IBS, SOS!

FOODS TO AVOID & FOODS TO ENJOY WHILE HEALING YOUR GUT:

8 Dietary Upgrades for IBS Success
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FOODS TO AVOID & FOODS TO ENJOY WHILE HEALING YOUR GUT: 8 DIETARY UPGRADES FOR IBS SUCCESS
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IRRITABLE Bowel Syndrome (IBS) is a disorder characterized by abdominal pain and digestive upsets. Most people who’ve been diagnosed with IBS experience intermittent abdominal pain along with constipation or diarrhea - either one or the other, or both at various times.

According to the International Foundation for Gastrointestinal Disorders, IBS is “one of the most burdensome chronic ailments being reported.” Their study revealed that sufferers of IBS “visit the doctor more frequently, use more diagnostic tests, consume more medications, miss more workdays, have lower work productivity and are hospitalized more frequently.”

10-15% of people worldwide suffer from Irritable Bowel Syndrome, commonly referred to as IBS - but only half of people who experience the pain, fatigue and inconvenience of IBS are actually diagnosed.
IBS is a serious and pervasive health problem. It is a condition defined by various symptoms, but specifically abdominal pain and altered bowel movements. Other symptoms associated with IBS are:

- Abdominal cramping
- Diarrhea
- Constipation
- Alternating diarrhea and constipation
- Gas
- Bloating
- Food intolerances
- Fatigue
- Difficulty sleeping
- Anxiety
- Depression

If you are experiencing these symptoms, it is likely that you are suffering from IBS.
IRRITABLE Bowel Syndrome is disruptive, embarrassing and painful. It can also lead to chronic and serious disease if left untreated. Consider some of the ways that long term IBS can degrade your health:

**Toxicity** - The inability of the colon to effectively eliminate waste causes toxic buildup in our organs, blood and brain. This is known as metabolic endotoxemia and it is a contributor to chronic diseases such as atherosclerosis, diabetes, obesity, dementia and cancer.

**Nutrient Deficiencies** - When we cannot digest and absorb our food we are unable to utilize the nutrients. No matter how balanced and complete our diet is, we will not be able to absorb and make use of the building blocks we need to keep our cells healthy. The chronic diarrhea associated with IBS causes malabsorption that leads to nutritional deficits.

**Mental Health Problems** - Due to the powerful connection between the gut and the mind, at least half - and perhaps as many as 90% - of diagnosed IBS sufferers have psychiatric disorders including panic disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, social phobia, posttraumatic stress disorder, and major depression.

**Autoimmune Disease** - The leaky gut and inflammation characteristic of IBS spur on a bodywide immune response that evolves into autoimmune diseases like celiac disease, Type 1 diabetes, multiple sclerosis and rheumatoid arthritis.

IBS is more than just an uncomfortable inconvenience. It is a real and serious threat to your long term health. It must be taken seriously and remedied as soon as possible.
TREATING IBS
Overcoming IBS involves a few specific phases of healing protocols. To begin with, we must identify the triggers in our diet that are contributing to our chronic inflammatory response. We can achieve this with diagnostic testing or by conducting an elimination diet.

Once we have removed irritants from our diet, we move into the second phase: healing inflammation. It is not enough to simply stop consuming foods that contribute to dysbiosis; we must actively repair the damage that has been done to our digestive tissue. We can use foods, herbs and supplements to soothe inflammation.

The last step is to restore diversity and abundance to our gut microbiota. Unfortunately, bacterial colonies (and even entire species) can be lost from our microbiome due to dysbiosis. The only way to restore the bacteria that we rely on for healthy digestion is to consume probiotics, either in the form of fermented foods or dietary supplements.

