



# What's Sabotaging Your Weight Loss Efforts?

Engineering Your Microbiome for  
Sustainable Weight Loss



## Why do we struggle so much with weight loss?

I have seen hundreds of clients desperate after trying every diet under the sun with little or no results. Some of them have even tried a juice cleanse that pushes them into a liquid diet for 10 days only to see no weight loss whatsoever, and they wonder how is it possible to give up food for so long without losing weight?

Well, weight loss is not a zero sum game where we lose weight by eating less. There are several factors that add to the equation: are we sleeping enough, are our hormones in balance, do we have toxins blocking our elimination routes, but most importantly **IS OUR MICROBIOME HEALTHY AND IN BALANCE?**

You might not be aware that one of the most important factors that affect weight loss is your **GUT HEALTH**. When the microbes that live in the gut are out of balance, it means that some bacteria start to overgrow, become harmful and take over other bacteria. Less diversity means more inflammation!

The gut microbiome is a diverse and dynamic ecosystem that regulates thousands of bodily functions, including mood, energy, focus, immune system and of course digestion, metabolism and hunger. This is backed by numerous studies that show that an imbalanced gut is associated with obesity and weight gain, and that there is a direct link between a healthy microbiome and effective weight management.

The truth is that gut health impacts your overall health and it's crucial for detoxification, proper digestion and nutrient absorption. So a well balanced gut will not only help you achieve sustainable weight loss, but will also enhance your general health.

**HEALTHY GUT = HEALTHY LIFE**



## How is Your Gut Sabotaging Your Weight Loss?

There are several things you might be doing that produce an imbalance in your gut. Little things like giving into sugar cravings and having that extra portion of cake, might be feeding 'harmful' bacteria that take over the beneficial microbes and disrupt gut's balance.

In the next section I will address some of these surprising things that might be sabotaging your weight loss efforts without you even noticing it. From prescription medications to fabric softener, there are a lot of little food and lifestyle changes that we can make to improve our gut health.

*struggling with weight loss?  
it's not your fault, it's your  
microbiome!*

## Medication and Your Gut



There are many kinds of medication that affect the gut balance. **This doesn't mean that you should not take these medications,** this just means both, that you should be extra careful with your gut care when you are under medical treatment, and that you should reduce the amount of medications when possible, for example, try to manage acid reflux with food and lifestyle choices instead of taking medication for it.

**Antibiotics** are of course designed to kill bacteria, and this often means they will have an affect on ALL bacteria, not just the harmful type. Therefore, they will exterminate all the bacteria from the gut. For most people with a healthy microbiome, the occasional use of antibiotics has a minimal effect and the gut can recover relatively quick. The problem is with people with poor gut health or a vulnerable microbiome, such as young children, elderly people. Yet, some antibiotics are so strong, they will affect even the microbiome of healthy adults,

In short, antibiotics are made to kill ALL bacteria and because of that, we should be avoid overuse and take steps to restore our microbiome after finishing treatment: drinking bone broth, supplementing with good quality probiotics, adding more resistant starch to your meals, etc.

**Antiacids** are widely used to treat digestive issues. Unfortunately, the modern Western diet is filled with processed foods that result in a myriad of digestive symptoms and this means many people rely on antacids to get some relief. The problem with antacids is that when they block the production of ALL acid, including stomach acid that are key for digestion, the absorption of micronutrients, and protection of the gut against pathogenic microorganisms.

The constant use of antacids can result in micronutrient deficiencies and the increase of 'bad' bacteria that affect the microbiome, including SIBO (Small Intestinal Bacteria Overgrowth).

These are just a couple of examples of how the use of some prescription medications can affect and disrupt the microbiome and affect the balance of the gut. That's why it's important to follow your doctor's instructions and not use more than the indicated doses, after finishing a treatment it is important to take steps to re-balance the gut and replenish the microbiome, and try to minimize the use of medications when possible by eating the right foods that can boost your health and minimize disease.



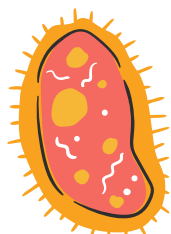
## Beating Intense Food Cravings.

Did you know that the bacteria of your gut affects what you eat? We have all had an intense food craving at some point, and I bet you it was not a craving for vegetables or fiber. Chances are that these cravings are about fatty, salty or sugary foods, am I right? Well, there is a good explanation for this and we can find the reason in our gut.

The microbiome plays a crucial role in food cravings. Specific bacteria thrive on certain nutrients and alter taste receptors, causing cravings for those foods. Gut bacteria need to eat certain things for their survival, this pushes them to send signals to our brain asking for a specific kind of food (for example, *prevotella* loves carbs) and we experience this as a craving.

