is easier than you might think! The benefit is that you can avoid the artificial ingredients and added sugar of commercial, store-bought brands – instead using quality ingredients, to get the most nutrients from your yoghurt. Yoghurt with active, living bacteria cultures – probiotics – helps keep the gut happy, improving digestive symptoms such as bloating, diarrhoea and constipation.

Ingredients

2 cups cashews, soaked for minimum 2 hours or overnight
½ cup plain unsweetened almond milk
Juice from 1 medium lemon
1 tsp pure maple syrup
Pinch of Himalayan or sea salt
2 capsules of good quality, multistrain probiotic

Method

1. Drain and rinse the soaked cashews, add all the ingredients minus the probiotic to the blender, blend on a high speed for 60 seconds or until smooth and creamy.
2. Transfer to a bowl and sprinkle with the probiotics and mix in with a spoon.
3. Cover the bowl with muslin cloth and leave it in a warm, dark place for 24-48 hours.
4. Store in an airtight container in the fridge.
The yoghurt will last for approximately 5 days.

Spice it up

- Sprinkle with cinnamon for bonus anti-inflammatory benefits!
- Top with slices of fresh fruit or frozen berries.
- Add chia seeds, goji berries, pumpkin and/or sunflower seeds.







TULSI JELLIES

These gut-friendly gummies pack a punch, containing two super ingredients!

Tulsi, or Holy Basil, is known as the 'Queen of Herbs' in traditional Indian medicine for its anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, digestive and stress-relieving properties. It can help ease constipation, promote metabolism and absorption of macronutrients, detoxify the liver and bladder and balance gut bacteria.

High in amino acids, gelatine can help heal the gut by restoring healthy stomach lining and improving gastric acid secretion. It also promotes strong bones, smooth skin and muscle synthesis. Use organic grass-fed bovine gelatin powder which is premium quality gelatin from healthy animals.

Ingredients

2 ½ tbsp powdered gelatin (grass fed bovine)
3 tbsp Tulsi tea leaves or 3 Tulsi tea bags
1 piece chopped ginger (approx. 2cm)
2 cups boiling water
2 tbsp honey (optional)
Pinch of salt

Method

1. Place the gelatin powder in a bowl.
Add 4 tablespoons of boiling water, stir and set aside for 5 minutes or until the gelatin dissolves.
2. Place the 3 tablespoons of Tulsi tea leaves (or 3 tea bags) in a heatproof bowl. Add the ginger and the 2 cups of boiling water. Allow to steam for 30 minutes.
3. Bring the two mixtures together and whisk lightly. Strain into a jug. Stir in honey (optional) and a pinch of salt.
4. Pour the mixture into moulds and place in the fridge for 4 hours or until set.
5. Enjoy 1-3 jellies daily.

Your next appointment is:



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Bio Concepts Pty Ltd

19a Guardhouse Road, Banyo QLD 4014 Australia

www.bioconcepts.com.au

Practitioner support: 1800 077 113

Phone: +61 (07) 3868 0699