



Leaky Gut & Gut Health

Many years ago, Hippocrates stated, “All disease begins in the gut”. Since then, we have come to learn that many diseases do, in fact, begin in our gut. A poorly functioning digestive system, paired with poor food choices, can lead to a whole host of diseases including diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular disease and more. Some of these illnesses can be a result of excess inflammation, dysbiosis and ultimately leaky gut.

WHAT IS DYSBIOSIS

Your digestive tract is lined with bacteria – some of them good, and some of them bad. It’s important to maintain a happy balance between the two in order to keep the bad bacteria in line.

Dysbiosis occurs when the bad bacteria outgrow the beneficial bacteria, upsetting the delicate balance in the gut. An excess of bad bacteria can lead to digestive distress, inflammation and other illnesses. This can include intestinal bacteria overgrowth, inflammatory bowel disease, and even allergies, asthma, metabolic diseases and obesity.

Dysbiosis can occur due to poor diet, excess stress, antibiotic treatment, certain medications, aging, illness and more.

WHAT IS LEAKY GUT?

Inflammation in the gut is the root of many illnesses. Simply put, inflammation is your body’s response to foreign invaders. Your immune system is called to the site of the invader to attack and repair cells. While inflammation is necessary for acute issues, chronic long-term inflammation becomes a problem.

Leaky gut happens when our digestive tract is under constant stress due to low-grade, chronic inflammation. Inflammation causes the cells of our intestinal lining to start to separate, creating small spaces between them. These junctions are just large enough for pathogens, tiny food particles and other toxins to cross the intestinal lining and enter directly into the blood stream. Because these toxins are foreign, an immune reaction happens leading to bloating, food sensitivities, allergies, skin issues and even autoimmune disease.

Dysbiosis, poor diet, toxins and excess stress can trigger leaky gut.

HEALING LEAKY GUT WITH THE FOUR R’S

Fortunately there are ways to heal leaky gut and improve intestinal permeability.

1. Remove:
 - Remove any foods that can damage the gut lining and trigger inflammation.
 - This may be different for everyone, but can include food intolerances or allergies, sugars, alcohol, gluten, dairy, and soy.
2. Replace:
 - Replace your digestive system with the nutrients or substances that are lacking for proper digestion.
 - This can include bitters, hydrochloric acid, enzymes, bile acids, and more.
3. Repair:
 - Repair the lining of the gut by taking a break from the inflammatory foods and nourishing the gut lining with nutrients and substances that can promote healing.



- Adopt a whole foods diet with natural fibre, consider herbal support such as aloe vera and other anti-inflammatory herbs, and consider other supplements like specific amino acids (L-glutamine), essential fatty acids, and antioxidants.
4. Re-inoculate:
- Repopulate your gut with healthy bacteria to improve your digestion and overall health. Healthy gut bacteria are critical for healthy digestion, immune function and more.
 - Consume fermented foods and consider a probiotic supplement.
 - Feed your healthy gut bacteria with sufficient prebiotics (for example, soluble fibres) so they can thrive.

SOURCES:

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