

# BASIC GUT SUPPORT GUIDE

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The goal of this protocol is to optimize digestion and heal your “leaky gut” so that the immune system surrounding your gut can function optimally. Inflammation in the gut and allow for optimal absorption of nutrients so you can start healing your hormones. I recommend you do this protocol if you have minor gut/digestive issues like gas, bloating, burping and infrequent constipation and diarrhea.

## What is Leaky Gut Syndrome?

Leaky gut syndrome is the result of damage to the intestinal lining. This causes incompletely digested food and waste to “leak” through the gut lining into the bloodstream. This triggers an autoimmune reaction, which can lead to gastrointestinal problems such as bloating, excessive gas and cramps, fatigue, food sensitivities, joint pain, skin rashes, and autoimmune diseases.

## Causes of Leaky Gut Syndrome/compromised digestion

The cause of this syndrome may be chronic inflammation, food sensitivity and allergies, damage from taking non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (think ibuprofen, midol, aspirin, advil etc.), cytotoxic drugs and radiation, antibiotics, alcohol consumption, or compromised immunity.

## STEP 1 – HEAL YOUR LEAKY GUT

- 1. Eliminate inflammatory foods from your diet** – Wheat, dairy, soy, corn and refined sugar are the most common allergenic and inflammatory foods. Conventionally raised meats are associated with inflammation too because of their high omega 6 content and the use of antibiotics and other hormones in their production.
- 2. Reduce your exposure to other inflammatory toxins** – Alcohol, antibiotics, birth control pills and synthetic drugs, unless they are absolutely necessary. I put major emphasis on NSAIDS because they directly cause a weakened gut lining.
- 3. Introduce homemade bone broth** - Make your own bone broth or order it from a trusted provider. It is a digestive aid and helps rebuild the gut.
- 4. Gelatin/Collagen** - This is an ingredient in bone broth that can be consumed instead of bone broth or added to the bone broth for additional healing. I like [Great Lakes Gelatin Collagen Hydrosolate](#), which can be dissolved in cold drinks too like smoothies, smoothie breakfast bowls or green juices. I add a tablespoon to bone broth, a smoothie or green juice once a day.
- 5. L-Glutamine** – This is an amino acid that feeds the cells of your gut lining. It is your gut's favorite food and helps to heal gut permeability issues very well. It is also found in bone broth.

Dosage: Take L-Glutamine for 28 days. Start with 1000mg three times a day mixed in 4oz of water and drink on an empty stomach. Take that for 5 days. Increase to 2000mg three times a day until day 10. From days 11-28 take 3000mg three times a day. This should work really well to heal and seal your gut. I like [Bulk Supplements Pure L-Glutamine Powder](#) or [Pure Encapsulations L-Glutamine Powder](#).

**6. Introduce turmeric** - Curcumin, an active ingredient in the spice turmeric, reduces overall inflammation and works wonders for pelvic pain, migraines and joint pain. I recommend 1000mg a day of curcumin with bioperine, or you can whip up a turmeric paste using coconut oil and black pepper. Turmeric is not absorbed well by the body without the presence of fat and black pepper. I also sprinkle it on top of almost all my meals.

## STEP 2 – BALANCE THE GOOD BACTERIA IN YOUR GUT

**1. Start with probiotic-rich fermented foods every day** – Refrigerated sauerkraut, kimchi, or any kind of fermented vegetables. The wider the variety, the better. Add 1-2 tablespoons (or more if you want!) each day to meals and work your way up to eating them with every meal. I love Bubbies and Farm House Culture and I also buy different kinds from my farmer's market. Please see the *How to make your own bacteria* e-book in the handouts section.

**Note:** Fermented and aged foods are high in histamines, which are compounds that trigger allergy-like symptoms in people who are histamine intolerant. Hives, headaches and sneezing are common reactions. So if you are sensitive to histamines then I recommend using a probiotic instead of fermented food.

**2. Probiotic capsules** – 10-50 billion CFU's per day with food. The severity of your symptoms will determine how long you need to take them but I suggest taking them for 28 days, 2-3 times a year to maintain gut health.

It's always best to start with a smaller dose and work your way up to higher dosages. Start with 10 billion CFU's if you've never taken probiotics before and to avoid any adverse reactions like bloating, gas, skin rashes and other common side effects of taking too many probiotics at once.

- Integrative Therapeutics Probiotic Pro-Flora Concentrate
- Metagenics Ultra Flora Plus DF 15 Billion Organisms
- VSL#3 is the most well-studied probiotic that is available over the counter and by prescription.

**3. Digestive enzymes** – One of the easiest, yet most beneficial digestion helpers - you'll break down food better and up-level the entire digestion process and your gut health in a major way. Do not take them for longer than needed as some research suggests the body can become dependent on them. Take 1 capsule before each meal for 28 days.

- Integrative Therapeutics Bio-Zyme
- Pure Encapsulations – Digestive Enzymes Ultra

**4. Focus on chewing your food 20-30 times each mouthful** – Chewing your food properly is very much a part of mindful eating and it becomes a habit over time. After chewing properly, you will likely experience less bloating, burping and stomach pain (if you have these symptoms).

**5. Get that fiber in** –If your bowels are slow moving then you need to make sure you are getting at least 35-45 grams of fiber each day. Optimal transit time should be 12-24 hours for proper absorption of your food. This means that if you eat at 7pm, you should ideally have a bowel movement the following morning between 7am and 12pm.