As you can see, diet plays a big part in our IBS recovery. In many regards, healing IBS is as simple as eliminating disease-promoting elements from our diet and replacing them with healing alternatives. Consider making these upgrades to your diet to heal your gut:

1. THE GUT-SOOTHING DIET

The IBS diet is all about eliminating foods that are contributing to the inflammatory cycle and emphasizing those foods which soothe inflammation and fortify the microbiome. We can begin
by adopting a gentle, gut-soothing diet and eliminating high FODMAP foods. FODMAPs are fermentable carbohydrates that feed gut bacteria and encourage them to proliferate. When our guts are healthy, it’s important to include sufficient amounts of fermentable carbohydrates in our diet so that our beneficial bacterial species will be nourished.

When these colonies are well fed they repay us by producing Short Chain Fatty Acids (SCFAs) like butyrate. Butyrate is an essential compound that we cannot get directly from our food, but must be produced by the bacteria in our guts. It serves many significant functions.

Butyrate is the primary source of energy in our colon cells. It decreases inflammation and inhibits histamine production. Butyrate produced by bacteria in our guts enters our bloodstream and crosses the blood-brain barrier, where it facilitates the production of Brain Derived Neurotrophic Factor (BDNF). BDNF supports our ability to learn, remember and form new memories.

Clearly, it is vitally important to consume the prebiotic foods that keep our microbiota happy and productive. Nonetheless, these nourishing fibers must be temporarily avoided while we heal our guts.

That’s right: although high FODMAP foods are healthy for most people to consume, they must be avoided in the first phase of IBS treatment. That’s because when we are suffering from dysbiosis, our microbiome is unable to correctly utilize fermentable carbohydrates.

When we have IBS, high FODMAP foods cause excessive absorption of water in the small intestine and a buildup of gas in the colon. Instead of being digested by desirable bacteria
and yielding a healthier microbiome, food for our digestive cells and essential neurotransmitters, fermentable carbohydrates exacerbate symptoms including bloating, gas, pain and diarrhea.

High FODMAP Foods to Avoid:

- Garlic
- Onion
- Apples
- Apricots
- Figs
- Mangos
- Nectarines
- Peaches
- Pears
- Plums
- Watermelon
- Asparagus
- Brussels sprouts
- Cauliflower
- Jerusalem artichokes
- Leeks
- Mushrooms
- Beans
- Nuts
- Agave nectar
- Amaranth
- Barley
- Rye

On the other hand, fiber is still an important part of our diet. Functional Medicine practitioner and gut-health expert Dr. John Dempster points us to foods that contain none or very low FODMAPs. We can enjoy as much of these as we please.
Zero FODMAP Foods to Enjoy:

- Alfalfa
- Arugula
- Bamboo shoots
- Red bell peppers
- Carrots
- Collard greens
- Cucumber
- Endive
- Galangal
- Ginger
- Kale
- Lettuce
- Nori
- Olives
- Parsnips
- Potatoes
- Radish
- Spinach
- Swiss chard
- Tomato
- Pumpkin
Low FODMAP Foods to Enjoy:

- Bananas
- Blueberries
- Broccoli
- Eggplant
- Green beans
- Kiwi
- Oatmeal
- Okra
- Oranges
- Peanuts
- Raspberries
- Sunflower seeds
- Strawberries
- Summer squash
- Sweet potatoes
- Walnuts
- Turnips
- Zucchini

In addition to steering clear of high FODMAP foods, we’ll be avoiding raw fruits and veggies until our IBS is resolved. Although we all know that fresh fruits and greens are wonderful for our health, if your gut is compromised you simply may be unable to digest those foods.
People who suffer from IBS typically produce inadequate digestive enzymes. Raw fruits and veggies require a strong digestive power to be sufficiently broken down into absorbable units.

Foods that cannot be digested efficiently begin to rot in our digestive tracts. When our food putrefies like this, our nutrients become toxins which aggravate Leaky Gut, instigate an inflammatory response and contribute to systemic toxicity.

Also, as food moves more slowly through our GI tract more water is absorbed. Sometimes so much water is absorbed that we become constipated.

