



6 STEPS TO BEGIN
Healing Your Gut

**SIMPLE PRACTICES TO
RESTORE BALANCE, IMPROVE
DIGESTION, AND BOOST
YOUR GUT HEALTH**

Six Steps

To begin healing your gut



1

Eliminate or minimize gut damaging foods

2

Minimize environmental toxins

3

Nourish your body and rebuild your gut lining

4

Reinoculate your gut microbiome

5

Upgrade your hydration

6

Manage your stress

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NUTRITION

Step 1

Eliminate or Minimize Gut Damaging Foods

Foods to be avoided by all:

- Highly processed carbohydrates (cereals, granola bars, flours, most bread, baked goods, pretzels, etc.).
- Highly processed oils (canola oil, soybean oil, corn oil, cottonseed oil, vegetable oil, sunflower oil, peanut oil, rice bran oil, grapeseed oil, safflower oil, and palm oil).
- Added sugars. This includes natural sugars such as honey and maple syrup. If you are really working towards healing your gut, eliminate all added sugar. Check labels on food for "added sugar" along with looking at the ingredients for sneaky forms of sugar.
- Non-organic dairy.
- Artificial sweeteners (sugar alcohols, saccharine, aspartame, sucralose, neotame, etc.).
- Fried foods. This included things like mixed nuts that have added oils.
- Highly processed meat (deli meat, hot dogs, pepperoni, cured meat, etc.).
- GMO foods.
- Alcohol.
- Foods you know you are allergic or sensitive to.
- Added colors, preservatives, or emulsifiers.

Foods to be avoided by most or kept to a minimum:

- Gluten
- Foods high in saturated fat
- Red meat
- Dried fruit

Step 1 Continued

Eliminate or Minimize Gut Damaging Foods

If you have never done an elimination diet or food sensitivity test, you may want to consider this as you could be eating something frequently that is causing damage to your gut. Each individual digests food differently than the next person, and you could be sensitive even to foods you believe to be healthy.

Here are some links to food sensitivity tests if you are interested:

- [Everlywell](#)
- [Labcorp](#)
- [Quest](#)

Additionally you may be dealing with conditions such as small intestinal bacterial overgrowth (SIBO) or candida, in which additional supplements and dietary strategies would need to be implemented for healing.

Here links to home tests if you are interested:

- [Life Extension](#) (SIBO)
- [Dr. Cabral](#) (Candida)
- [Verisana](#) (Candida)
- [Viome](#) (Full Microbiome)



Step 2

Minimize Environmental Toxins

Believe it or not, toxins in our food, water, and household products can have a major impact on our gut health. Just as an example, glyphosate, which is an herbicide sprayed on most non-organic crops, was originally patented as an antibiotic. Antibiotics kill off our healthy gut bacteria and disrupt the gut microbiome.

Here are ways to reduce environmental toxins:

- Eat organic fruits, vegetables, and animal products. This is especially important when eating the skin of a fruit or vegetable. For example berries should be bought organic, whereas this is not as crucial for a watermelon in which you are not eating the thick outer shell.
- Drink filtered water and avoid water that has been stored in a plastic bottle.
- Reheat your food in glass containers, avoid reheating in plastic.
- Invest in clean cookware such as ceramic or stainless steel. Avoid cooking in non-stick pans that have PFA's or teflon (especially if this cookware is scratched).
- Go through your household cleaning products and skincare products and check for harmful ingredients such as parabens, phthalates, PFAs, and formaldehyde. Use the [ThinkDirty App](#) or the [Healthy Living App](#) to check your products for quality.
- Wet dust your home frequently to pick up dust that may contain harmful toxins.
- Consider investing in an air purifier to further reduce toxic dust particles within the home. The [Air Doctor](#) and [Molekule](#) are examples of certified HEPA air filters.

Step 3

Nourish Your Body and Rebuild Your Gut Lining

Our food choices can either help support and fuel our bodies or hinder and damage the body. Choose foods that can help rebuild and repair your body.

Clean Protein:

- Organic and pasture raised poultry and eggs
- Wild caught fish
- Organic bone broth
- Grass-fed beef (good for some people in small amounts while healing the gut)
- Organic lentils, beans, nuts, and seeds

Healthy fats:

- Olive oil (best used cold or cooked over low heat)
- Avocados
- Organic nuts and seeds
- Organic pasture raised eggs
- Fatty fish such as wild caught salmon, mackerel, and sardines.

Fiber:

- Organic vegetables
- Organic fruit in moderation to avoid excessive sugar intake. Berries are especially high in anti-oxidants and micronutrients to aide in gut healing.
- Organic nuts and seeds
- Organic legumes and beans. Some people will tolerate gluten free grains well, while others will not.



Step 3 Continued

Nourish Your Body and Rebuild Your Gut Lining

The following foods and supplements are especially good at rebuilding the gut wall and supporting a healthy environment for the gut microbiome.

