



# Leaky Gut

Although our intestinal lining is hidden deep within our bodies, it is actually regarded as an “external system,” playing a critical role in protecting us from the toxic environment around us. This barrier has the very important task of determining what is absorbed from our gastrointestinal tract into our bloodstream. In ideal conditions, essential nutrients, electrolytes, and water get in, while toxins (certain foods, microorganisms and environmental pollutants) stay out.

Unfortunately, many modern-day lifestyle habits, environmental stressors and certain medications can disrupt the integrity of the intestinal lining. The result is increased intestinal permeability, also known as “leaky gut syndrome.”

Leaky gut syndrome has been associated with a number of conditions, including but not limited to:

- Inflammatory bowel disease
- Celiac disease
- Diabetes
- Food allergy
- Rheumatoid arthritis
- Multiple sclerosis
- Asthma
- Chronic fatigue syndrome
- Depression

It's very important to optimize the health of the gastrointestinal tract and reverse leaky gut syndrome to promote overall wellness.

## **Contributing Factors**

A number of factors, including the following, can contribute to leaky gut:

- Antibiotics
- Poor diet
- Aging
- Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)
- Aspirin
- Stress
- Poor sleep
- Intestinal bacterial balance

All of these factors need to be addressed when treating leaky gut syndrome. It is important that you consult with your healthcare practitioner before discontinuing any prescription medication.

## **Treatment Options**

The first step in fixing your intestinal barrier is to identify and eliminate as many contributing factors as possible. After that, it's time to restore the balance of good bacteria in the gut. This can be accomplished using a high-quality probiotic supplement. Research on both *Lactobacillus* and *Bifidobacterium* strains of probiotics have been shown to repair intestinal lining. Finally, intestinal repair is a final step in restoring optimal intestinal permeability. Some key nutrients that facilitate this repair may include digestive enzymes, zinc carnosine and glutamine. This multi-step health program will put you well on the way to optimal digestion and intestinal health.