Take a break from uncooked produce while you heal yourself. You’ll be able to reintroduce raw fruits and veggies once you’ve restored balance to your microbiome. Meanwhile, soothe your gut by consuming pre-digested foods.

That means soups, stews, and well-cooked vegetables. Warm, cooked foods are easier on your digestive tract and will help your gut to heal until you are once again able to indulge in your favorite raw foods.

**AVOID:** Fresh Fruits, Raw Veggies, Salads & High FODMAP Foods  
**ENJOY:** Soups, Stews & Low FODMAP Foods

### 2. DAIRY PRODUCTS

Dairy fuels inflammation and congestion. In fact, it is the second-most inflammatory food in the modern diet. Inflammation caused by consumption of dairy products causes digestive problems like gas, bloating, constipation and diarrhea.

Humans are the only mammals that consume milk beyond the breastfeeding years and many scientists and nutritionists insist...
that we simply lack the enzymes to properly digest dairy products by the time we are eight years old. When it comes to IBS, inflammation and dysbiosis, dairy has got to go. Milk contains two proteins (casein and whey) which are difficult to digest and lead to food sensitivities for many people.

Plus, many of us lack sufficient lactase to digest milk. That means that the sugar in milk, lactose, gets fermented by our gut bacteria which causes gas, bloating and diarrhea.

Fortunately, you can enjoy dairy-free versions of many of your favorite foods. Veganism is a popular lifestyle choice that is quickly gaining traction in the mainstream market. As a result, you’ll find many dairy-free options at pretty much any grocery store.

Milk, cheese, yogurt, cream - you name it, there’s a dairy-free alternative available. Many of these products are highly processed and contain undesirable additives so use them sparingly and pick the options with the fewest ingredients or make your own...

Delicious, Creamy Coconut Milk

There are many tasty, commercially-available, dairy-free milk alternatives but they all contain some form of preservative or thickening agent. You can easily make your own homemade milk without any extra ingredients.

All you need is an 8 oz. bag of unsweetened, shredded coconut and 4 cups of hot water. Combine the coconut milk and hot water in the blender and
allow it to sit for several minutes to give the coconut time to soften. Blend thoroughly. Strain through a nut bag, cheese cloth or a clean rag. Your coconut milk can be used right away or stored in the fridge for up to 4 days.

Coconut soothes inflammation and is a low FODMAP food (unless consumed to excess). Coconut milk is a great source of vitamin C, folate, iron, magnesium, potassium, copper, manganese and selenium.

Instant Sesame Milk
Simply blend ¼ cup raw, organic tahini with 2 cups water.

Sesame milk is protein-rich, fiber-rich and an excellent source of gut-healing nutrients like magnesium, zinc, selenium and Vitamin B1. Most nuts and seeds create acidity in the body, but sesame is alkalizing.

This recipe can be adapted to use any other kind of nut butter for a quick and healthy alternative to dairy products and store-bought plant-based milks.

AVOID: INFLAMMATORY DAIRY PRODUCTS
ENJOY: HEALTHY PLANT-BASED ALTERNATIVES

3. Refined Sugar & Artificial Sweeteners

Processed, refined sugars and artificial sweeteners have no place in a healthy diet. Sugar reduces the number of favorable bacteria in our guts and triggers inflammatory pathways.
Low-grade, chronic, systemic inflammation caused by the consumption of refined sugars increases gut permeability, leaving us with Leaky Gut which allows bacteria, toxins and food particles to enter our bloodstream and further contribute to inflammation.

Sugar also feeds candida. Candida overgrowths are a symptom of dysbiosis and a contributor to IBS. Yeast love sugar. When we have a candida overgrowth, our appetite for sweet, sugary foods increases to satisfy the yeast.

Candida infections are not the only thing that increase our appetite for sugar. Did you know that craving sweets can be an indicator of a nutrient deficiency? Specifically, zinc and magnesium deficiencies can cause us to crave sweet foods. Choose foods rich in these nutrients to reduce your appetite for sweets.

