



foods for gut health

**BECAUSE GUT HEALTH IS
*EVERYTHING***

by Dr. Aimee Warren

Your gut does more than digest food; it's the command center for your immune system, mood, plays a big role in hormone balance, and even energy levels. When it's out of balance, everything feels off. The good news? Food can be your greatest ally in restoring and maintaining a healthy gut.

Why Gut Health Matters

Your gut is home to trillions of microbes—bacteria, fungi, and other microorganisms that make up your microbiome. A balanced microbiome supports digestion, regulates inflammation, and even communicates with your brain through the gut-brain axis. When this balance is disrupted (think poor diet, stress, or antibiotics), it can lead to bloating, fatigue, brain fog, and even chronic conditions like IBS or autoimmune diseases.

The key to a happy gut? Feeding it the right foods to nourish those good microbes and keep the bad ones in check.

A healthy microbiome is diverse!

Diversify and strengthen your gut microbiome by eating lots of different fruits, veggies, and whole grains. Eat in season and organic when possible!



The Best Foods for Gut Health

Fermented Foods

- **Why They Help:** Fermented foods are rich in probiotics, the “live bacteria” that replenish and diversify your gut microbiome.
- **Examples:** Sauerkraut, kimchi, kefir, yogurt (with live cultures), miso, and kombucha.
- **Pro Tip:** Start small if you’re new to fermented foods—too much too soon can overwhelm your gut.

Fiber-Rich Foods

- **Why They Help:** Fiber acts as prebiotics, feeding the good bacteria in your gut. Soluble fiber, in particular, helps maintain a healthy gut lining.
- **Examples:** Oats, flaxseeds, chia seeds, apples, artichokes, and legumes.
- **Pro Tip:** Increase fiber intake gradually to avoid bloating or discomfort.

Leafy Greens

- **Why They Help:** Greens like spinach and kale contain specific sugars that fuel the growth of healthy gut bacteria.
- **Examples:** Kale, spinach, arugula, Swiss chard.
- **Pro Tip:** Incorporate greens into smoothies or sauté them for a gut-friendly side dish.



Colorful Fruits and Vegetables

- **Why They Help:** A variety of plant-based foods promotes microbial diversity. Plus, they're rich in antioxidants that combat inflammation.
- **Examples:** Berries, sweet potatoes, carrots, and beets.
- **Pro Tip:** Aim for a "rainbow" on your plate to maximize nutrient variety.

Nuts and Seeds

- **Why They Help:** Packed with fiber, healthy fats, and polyphenols, nuts and seeds support gut health and reduce inflammation.
- **Examples:** Almonds, walnuts, flaxseeds, and sunflower seeds.
- **Pro Tip:** Add them to oatmeal, salads, or smoothies for a nutrient boost.

Garlic and Onions

- **Why They Help:** These allium vegetables contain prebiotics that feed beneficial gut bacteria and support immunity.
- **Examples:** Garlic, onions, leeks, and shallots.
- **Pro Tip:** Cook them lightly to preserve their gut-friendly compounds.

Green Tea

- **Why It Helps:** Green tea is loaded with polyphenols, plant compounds that fuel beneficial bacteria and combat inflammation.
- **Pro Tip:** Swap your morning coffee for a cup of green tea to support your gut and energy levels.



Foods to Avoid for Gut Health

While nourishing your gut, it's equally important to minimize foods that disrupt the balance:

- **Refined sugars and artificial sweeteners:** These feed harmful bacteria and disrupt gut health.
- **Processed foods:** Often low in fiber and high in additives that can irritate the gut.
- **Excess alcohol:** Can harm the gut lining and disrupt the microbiome.

Building Gut-Friendly Habits

Gut health isn't just about what you eat; it's also about how you live:

- **Slow Down:** Chew your food thoroughly to kickstart digestion.
- **Stay Hydrated:** Water helps maintain a healthy gut lining and supports digestion.
- **Manage Stress:** Chronic stress can alter your microbiome, so prioritize relaxation and mindfulness.

Your gut is your body's command center, and the food you eat is the fuel that powers it. By incorporating gut-friendly foods and habits into your daily routine, you're not just improving digestion—you're setting the foundation for better energy, mood, and overall health. After all, when your gut is happy, *everything* works better.