

Natural Health News

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EVERGREEN SPA & WELLNESS
ELY, MN



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STORE HOURS:

Tuesday – Saturday
9:30 am-5:30 pm

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By Appointment

LEAKY GUT SYNDROME & HOW TO REPAIR IT

Leaky gut syndrome is a rapidly growing condition that millions of people are unknowingly struggling with and, if left untreated, can have a big impact on your health. Your small intestine is 23 feet long and is lined with finger-like projections (named villi). The job of your small intestine is to effectively digest your food and then deliver those nutrients to all your cells via your bloodstream. You have 10 trillion cells to feed. Additionally, 70 to 80 percent of the human immune system is found in your gut. The immune presence in your gut ensures that any dangerous organisms that might “hitchhike” along with your food, such as bacteria, parasites, or yeast, will be eradicated quickly and efficiently. Your gut is called the second brain for two reasons: 1. The gut is second in importance to only the brain 2. The gut has an intelligence, provided by your immune system, which allows for the passage of nutrients out to your bloodstream, while at the same time preventing any invaders from entering your bloodstream. If both systems are functioning optimally, your gut and immune system perform that job very well, allowing you to enjoy great health. A leaky gut occurs when the immune system becomes greatly compromised, and it is not able to maintain the tight control on the opening and closing of the microscopic “gates” (better known as tight junctions) across the small intestine. The gates should only open to allow nutrients to pass out of the gut and into the bloodstream, and should close tight and block any bacteria, toxins, and partially digested food from escaping into your bloodstream. The gut is deemed “leaky” when the tight junctions are not appropriately guarded. The inevitable result of leaky gut is widespread inflammation, the root cause of all degenerative diseases, including autoimmune disease. Things that can compromise your immune system include gluten, other food sensitivities (dairy, corn, and soy are potentially high on the list), drugs, GMO foods (avoid as many as possible), toxins, genetics (this can be tested for). There are several symptoms of leaky gut including bloating or gas, food sensitivities, fatigue, slow metabolism, weight gain, thyroid disease, diarrhea and constipation, joint pain or arthritis, depression and anxiety, nutritional deficiencies, headaches, brain fog, poor memory and concentration, skin conditions (such as acne, eczema or rosacea) and having the diagnosis of an autoimmune disease. Research by Dr. Alessio Fasano and his team discovered the substance *zonulin*, which is responsible for the leakiness that occurs between the cells of your small intestine. The team discovered gluten and bacteria in the intestine as major triggers of leaky gut.

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While some people are more susceptible to gluten than others, particularly those with celiac disease and gluten sensitivity, it was interesting that the researchers documented gluten to create a leaky gut in everyone, regardless of the presence of celiac disease or gluten allergy. The time frame for which the “leakiness” lasted was shorter in those without either gluten condition, but it still occurred. In addition to the triggers of gluten and bacteria, other factors believed to contribute include: high sugar intake (will feed the growth of yeast, candida and bad bacteria, which will further damage your gut), NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs such as Advil, Motrin, Aspirin and Ibuprofen), steroids, antacids, birth control pills, antibiotics and nutritional deficiencies (particularly vitamins A and D3, and zinc). The cause of your leaky gut needs to be identified and those factors removed from the equation. Whether it is gluten, an infection, or a drug, eliminating the cause or contributors must be addressed. Then, the second step is to heal the gut. There is not a single supplement that heals leaky gut. However, these are some of the most important steps to take: **Consume bone broth** which contains collagen and the amino acids proline and glycine that can help heal your damaged cell walls. **Limit your intake of sugar and refined carbohydrates** (which turn into sugar) to starve the bad bacteria that may be lurking in your gut. Take a good quality **probiotic** to feed and support the good bacteria. Consume **probiotic foods** such as fermented vegetables which contain organic acids that balance intestinal pH and probiotics. Sauerkraut, kimchi, kombucha, are part of this group of foods. Consume **coconut products**—all coconut products are especially good for your gut. The medium-chain fatty acids in coconut are easier to digest than other fats and work well for leaky gut. Also, coconut kefir contains probiotics that support your digestive system. **Sprouted seeds** (chia seeds, flaxseeds and hemp seeds) are great sources of fiber that can help support the growth of beneficial bacteria. If you have severe leaky gut, you may need to start out getting your fiber from steamed vegetables and fruits.

Healthy fats promote healing (egg yolks, avocados, ghee and coconut oil are easy on the gut and promote healing). Omega-3 fats and anti-inflammatory foods like grass-fed beef and wild-caught fish like salmon benefit a damaged gut. **Digestive enzymes** (1 to 2 capsules at the beginning of each meal) ensure that foods are fully digested, decreasing the chance that partially digested food particles and proteins are damaging your gut wall. **Quercetin**—an antioxidant found in a variety of fruits and vegetables including garlic, capers, cherries, red grapes, blackberries, onions, and apples, to name a few, is a highly beneficial natural anti-inflammatory. **Zinc** is an important mineral that is integral to maintaining tight junction health.

Licorice root is an adaptogenic herb that helps balance cortisol levels and improves acid production in the stomach. Licorice root supports the body’s natural processes for maintaining the mucosal lining of the stomach and duodenum. This herb is especially beneficial if someone’s leaky gut is being caused by emotional stress because it improves the way you produce and metabolize cortisol. The antioxidant and antihistamine properties of **marshmallow root** make it a great addition to any natural medicine cabinet, particularly for those struggling with leaky gut. **Reishi mushrooms** can help to positively influence your immune system. Not only do Reishi mushrooms help kill dangerous cells that cause diseases (like cancer), they also protect healthy genes from mutating and support proper liver detoxification. **Ginger** also supports overall gastrointestinal health. You will be able to find a lot of beneficial natural remedies at the Evergreen Cottage. If you need assistance, please feel free to reach out or schedule a health assessment by calling 218-365-2288.

Organic Roots  *Bistro*

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TUESDAY— SATURDAY 9:30 AM—5:30 PM
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