Many great sources of magnesium are unfortunately also high FODMAP, but we can still be sure we’re getting enough of this vital nutrient by incorporating low FODMAP sources like avocados, pumpkin seeds, chia seeds and bananas into our diet.

Dark, leafy greens are also a great source of magnesium. If you are avoiding fresh greens, simply throw them into a gut healing juice blend. Your best low FODMAP foods that are rich in zinc are hemp, squash and pumpkin seeds, along with quinoa, rice, potatoes and kale.

Sticking to a whole foods diet rich in a diversity of nutrients is the best way to reduce cravings. When you do indulge in a sweet
treat, make it as healthy as you can. We certainly want to stay away from refined sugars, but the truth is, most artificial sugar substitutes also have a damaging impact on our guts and health. Artificial sweeteners are the epitome of empty calories, absolutely devoid of nutritive value. They cause us to prefer sweet tastes over the flavors of fat-, protein-, and mineral-rich foods and even contribute to food addictions. NASs (non-caloric artificial sweeteners) also wreak havoc on your digestive tract, encouraging the growth of pathogenic bacteria, upsetting the balance of the microbiome and spurring inflammation.

The next time you have a hankering for something sweet, opt for a healthier treat like dates, maple syrup or honey that will satisfy your sweet tooth without fueling inflammation or compromising your microbiome.

**Dates** - Dates are rich in fiber and important minerals like calcium, iron, zinc and magnesium, not to mention powerful antioxidants that help us to curb inflammation. Dates are also really great for our digestive health as studies have found that the consumption of dates increases beneficial bacterial populations and inhibits the proliferation of colon cancer cells.

**Maple Syrup** - Maple syrup is an excellent source of manganese, zinc, calcium and potassium, and contains twenty-four different antioxidants! Maple syrup reduces inflammation, provides protection from cardiovascular disease and reduces cancer rates. This natural sweetener which is derived by boiling the sap of the sugar maple tree is a gut-healthy alternative to sugar and artificial sweeteners.

**Honey** - No list of healthy sugar substitutes would be complete without honey! Honey contains prebiotics which feed and encourage the growth of desirable species of intestinal bacteria. Honey is rich in antioxidants - including phenolic compounds and flavonoids. Honey also contains trace amounts of micronutrients
like potassium, iron and zinc. Honey is an effective topical treatment for skin wounds and burns. When we consume it, it soothes and heals intestinal ulcers.

**AVOID: SUGAR & ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS**  
**ENJOY: NUTRIENT DENSE FOODS AND NATURAL SWEETENERS**

### 4. WHEAT AND OTHER SOURCES OF GLUTEN

Unfortunately, the wheat on the market today is not the same product it was 50 years ago. We’ve hybridized species to create a high-gluten variety that is also highly resistant to pesticides.

Since these plants have been genetically modified to survive strong applications of pesticides, more pesticides are used in their cultivation. Conventionally-produced wheat crops are treated with noxious chemicals twice, including just before harvesting. When we eat wheat, we’re taking in those poisons in with every bite.

Also, gluten prompts our bodies to secrete more zonulin, which contributes to Leaky Gut and inflammation. Zonulin weakens our gut junctions, allowing toxins to leak directly into our bloodstream.

Gluten consumption causes the microvilli that line our digestive tract to atrophy and erode. The microvilli increase the surface area in our gut and are responsible for the absorption of nutrients. When gluten compromises our ability to digest and absorb our food, we become susceptible to inflammation and Leaky Gut. We also exhibit symptoms of gastric upset like bloating, constipation, diarrhea, weight loss, and fat malabsorption. We can also be left vulnerable to the effects of malnutrition, including iron deficiency, low vitamin D or osteoporosis.
That’s why we’ll be eliminating from our diet not only wheat but also any other foods that contain gluten, like barley and rye. The good news is that you can cut wheat from your diet while still enjoying many of your favorite foods. Thanks to alternatives like almond, rice and coconut flour, we can prepare baked goods without wheat. Many gluten-free, wheat-free products like breads, cereals and even frozen pizzas are commonly found in grocery stores these days. If you don’t see gluten-free options where you usually shop, check with a health store in your community.

