Foods to Avoid for a Happy, Healthy Life with good Gut Microbiome are Sugar, Meat, Plants with Pesticides, Dairy, HFCS, synthetic Food Additives, Preservatives, Food Colorings, + Refined Vegetable Oils.

ultra-processed food is a

CHEMICAL SH*T STORM

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Tummy troubles? These ingredients could be why.

It’s everyone’s favorite topic: digestive discomfort. Whether you’ve been experiencing chronic gut issues for years or you’re new to the matters of a miserable microbiome, one thing is clear—a significant component of our overall health is determined by the (beneficial) bacteria that reside in our gut, aka our microbiome.
“Research has shown that all roads lead to the health of our gut microbiome—our well-being depends on it,” says Raphael Kellman, MD, founder of the Kellman Wellness Center in New York City. “This is the inner realm of thousands of microbes residing in our intestines. They are intimately connected to all aspects of health greatly impacting mood, metabolism, immune function, digestion, hormones, inflammation, and even gene expression.” We’re listening. According to Dr. Kellman, a balanced bacterial population can mean excellent health, while dysbiosis—or microbial imbalance—triggers disease and chronic illness.

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But how do you know if you have an unhealthy gut? According to Carielle Nikkel, MS, RDN a nutritionist with Persona Nutrition, some common symptoms that suggest an imbalance include bloating, gas, and abdominal pain. “Your digestive discomfort could be explained by a variety of issues—from a food sensitivity to an underlying health condition,” she says. “But one trend is clear: digestive issues are often linked to an imbalance of bacteria in your gut. This delicate balance can be altered by your lifestyle, exercise, and antibiotic use (among many other things), but diet is one of the best, most effective ways we can improve our microbiome.”

By making dietary and lifestyle changes with the bacteria in mind, you can see improvements in every area of the body, including in systems that may seem far removed from intestinal health. Here are the five foods Dr. Kellman recommends avoiding in the name of your gut microbiome—and overall health and happiness.

1 Sugar.

While most dieters expect to cut back on sugar because of calories, on a deeper level, sugar should be avoided for the detrimental effects on gut bacteria and inflammation. "Sugar is known to nourish disruptive strains and yeast, allowing them to overgrow exceeding a healthy percentage of the microbiome," Dr. Kellman says.

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2 Mea.t.

A popular trend today is to eat a diet (keto, paleo) comprised mainly of animal proteins and fat. Unfortunately, this does little to sustain the health of the microbiome. Without a substantial amount of plant fibers known as prebiotics, the microbiome becomes depleted. This reduces its ability to make necessary nutrients for our health, like short chain fatty acids, vitamins, and natural antibiotics that keep us safe from pathogens. A microbiome-friendly diet is high in plants and uses healthy animal proteins as a side dish.

**RELATED:** Your Gut Needs Prebiotics and Probiotics—but What's the Difference? This RD Breaks It Down

3 Plants with Pesticides.

The microbiome is highly sensitive to exposure to chemicals, toxins, and pesticides—especially those coming from the food and water we drink. "If you have a sensitive gut, whenever possible, avoid foods that may have been exposed to plant pesticides by choosing organic fruits and veggies (especially those that are on the Dirty Dozen list), animals raised without hormones, and drink filtered water," Dr. Kellman advises.

4 Dairy.

While dairy can be beneficial for some, for those with an allergy or intolerance, eating it leads to inflammation, leaky gut, and reactions that can affect the immune system. "Many people benefit by removing it for a period of time and reintroducing it later," says Dr. Kellman. Same goes for gluten: it isn't bad for you, but if you have an allergy or sensitivity, giving it up is a no-brainer for good gut health.

**RELATED:** Are You Getting Enough Vitamin D? Here’s What You Should Know
5 HFCS, Additives, Preservatives, Food Colorings, and Refined Vegetable Oils.