- **Bone broth** can be used in soups, sauces, or you can drink plain. Bone broth contains glycine and arginine to fight against inflammation. It has many trace minerals such as, omega 3's, gelatin, and glutamine all of which can help repair the gut lining.
- **Aloe** can be taken as a supplement, blended into a smoothie, or you can drink as a juice. Aloe contains anti-inflammatory polyphenols, enzymes such as amylase and lipase to aide in healthy fat and sugar metabolism, and prebiotics to help balance the gut microbiome. Aloe can help reduce constipation.
- **Dandelion greens** are loaded with vitamins and minerals such as vitamin A, C, E, K, phosphorus, calcium, sodium, and potassium. They also are very low in calories yet high in fiber to improve gut motility.
- **Dandelion Root Tea** is a delicious coffee alternative without the caffeine or acidic properties.
- **Licorice Root Tea** has antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and antimicrobial effects. This can be especially effective for those suffering with gastric reflux or stomach ulcers.
- **Unpasteurized apple cider vinegar** can improve the digestion of foods that are harder to breakdown, can help regulate blood sugars, and is a source of probiotics for a healthy gut microbiome.
- **Ginger** helps activate digestive enzymes to breakdown food faster and move food through the gut at a healthy rate. It also contains prebiotics to improve balance of the gut microbiome.
- **Collagen peptides** contains amino acids such as glutamine to help rebuild the gut lining.
- **Glutamine** is an amino acid needed to build proteins. It is especially important for digestive health and immune health.

Step 4

Reinoculate Your Gut Microbiome

The gut microbiome consists of the living organisms present within the gut. Within our digestive tract we have bacteria and yeast, some of which are beneficial to our health and some of which are not. Things like sugar, processed foods, stress, antibiotics, and other medications can alter our gut microbiome, causing a decrease in healthy bacteria and an increase in harmful bacteria or yeast. The previous strategies focus mostly on reducing things that cause damage to the gut microbiome along with rebuilding the gut wall.

If damage to the gut exists, one may also need to take extra steps to reintroduce healthy gut bacteria and foods that help this healthy bacteria to grow. See below for examples of foods and supplements to reinoculate the gut.

Probiotics (healthy gut bacteria)

Food:

- Kimchi
- Sauerkraut
- Kombucha
- Tempeh
 - (soy/grains)
- Miso (soy)
- Nato (soy)
- Kefir (dairy)
- Yogurt (dairy or coconut)

Supplements

- [Sports Research Probiotics](#)
- [Ora Organic Probiotics](#)

Prebiotic Foods (foods that feed the healthy gut bacteria)

- Garlic
- Onion
- Asparagus
- Bananas
- Jerusalem artichokes
- Dandelion greens
- Beans/legumes
- Chicory root
- Cacao

Step 5 Upgrade Your Hydration

This deserved its own step because so often this is overlooked and it is crucial for gut health. While we are able to go weeks without food, just a few days without water could be the end of us. In regards to gut health, water is important for the breakdown of food, to move food at a normal rate through the body, for energy production, and for stabilizing the gut microbiome.

Most people need to drink approximately half their body weight (in pounds) in ounces daily. For example, if you weight 140 pounds, you would need about 70 ounces of water daily for optimal hydration.

If you are having difficulty keeping up with your water consumption, the following apps may help you track and stay accountable to your water needs.

- Daily Water Tracker Reminder
 - Available on: iPhone, iPad and Android. Price: Free with in-app purchases.
- Aqualert
 - Available on: iPhone, iPad and Android. Price: Free with in-app purchases.
- Hydro Coach
 - Available on: Android. Price: Free with in-app purchases.
- iHydrate
 - Available on: iPhone and iPad. Price: \$2.99 with in-app purchases.



Step 6

Manage Your Stress

Stress has a huge impact on our gut health. When stress is high, digestion is slow. In addition, chronically elevated stress hormones can cause damage to our gut microbiome and increases levels of inflammation throughout the body. Managing stress is easier said than done. Stress management will look different for each person, but it is an important piece of the puzzle when working on gut health. The following strategies can be used individually or in combination to reduce the effects of high stress.



Breath work: Perhaps the fastest way to reduce elevated stress hormones in the blood stream is through breath work. Breath work can be performed anywhere, and at any time with no equipment necessary. [Here is a great article on breath work.](#)



Meditation: For some, meditation can be challenging in the beginning. If just starting out, begin with a short guided meditation and remember that it is normal for the mind to wonder. [Here is an example of a guided meditation.](#)



Morning routine: This can help start the day off on the right foot. Design your morning routine to help move you closer to your goals, and to help reduce stress or anxiety first thing in the morning. An example morning routine could be: Drink a 12 ounce glass of water, meditate or do breath work for five minutes, and say five gratitude statements or affirmations.



Gratitude journaling: Gratitude journaling is one of the best ways to create happiness and peace. Before bed or early in the morning, write down 3 - 5 things that you are truly grateful for, big or small.