Commercially-prepared gluten-free products are a convenient way to upgrade your diet without having to give up your favorite familiar foods. However, the truth is that many of these foods are highly processed, loaded with sugars and also contain artificial additives - and most of their nutrients have been destroyed.

You can recreate many of your favorite wheat-based meals using simple, whole-food substitutions like these:

**Zucchini Noodles** - Indulge in a rich, saucy pasta dish without a trace of gluten on your plate by making noodles out of zucchini, known as zoodles. Use a spiralizer to create classic pasta shapes, julienne your zucchini into thin strips or simply slice flat sections to use for lasagna. The zucchini can be steamed, baked or sauteed. Zucchini is rich in fiber and relieves symptoms of IBS including constipation. Regular consumption of zucchini has even been shown to prevent intestinal ulcers, IBS and colon cancer.
**Lettuce Wraps** - There’s really nothing like a sandwich! The perfect blend of savory protein, fresh veggies and just the right sauce to pull it all together is hard to beat. But you may want to think twice before lunching on a classic stacker. Instead of traditional, or even gluten-free - bread, try using a nice, broad leaf of romaine lettuce to hold your concoction together. Romaine lettuce not only makes a perfect wrap but is also rich in valuable nutrients like fiber, Vitamin C, calcium, vitamin A, magnesium and potassium. Romaine also heals the gut by soothing inflammation.

**AVOID: WHEAT & OTHER SOURCES OF GLUTEN  
ENJOY: GLUTEN-FREE FOODS, ZOODLES & LETTUCE WRAPS**

### 5. GMOS & PESTICIDES

Genetically modified products are harmful to the environment and to our health, especially our guts. Mixing genes of unrelated species yields unpredictable side effects. The American Academy of Environmental Medicine (AAEM) urges doctors to prescribe non-GMO diets for all patients. Many crops are modified to increase the amount of pesticide exposure the plants can tolerate, which means more pesticide residue on our foods and more pesticides in our soil and waterways wreaking havoc on our environment.

Government oversight is lenient when it comes to GMOs. It’s up to us to protect ourselves and force GMOs out of the food supply.
by refusing to purchase these dangerous products. Look for “Organic” and “Non GMO” certificates on all of the food you purchase to protect yourself and the earth from toxic GMOs. We’ve just learned about the dangerous pesticides being applied to wheat. Unfortunately, these toxic compounds are being applied to many other foods as well, and we consumers are really paying the price with our health.

Glyphosate, the active ingredient in the popular commercial pesticide RoundUp, is a dangerous, carcinogenic antibiotic. Pesticides wreak havoc on our microbiome and are creating health problems on a global scale that we are only now beginning to understand.

Countries and communities around the world are fighting for our health by banning the use of glyphosate. Protect yourself now by choosing organic foods. Organic is always the best option, because when we buy organic products we encourage more organic and small farmers to produce food for us. We shift the market away from Big Ag companies that seem to care more about their product than the people who keep them in business.

There’s also the environmental impact. Pesticides in conventionally grown products contaminate soil, decimate populations of insects and rodents and eventually all make their way into our waterways where they contaminate our drinking water and threaten the wellbeing of aquatic species. Choosing to use our money to support the greater good of the planet by opting for organics is a real responsibility that the modern consumer faces.

Organic foods are often more expensive than conventionally produced crops but you can still protect your health by following these tips to get the best deals on safer foods:
Buy directly from farmers. Either at farm stands or green markets, you can buy your produce directly from the farmers who grew them, and personally verify that your food has been grown without dangerous chemicals.

Join or form a co-op. Increase your purchasing power by buying dry goods in bulk. You can join a co-op that already serves your community or start your own. Starting your own food buying club is easier than you might think. All you have to do is organize enough people to meet the order minimum at the company that you are purchasing from. 5 or 6 families is enough to get you started in most cases.