#### **6. Consume foods that contain the prebiotic resistant starch**

There are a number of foods that contain resistant starch in them: legumes such as lentils, white beans and chickpeas, along with cooked plantains and potatoes that have been cooled, like potato salad. You can try unmodified potato starch ([Bob's Red Mill](#)), which is one of the best sources of RS. This can be added into smoothies or juices because it's best when not heated.

Note: If you feel bloated, constipated or gassy after trying out prebiotic foods then they might not be for you, which is totally okay.

### **STEP 3 – LIGHT YOUR DIGESTIVE FIRES**

**1. The first thing you want to do is the baking soda stomach acid test.** This is not a 100% accurate test but it will give you a good idea of what's going on with your stomach acid. If it is inconclusive for you, then I recommend the next step.

**2. Take the HCL challenge outlined on the same handout.** HCL is basically a supplemental form of hydrochloric acid that is very effective for people with low stomach acid.

**3. If these two tests are pointing towards a stomach acid deficiency** then you can follow the steps below to stimulate acid production in the stomach.

#### **GOOD:**

- Start each morning out with warm water and lemon or lime. Squeeze a tablespoon of lemon juice into the water.
- Raw apple cider vinegar - add 1 tablespoon of raw apple cider vinegar to an 8oz glass of warm water and drink it in the morning and then again before meals. You can even have it after meals to stop heartburn if it happens.

**NOTE:** I don't think apple cider vinegar should be used on a long-term basis because of the potential damage to the enamel on your teeth.

#### **BETTER:**

Take bitter herbs or "digestive bitters" which have been used in traditional cultures for thousands of years to stimulate and improve digestion. Studies have confirmed the ability of bitters to increase the flow of digestive juices, like HCL, bile and pepsin. Look for digestive bitters that have some or all of the ingredients commonly used in herbology:

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|-------------------|----------------|
| • Dandelion       | • Milk thistle |
| • Fennel          | • Peppermint   |
| • Ginger          | • Wormwood     |
| • Beet root       | • Yellow dock  |
| • Goldenseal root |                |

Take a dose of bitters (according to the label or directions from an herbalist) before each meal to get your juices flowing!

### **BEST:**

Supplement with Betaine HCL. This is the best option to help restore your stomach acid production. This is going to require close attention to your symptoms and whether they improve or not. Usually people see an improvement in 3-6 months depending on their stomach acid levels. I recommend [Bluebonnet HCL Plus Pepsin](#).

### **If you have low stomach acid:**

1. Your meals should contain at least 15-20 grams of protein (about 4-6 ounces of meat). Do not take HCL with a meal that doesn't have animal protein.
2. Start with 1 pill (650mg or less) of Betaine HCL with each meal. Take it 12 minutes after you begin eating.
3. Finish the meal and observe sensations like: heaviness, burning, warmth or hotness.
4. Stay at this dosage of 1 pill for another day of meals with protein and if you don't notice anything, then at the beginning of your 3rd day, try TWO pills.
5. Stay there for another day and then try THREE pills.
6. Keep increasing the number of pills taken with each meal until you notice some GI discomfort described in step #3, especially the warm/hot sensation. Please don't go over 10 pills without supervision by either myself or a qualified practitioner. You can book a private session with me by emailing [support@nicolejardim.com](mailto:support@nicolejardim.com).
7. When you feel this sensation, reduce the dosage to the previous number of capsules you were taking before you experienced it and stay at that dosage. For example, if you felt the discomfort at 4 pills, then 3 pills is your proper dosage for each meal.
8. Over time, if you start to feel a warming sensation at that dose, reduce again by 1 pill. You may find that you can continue to reduce the dosage, or you may also find that you may need to increase the dosage.
9. After 90 days on your maintenance dose, try to gradually reduce the dose to zero.

### **IMPORTANT:**

If you're consuming any anti-inflammatory medicines please do not take HCL. Examples of those are: corticosteroids, aspirin, ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) or other NSAIDs. These drugs can damage the GI lining and supplementing with HCL could aggravate it, increasing the risks of bleeding or ulcer. If you have any kind of stomach ulcer, please do not take HCL.

## **ADDITIONAL STEPS**

**1. Systemic bacterial/fungal or parasite infections** - my simple gut protocol is not going to eradicate a systemic infection or bacterial overgrowth so I urge you to see a functional or naturopathic doctor who can correctly test, diagnose and help you treat the issue.

**2. Chronic yeast infections, bacterial vaginosis and/or your tongue has a white coating** – If you have either of these then it is likely you have a yeast or candida overgrowth or some

other kind of bacterial imbalance. Here's what to do in addition to seeing a qualified practitioner:

It is imperative that you remove all sugar and refined carbohydrates from your diet. You might want to introduce a women's health probiotic to help with the yeast infection symptoms. Primadophilus Optima Women's, Renew Life Ultimate Flora Vaginal Support or Integrative Therapeutics Women's Pro Flora

**3. Consider ALCAT testing for food sensitivities and allergies** – If you are confused about what foods to eliminate then consider this test. It is a more expensive option but it is very comprehensive and will tell you exactly what you are allergic to and how allergic you are to each food. I offer ALCAT food allergy testing and you can find the brochure with the different tests and pricing in the handout download section. If this is something you'd like to do we can set up a time to discuss your options. Email my support team at [support@nicolejardim.com](mailto:support@nicolejardim.com) and we'll get right back to you.