Patient Handouts

Leaky Gut & Your Health

What is Leaky Gut?

Leaky gut, also known as increased intestinal permeability, has been linked to a variety of conditions including arthritis, autoimmune diseases, autism, and skin conditions, as well as many symptoms such as gas, bloating, constipation, diarrhea, and cramping. How is it that a gut condition can lead to so many systemic issues? When our gut lining is damaged, it becomes 'leaky' and allows large particles to pass through the lining and into our bloodstream. Our immune system, not used to being exposed to particles of this size, views them as invaders and attacks them, creating complexes of food particles and immune cells that can deposit all over the body, creating inflammation. Through this process, an issue in our gut can create symptoms within our joints, skin, even our brain.

Why Does	the	Gut	Become	Leak	۷?
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Today, we are exposed to many substances that can damage our gut lining. Toxins, bacteria, medications, and even certain foods can damage our gut lining and promote the development of leaky gut. Some of the top offenders are gluten, NSAIDS, stress, antibiotics, yeast overgrowth, and pesticides. This constant onslaught causes the tight links between the gut cells to separate. Common genetic mutations can also influence our ability to create new cells and repair the leaks.

When Do We Heal the Gut?

We consider healing the gut when we see certain symptoms, particularly skin conditions such as acne and eczema, digestive upset including diarrhea, constipation, and heartburn, and nutritional deficiencies linked to gut malabsorption. We also may consider treating the gut when treating immune conditions such as autoimmune diseases, seasonal allergies, food allergies, and asthma. Since our gut produces many of our neurotransmitters (brain messengers), especially serotonin, we must consider gut health in psychiatric conditions such as anxiety and depression. As well, any signs of inflammation of the body may benefit from gut healing as this helps to reduce the total load of inflammation in the body.

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