Grow your own. Get down and dirty! Dig your hands into the dirt to boost your microbiome and produce safe food for your family at a mere fraction of the cost you’d pay anywhere else. If you think you don’t have enough room, you’re probably wrong. Learn about maximizing food production in a small space and container gardening from Permaculture College Australia at https://permaculture.com.au/. Many municipalities also offer community gardens where you can rent a plot for the growing season for a nominal fee. Community gardens are really great for beginner gardeners because you’ll be sharing space with experienced “green thumbs” who can answer any questions you may have along the way.

Make smart compromises. Going organic is always your safest bet, but sometimes organic options are inaccessible or unaffordable. In those cases, we can make better choices by steering clear of
foods with the highest amount of pesticide contamination. The Environmental Working Group helps us know when we must choose organic items and when we can get away with conventionally grown products. Use their annually updated guide to help you protect your family from ‘frankenfoods’ without breaking the bank. Find the compete guide at https://www.ewg.org/foodnews/?gclid=CjwKCAjwk7rmBRAaEiwAhDGhxIsrojr1Xt_uqc8mZHk4Ba_K18HmcDDb6rnIiABohlX7eJGVx7fhoCn5sQAvD_BwE.

AVOID: GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOODS & PESTICIDES
ENJOY: ORGANIC FOODS

6. SAD DIET

Studies have confirmed that a healthy gastrointestinal microbiome is dependent on dietary diversity. That’s bad news for most of us because over the past 50 years, much of the diversity in the Western diet has been lost.

In fact, today, 75% of the world’s food supply comes from only 12 plant and 5 animal species! We all know that eating lots of fruits and vegetables is one of the most important things we can do to protect our health. Unfortunately, we often still don’t include a sufficient variety of whole foods in our diet.

In the US alone, three out of four people do not eat enough vegetables or fruits to maintain optimal health. On the other hand, more than half of the population is consuming too much protein. And nearly all Americans partake of an excess of saturated fats, added sugars and sodium.

This way of eating is known as the Standard American Diet, or SAD for short, and it is sad indeed!
The SAD diet is characterized by excessive consumption of red meat, processed meat, pre-packaged foods, fried foods, dairy products, high fructose corn syrup and sugary drinks. Unfortunately, it is not confined to the US but is the norm in many other Western nations.

The SAD diet is especially problematic for our guts, and a significant contributor to IBS.

A diet rich in meat poses dangerous and far-reaching consequences for our health. Steaks and burgers are popular fare, even though red meat triggers IBS symptoms for most people. The lactose found in dairy products is also problematic. It provokes bloating, cramping and diarrhea. High fructose corn syrup and artificial sweeteners are inflammatory and congestive. And processed foods contain additives and preservatives that contribute to IBS flare ups.

Following the SAD diet results in chronic inflammation, increased intestinal permeability, heightened vulnerability to pathogens, and nutrient deficiencies.

The choices we make at the table have big consequences for our health. We’ve got to eat more whole foods and fruits and vegetables if we wish to heal our gut.

By eating more fruits, vegetables and whole grains, we can protect ourselves from major illnesses and increase our consumption of antioxidants, healthy fats and proteins, vitamins and minerals, and of course the gut’s favorite nutrient: fiber!

A diet that is rich in fiber and includes a diversity of fruits, vegetables and grains soothes inflammation and heals the gut while protecting us from serious and chronic disease.

It’s a lot easier to change your diet if you focus on what you’re
adding instead of what you’re taking away. You can effectively crowd undesirable foods out of your diet simply by getting enough of the foods that support health. We should all be consuming 7-9 servings of fruits and vegetables every single day, but most of us don’t even come close to meeting this criteria.

Focus on creative ways to meet this goal, like making smoothies, having a salad with your dinner and snacking on whole foods instead of pre-packaged convenience foods. Find recipes for creating healthier versions of traditional dishes.

