



UNDERSTANDING  
LEAKY *Gut*

## Hi and Welcome!

Congratulations! You have just taken an important step to help improve your gut health. If you suspect that “leaky gut” may be an issue for you, then following this program may help you repair the gut lining. This will give you a better opportunity to help restore proper intestinal function and may have a positive effect on other health conditions.

My goal is to help you through this journey. As a Registered Holistic Nutritionist and Life Skills Coach, I am dedicated to helping clients with their health journey.

Striving to achieve health and wellbeing is a process which can include improvements and sometimes minor setbacks. The body needs time to re-adjust its settings, clear out waste materials and build new tissues in order to perform more effectively.

I am here to support you through the process, answering your questions and providing any extra information you may need.

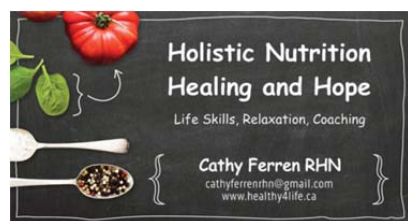
If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at [cathyferrenrhn@gmail.com](mailto:cathyferrenrhn@gmail.com).

Enjoy the foods and be good to yourself.

Cathy Ferren



[www.healthy4life.ca](http://www.healthy4life.ca)



### Medical Disclaimer

All information contained in the Healthy Gut program is for informational purposes only. It is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent health problems. For all serious health issues, please contact a medical or nutrition practitioner. The information provided in this program is based on the best knowledge of the author at the time of writing and we do not assume liability for the information within this program, be it direct or indirect, consequentially, special exemplary or other damages. In all circumstance, it is always wise to consult your physician before changing your diet, taking supplements or starting any exercise or health program.

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## Understanding Leaky Gut

The key to understanding what is meant by “leaky gut” requires some knowledge of our gastrointestinal system (GI tract). The “tube” that is our GI tract is technically considered to be outside of our body. Materials such as foods, pathogens, drugs or anything we ingest are processed by our digestive and intestinal system so we can absorb our nutrients and be protected from anything that is harmful before it “enters” the body, which technically means it will enter the bloodstream. Once inside the bloodstream, substances are considered inside the body.

To protect ourselves, we have a complicated set of enzymes, cells, good bacteria and hormones as part of our intestinal wall lining that are designed to protect us and only allow what we need into the body and keep elements like bad bacteria, viruses or yeast out.

The issue for leaky gut involves the cells that make of the intestinal wall lining. In between each cell are tight gap junctions that prevent anything but nutrients or other elements that are supposed to enter the body from getting in. However, if the junctions become loose or “open”, this causes a condition known as intestinal permeability or if we go by its euphemistic name - leaky gut.

Is it easy to open up the gap junctions? We are actually born with leaky gut. This is how the mother’s antibodies are passed onto the newborn baby in the first three months of life. Breast milk contains the mother’s antibodies but these are large molecules, too large to enter the bloodstream through the pathway that vitamins or other nutrients, which are small molecules, enter. After the three-month period and once the baby has had time to build up its own good bacteria in the gut, the gap junctions close.

### The Role of Zonulin:

Zonulin is a chemical that is released by cells in the intestinal wall lining to open the gap junction. This is a normal process. It is part of a defense mechanism. By opening the gap junctions, it allows water to flood the intestines in order to flush out pathogens and bad bacteria. This may present as diarrhea depending on how much water is released. However, that should be seen as a good thing. It means the immune system is working and the body knows how to protect you.

The good bacteria are responsible for closing the gap junctions and keeping them closed unless we need this protective response.

As seen from the diagram, the blue dots represent the good bacteria; they line the intestine like soldiers guarding a fort. The good bacteria or intestinal microflora, as it is also known, are responsible for many elements of our health and well-being. They help us successfully digest food and absorb nutrients as well as prevent food sensitivities and allergies. They work directly with our immune system and protect us from bad bacteria, fungi and viruses. They

also keep naturally occurring yeast molecules in check so they do not cause us any issues. As long as a negative element cannot get out of our gut lining, they cannot lock onto receptors sites and trigger a zonulin release, allowing toxins into the blood stream. This helps protect the inside of the body from infection as well limit food sensitivities. Our beneficial bacteria play many roles and a lack of these microorganisms is connected to every health condition from intestinal issues such as colitis, IBS and Crohn’s, to conditions inside the body such as allergies, heart disease, diabetes, cancer, depression,

