

Healing Your Gut: At-Home Strategies for Restoring Your Microbiome

From a Functional Medicine Perspective

A healthy gut microbiome is the foundation for optimal digestion, nutrient absorption, immune function, mood regulation, and overall vitality.

When gut bacteria become imbalanced (**gut dysbiosis**), you may experience:

- Bloating, gas, constipation, or diarrhea
- Fatigue or brain fog
- Skin issues
- Food sensitivities

Below are **evidence-based, at-home strategies** to help restore balance and support gut healing.

Remove Triggers That Harm Your Gut

These can damage the gut lining or promote harmful microbes:

- Highly processed foods (refined sugar, white flour, packaged snacks)
- Industrial seed oils (soybean, canola, corn, cottonseed)
- Alcohol (especially beer and sugary cocktails)
- Artificial sweeteners (aspartame, sucralose, saccharin)
- Excess gluten & dairy (especially processed forms)
- Unnecessary antibiotics & NSAIDs (unless prescribed)

Eat to Feed Beneficial Bacteria

Prioritize foods that nourish your microbiome:

- **Prebiotic-rich vegetables:** asparagus, leeks, onions, garlic, dandelion greens, artichokes
- **High-polyphenol foods:** blueberries, green tea, pomegranate, extra virgin olive oil
- **Diverse plant fibers:** aim for **30+ different plant foods/week**
- **Clean fermented foods:** sauerkraut, kimchi, coconut yogurt, kefir, miso (if tolerated)

Consider Targeted Supplements

Category	Purpose	Example/Notes
Probiotics	Reintroduce beneficial bacteria	Spore-based blends (Megasporebiotic), Lactobacillus & Bifidobacterium blends, Saccharomyces boulardii
Prebiotics	Feed good bacteria	PHGG, inulin, GOS — start slowly to prevent bloating
Gut-Lining Support	Repair and soothe	L-glutamine, aloe vera extract, DGL licorice, zinc carnosine
Digestive Support	Aid food breakdown	Digestive enzymes, betaine HCl (for low stomach acid)
Anti-Microbial Herbs (short-term)	Reduce harmful overgrowth	Oregano oil, berberine, neem, garlic — use in cycles, follow with probiotics

Lifestyle Habits for Gut Repair

- **Manage stress:** meditation, deep breathing, light exercise
- **Sleep well:** 7–9 hours/night to protect microbiome health
- **Move daily:** walking, stretching, gentle strength training for gut motility
- **Stay hydrated:** filtered water maintains mucosal lining
- **Time-restricted eating:** 12–14 hour overnight fast supports repair

The Functional Medicine “4R” Gut Repair Framework

1. **Remove** harmful triggers (foods, pathogens, toxins)
2. **Replace** digestive factors (enzymes, stomach acid, bile)
3. **Reinoculate** with probiotics & prebiotics
4. **Repair** the gut lining with targeted nutrients

When to Seek Medical Guidance

If symptoms persist or worsen — especially **blood in stool, severe abdominal pain, or rapid weight loss** — consult your healthcare provider.

Possible functional lab tests:

- Comprehensive stool analysis (DNA-based)
- SIBO breath testing
- Food sensitivity testing
- Zonulin/leaky gut markers

Disclaimer: This handout is for educational purposes only and is not a substitute for personalized medical advice. Always consult your healthcare provider before starting new supplements or therapies.