

Gut Health

Our gut is actually one long tube that begins at our mouth and ends, well, you know...on the other end. As food is consumed, the process of digestion begins with the help of digestive enzymes, acids, and helpful bacteria. At the appropriate time, nutrients are allowed into the bloodstream, and waste products are passed along and eventually excreted. At least, this is the way the process is designed to work.

Just like your household trash, if food sits in the gut too long (constipation), waste products and toxins start to rot and can be recycled back through the system and passed into the bloodstream – causing all kinds of havoc. On the other hand, if you empty your household trash too quickly, you end up wasting plastic bags and spending money unnecessarily on more. In the same way, when food passes through your system too quickly (diarrhea), important nutrients are not being assimilated. Even if you have the best diet in the world, your body is not benefiting. Food is being wasted and the body suffers. As with most things, the key is HEALTHY BALANCE – we want digestion to occur at just the right speed...not too fast and not too slow. And we want the good stuff in and the bad stuff out. The good news is, you can control how efficiently this system works!

Many factors in our environment contribute to poor gut health. Imagine these things “poking holes” in your gut and allowing the bad stuff into your bloodstream and therefore into your whole body. Here are the most common gut irritants:

- a diet high in nutrient-poor carbohydrates
- a diet high in sugar and processed foods
- antibiotics and other prescription drugs
- NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs)
- antibacterial soaps and hand sanitizers
- herbicides, pesticides and synthetic hormones (from the poor quality plants and animals that we consume)
- chronic stress
- chronic sleep deprivation
- heavy metals like aluminum, lead and mercury
- toxic mold
- other environmental toxins

The results of poor gut health can range from mild to severe. Those in the field of ancestral health believe that **almost all disease** can be traced back to inflammation somewhere in the body, which in turn is tied to gut health. That’s why it is so important to start your kids off right, *right now* – with the best possible diet you can provide. Your choices now will affect their longterm health, and perhaps even the health of their children, and their children’s children. Serious stuff.