

“All Disease Begins in the Gut”

-Hippocrates

What Is “Leaky Gut” and why should you care?

“Leaky gut,” or **increased intestinal permeability**, happens when the tight junctions in your gut lining become compromised. This allows toxins, undigested food particles, and bacteria to "leak" into the bloodstream — triggering inflammation, immune reactivity, and widespread symptoms.

How Common Is It?

- **Up to 30%** of people worldwide may have increased intestinal permeability, especially those with **IBS, metabolic syndrome, or chronic inflammation**.
- A comprehensive review found:
 - **25–87.5%** of people with **autoimmune diseases**
 - **30–65%** of individuals with **diabetes**
 - **35.6%** of those with **food allergies** all experienced increased intestinal permeability.

Common Signs of Leaky Gut:

- Bloating, gas, or irregular bowel movements
- Food sensitivities
- Fatigue or brain fog
- Skin issues (eczema, acne, rosacea)
- Joint or muscle pain
- Autoimmune flare-ups
- Mood issues (anxiety, irritability)
- Histamine Intolerance

What Causes Leaky Gut?

From a functional medicine lens, common root causes include:

- Processed Foods (junk food, gluten, sugar, industrial oils)
- Medications (NSAIDs, antibiotics, birth control pills)
- Toxin Exposure (pesticides, plastics, alcohol)
- Chronic Stress
- Dysbiosis (gut imbalance, yeast, SIBO, parasites)
- Chronic Low-Grade Infections (H. pylori, Epstein-Barr virus (EBV), Candida overgrowth, Latent viral or bacterial load)

The 5R Approach to Healing the Gut

Functional Medicine uses the **5R framework** to restore gut integrity:

1. Remove

- Eliminate inflammatory foods, infections, and toxins.
 - Gluten, dairy, sugar, alcohol, processed foods
 - Test for Candida, SIBO, parasites if needed

2. Replace

- Support digestion with what the body lacks.
 - Stomach acid (HCl), digestive enzymes, bile support

3. Reinoculate

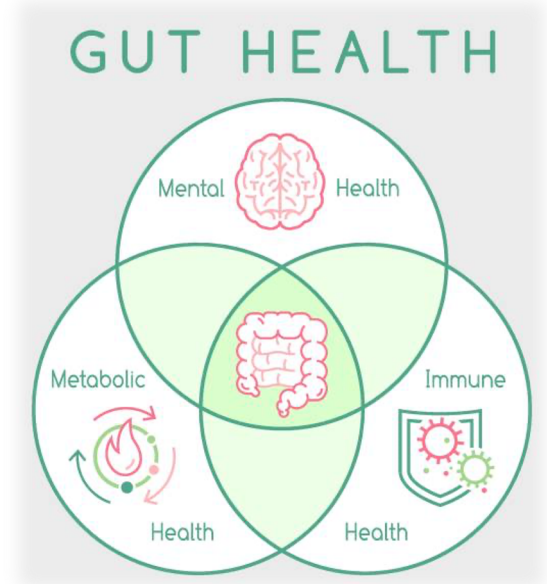
- Restore beneficial microbes.
 - **Probiotics** (lactobacillus, bifido, etc.), fermented foods
 - **Prebiotics** (fiber, inulin, resistant starch)

4. Repair

- Rebuild the gut lining.
 - Key nutrients: L-glutamine, zinc carnosine, collagen, aloe, DGL licorice, vitamin A & D

5. Rebalance

- Address lifestyle factors.
 - Stress reduction, quality sleep, movement, breathwork, meaningful social connection



Daily Tips for Gut Health

- Eat a fiber-rich diet
- Take time to chew thoroughly for proper digestion and absorption
- Stay well hydrated
- Limit plastic and chemical exposure
- Focus on whole, colorful, anti-inflammatory foods
- Prioritize sleep and stress management
- Engage in regular physical activity
- Avoid unnecessary antibiotics

Need Personalized Support?

Schedule with NP Elaine to discuss advanced stool testing, food sensitivity labs, or a customized 5R protocol to rebuild your gut from the inside out.

*Reference Links:

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33642218/>

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10221762/>