This last group is a mixed bag of detrimental products, all of which have a few big things in common: they all promote inflammation, are highly processed, and can lead to imbalances in bacterial communities. (To clarify, refined vegetable oils refer to varieties like soy, corn, sunflower, and cottonseed, not healthy oils like olive and avocado.)
6 Worst Trans Fat Foods

- **Fried Foods**: Almost any food that is battered and fried. Examples include French fries, onion rings, chicken wings, and fried chicken.
- **Desserts**: Ready-to-eat treats that often come individually packaged or frozen. Examples include snack cakes, cake and brownie mixes, and ice cream bars.
- **Pastas**: Processed pastas that are boxed or come frozen. Examples include ravioli, macaroni and cheese, and lasagna.
- **Salty Snacks**: Salty and bite-sized foods that are typically quick to make or packaged ready-to-eat. Examples include crackers, popcorn, and beef jerky.
- **Breads**: Processed breads that come frozen or can be bought packaged and pre-cut. Examples include garlic bread, Texas toast, and breadsticks.
- **Breakfast Pastries**: Processed pastries that are typically eaten in the morning. Examples include donuts, cinnamon buns, and coffee cakes.

**EAT CLEAN**

- No Pesticides, Hormones & Antibiotics
- No Saturated or Trans Fat
- No Dairy, Gluten, Soy or GMO’s
- No Refined Sugar or Aspartame
- No Artificial Flavors or Colors
- No Preservatives or Additives

Fit Fact: Eating a CLEAN, anti-inflammatory diet helps the body release toxins
**AVOID!!**
- Artificial sweeteners
- HFCS - BHA/BHT
- MSG - Sulfur Dioxide
- Trans Fat - Food Dyes
- Potassium Bromate
- Sodium Sulfite
- Sodium Nitrate

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**10 WORST FOOD INGREDIENTS**
Find out where it's lurking, why it's bad, and how you can avoid it:

1. Monosodium Glutamate (MSG)
2. Aspartame
3. High Fructose Corn Syrup (HFCS)
4. Agave Nectar
5. Artificial Food Coloring
6. BHA and BHT
7. Sodium Nitrite and Sodium Nitrate
8. Potassium Bromate
9. Recombinant Bovine Growth Hormone (rBGH)
10. Refined Vegetable Oil

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**Dangers of Splenda**
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- digestive distress
- cravings & weight gain
- thyroid dysfunction
- sleep problems
- migraines & dizziness
- allergic reactions
- alters the microbiome & destroys healthy, beneficial gut flora
- increases blood sugar & risk of diabetes
- causes leukemia & other cancers

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**Artificial Color Red #3 Has Been Shown to Cause Cancer in Animal Studies**

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DANGERS OF PROCESSED MEAT

HIGH RISK OF STROKE
A 2012 American Heart Association study linked stroke risk to processed meat consumption, with risk increasing by 13% for every daily serving.

INCREASED RISK OF DEATH
In 2013, the American Journal of Epidemiology reported that processed meat products are linked to increased risk of death.

DOUBLE THE RISK OF LUNG DISEASE
A 2014 study found that men who eat processed meat daily have more than double the risk of developing lung disease compared with men who rarely or never eat processed meat.

DOUBLE THE RISK OF HEART DISEASE, CANCER, & DIABETES
A 2014 Harvard study found that processed meat raises women’s risk of cancer, heart disease, and diabetes. And a 2012 British Medical Journal Open study linked processed meat consumption to increased risk of heart disease.

INCREASED RISK OF COLORECTAL CANCER & EARLY DEATH
In 2013, the American Cancer Society found that colorectal cancer survivors who consume the most red or processed meat are more likely to die over a 7.5-year follow-up.

INCREASED RISK OF BLADDER CANCER
A 2010 NIH study found that consumption of processed meat increases risk for bladder cancer.

INCREASED RISK OF PROSTATE CANCER
A 2009 NIH study found that processed meat increases prostate cancer risk. Every 10 grams of processed meat consumed raises prostate cancer risk by 19%.

A 2013 Harvard study found that men who consume the most processed meat have more abnormalities in sperm count, size, and shape.

for more information, please visit PCRM.org/DropTheDog