Don’t force yourself to eat foods that you don’t enjoy just because they are good for you. There’s so many healthy foods to choose from and diversity is key to dietary success! Keep trying new foods, preparations and combinations to discover your favorite way to enjoy a diet rich in whole foods.

AVOID: MEAT & ANIMAL PRODUCTS
ENJOY: A BROAD DIVERSITY OF PLANT-BASED WHOLE FOODS

7. DRINKING WATER

Water is the single most important thing we consume. It makes up 75% of our bodies and is essential to our immediate survival. We should all be striving to drink about 8-10 glasses, or half our weight in pounds in ounces of water every day to keep our minds sharp, skin glowing and energy levels high.
But depending on where our water is coming from, it can also be a source of dangerous chemicals that impair our health.

Tap water is commonly polluted with a variety of contaminants. According to the EPA, some things we can expect to find in our water are nitrogen, bleach, metals, bacteria, viruses, protozoa, parasites and radiological elements like uranium and plutonium. Many people are also concerned about pesticides, chlorine, fluoride and pharmaceutical drugs in their drinking water.

Chlorine spells big trouble for the gut because it not only kills dangerous pathogens in the water supply, but also wipes out our beneficial intestinal bacteria - leaving us vulnerable to Leaky Gut, IBS and a host of pathogenic infections.

But don’t reach for that bottled water just yet! Plastics are an environmental hazard and a personal health nightmare. Plastic from flimsy bottles leaches into the water and ends up wreaking havoc on our endocrine systems. On top of all that, single-use plastics are an unjustifiable waste and a major source of pollution.

To make matters worse, bottled water is minimally regulated and according to the EPA it’s usually not any better than tap water. Two-thirds of the bottles wind up in landfills or the ocean, where they will poison us all for years to come. Your best bet is a water filtration system. You can invest in whole home filtration and have clean water flowing out of all your taps or use a more economical countertop filter for drinking and cooking. While you’re at it, install a shower filter to protect yourself from chlorine steam - which decimates the microbiome!

How do you know what kind of filter you need? Well, that depends on the contaminants that are present in your water. To find out what you’re up against check the annual water quality report that your city files with the EPA. Or better yet, have your tap water tested. Contaminants like lead can leach from rusty pipes so there
may be dangerous toxins in your personal water supply that will not show up in the city’s report.

While the precise filtration system that will work best for any one particular household will depend on the contaminants present in their unique supply, generally speaking reverse osmosis systems are the safest bet.

Typically installed under the kitchen sink, reverse osmosis filtration systems provide the purest water possible. In fact, the water that flows from a reverse osmosis filter is so pure that up to 80% of tap water is discarded in the process of cleaning it!

AVOID: TAP & BOTTLED WATER
ENJOY: LOTS OF FILTERED WATER

8. EATING ON THE GO

Eating hurriedly and while multitasking sets us up for maldigestion. When we are stressed or rushed, our bodies operate in the sympathetic state. This is our “fight or flight” mode. When we operate from the sympathetic nervous system, our bodies shut down less imminent functions like resting, digesting and healing to focus on immediate survival of a real or perceived threat.

Instead of producing digestive enzymes and hormones that promote healing, we excrete large amounts of adrenaline, which sharpens our focus and energizes us to engage or escape a threat to our safety. The circulation to our digestive tract and organs decreases in order to improve blood flow to our limbs so that we can run, climb or fight as necessary.

When it’s time to eat, the last thing we want is to be operating from our sympathetic nervous system! We need to be relaxed
in order to digest and absorb our food. If we are checking messages, reading the news or making to-do lists while we eat, our minds and bodies are unable to shift into the parasympathetic mode which supports optimal digestion and absorption of nutrients.

Slowing down our meals gives us time to savor and appreciate the tastes and textures of our foods. The slower we eat, the more joy we derive from our fare while consuming fewer calories.

More importantly, taking time to savor our bites gives our digestive process time to prepare for the food that is coming. Digestion begins in the mind. Focusing on our foods increases signals from the brain to the gut to produce digestive acids. It also gives our salivary glands time to begin the first phase of digestion in our mouths.

A nice, slow meal can be a mindful experience with benefits similar to meditation. Take time to be in the moment while you eat. Savor your food. Take a break from multitasking. Feel gratitude for the food on your table and its nourishing impact on your body.

Sit down to eat in a calm environment that allows you to pay attention to your food. Don’t eat on your feet. Don’t eat while watching TV, catching up on work or responding to messages. And definitely don’t eat while you’re driving!

Cultivate a space for meals that is quiet, free of distraction and conducive to relaxation. Optimally, the table that you sit at for
meals would be used for this purpose only. If that’s not practical, at the least clear clutter and items that distract or stimulate you from the table before sitting to enjoy your meal.

Choose high-fiber foods that take time to chew, like fruits and veggies. If you’re eating foods that can be swallowed whole, like smoothies and pureed vegetables, ingest just a bit at a time and swish each “bite” around your mouth a bit to allow time for your food to warm or cool to a comfortable temperature and to allow your salivary enzymes to begin digestion.

Place your fork down on the table between bites. Allow yourself time to finish chewing and enjoy each bite before shoveling more food in. Catch your breath, notice how you feel, enjoy conversation with company if you’re eating with others or simply feel gratitude for the nourishment you’re receiving.

Try to chew your food a specific number of times before swallowing. 32 is the recommended number by many experts. The way we eat our food can be almost as important as the items we choose to have on our plates. It is vitally important that we take time to chew our food until it is liquified before swallowing.

When we fail to do so, large chunks of food make their way to our stomach where they cannot be broken down quickly enough. When food sits in our stomach for longer than an hour or two it begins to putrefy, turning nutrients into toxins and placing an undue burden on not just our digestive tract, but our immune system as well.

The mechanical process of breaking your food into smaller chunks is essential to the digestive process that follows. Undigested food is a hazard to your health, no matter how clean your diet is. Failure to chew sufficiently places a burden on our immune system as nutrients putrefy into toxic compounds that must be eliminated.
On the other hand, making a habit of chewing your food thoroughly will result in increased energy levels, improved sleep and enhanced ability to focus, as your body is now able to break down and absorb the building blocks of a healthy physiology.

Allot enough time to enjoy your meal. You want to give yourself at least 30 minutes away from your busy day to relax, settle in and consume your food. Don’t wait until you’re hungry and grab whatever is quick and easy. Set a time for your meal, plan what you’re going to eat ahead of time and look forward to both the break from your day and the delicious food that you’re anticipating.

**AVOID: SHOVELING DOWN YOUR FOOD WHILE MULTITASKING**

**ENJOY: SLOW & RELaxed MEALS**
We have only been able to scratch the surface on the topic of the gut, and even IBS. However, we hope the information you have learned in this ebook will assist you in understanding the importance of a healthy gut, and help you adjust your daily habits to improve your health.

However, we hope your journey doesn’t end here. You need to know the full story.

**As such, we’d like to officially invite you to the free screening of The Gut Solution, which airs on July 1st, 2019**

The Gut Solution is an 8-part documentary series that discovers that the hidden root cause behind obesity, depression, anxiety, skin issues, autoimmune disease, and even cancer, can be in the gut. This cutting-edge series draws from the wisdom of over 40 world-leading experts, who share how to reverse all of these common ailments that we face today by sharing the tools to heal the gut.

If you are frustrated with your health, and you don’t know what’s wrong, do not ignore your gut. For many people, gut health is the missing piece of the puzzle.

So, take action today. Watch this groundbreaking series, and learn what you can do to truly restore your health.

If you haven’t already, secure your free spot to watch the series by entering your name and email on www.gutsolutionseries.com or clicking the button below.

**GET ACCESS NOW**

We’ll see you on July 1!