## HOW THE BACTERIA IN YOUR GUT AFFECTS WHAT YOU EAT

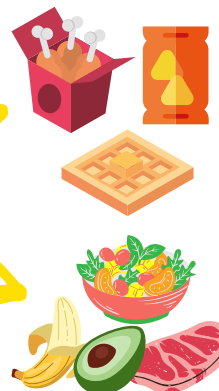
**VAGAL NERVE -  
DIRECT LINE OF  
COMMUNICATION  
WITH THE BRAIN**



**BACTERIAL GUT  
'INFORM' THE BRAIN  
OF THE NUTRIENTS  
THEY NEED**



**FACTORS LIKE  
TOXINS, BACTERIA  
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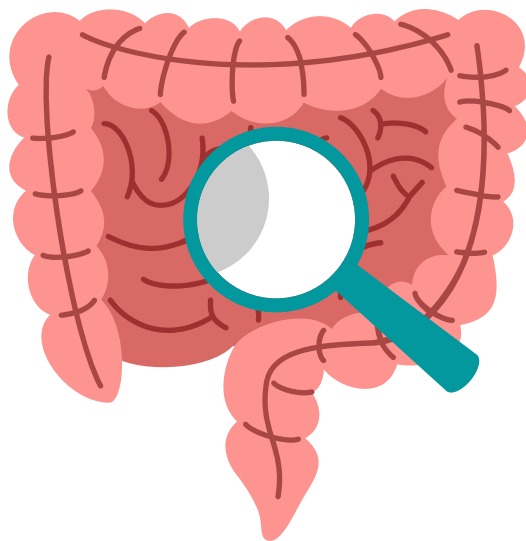




One of the most common cases that I see in my practice and one of the examples of how an overwhelming food craving caused by an imbalanced microbiome can hinder your weight loss efforts is *Candidiasis*. *Candida Albicans* is one kind of yeast that is common in the human body, the problem is that it's very opportunistic pathogen, so when the system where it lives is out of balance (skin, mouth, gut, etc.) then *Candida* takes advantage and takes over.

It's very common to see the gut taken over by *Candida*. This manifests in annoying digestive symptoms like bloating, constipation, heartburn, belching, etc. but also in intense food cravings for sugar. These cravings can manifest as something overwhelming that take over our thoughts and push us to eat foods loaded with sugar, which feed the *Candida* in the gut, allowing it to spread and take over the 'beneficial' organisms in the microbiome.

This is how a food craving can result in a vicious cycle but it also creates the opportunity to engineer your microbiome and shape your gut into a powerhouse that allows you to have more energy, focus, better mood, improved health, hormonal balance and long term weight management. Eating the right foods can start changes even within 24 hours!



## Clean Living: Avoiding Disrupting Chemicals.

Many people are not aware of the amount of chemical disruptions that have a direct effect on our endocrine system. A lot of the substances used for the production of common household goods mimic human hormones when they come in contact with the body, resulting in the disturbance of the hormonal balance. This disruption is linked to developmental, reproductive, brain, immune, and other problems.

Unfortunately, these hormone-disrupting chemicals are everywhere. We find them in plastics, food packaging, detergents, cleaning products, air fresheners, foods, drinking water, cosmetics and personal care products, fragrances, pesticides, and more. Because the hormonal system is such an intricate orchestra playing in delicate balance, even the smaller amount of chemicals have a huge effect in our health.

Hormones have a direct effect on the gut and many microbes are sensitive to chemicals, therefore they will have different effects in the microbiome. For example, certain substances used to kill fungus can change the composition of the microbiome, leading to adipogenesis. Such chemicals are classified as obesogens, foreign chemical compounds that disrupt normal development and balance of lipid metabolism, which can lead to obesity.

Other common examples include triclosan, a common additive in personal care and household goods that cause changes in the microbiome that favor certain bacteria; and phthalates, a common ingredient in the plastics used to package food that alters glucose and lipid metabolism, which increases the risk of developing insulin resistance.

The sad truth is that we are surrounded by harmful chemicals and we need to take steps to avoid our exposure as much as possible.



## Tips for Clean Living



- Read labels and chose products that doesn't contain chemical additives. There are some apps and websites that can help you learn which additives are harmful and which alternatives are safer.
- Avoid personal care and household products with fragrance. There are extensive studies that show the negative impact of fragranced household products, one-quarter of the ingredients in air fresheners are classified as toxic or hazardous.
- Chose organic products when possible. I know that it might not be econimically possible to shop all organic products. That's why I recommend my clients to focus on the food products that contain the bigger amount of pesticides and chemicals. This is know as the 'Dirty Dozen', you can find more information in [www.ewg.org](http://www.ewg.org)
- Use water filters for all drinking water and avoid bottled water. Plastic bottles have a chemical compound Bisphenol A that can be released into the water when exposed to heath.
- Wash all your fruits and vegetables to get rid of pesticides. Use a mild solution of additive-free soap like pure castille soap or biodegradable cleaner.

## Malnutrition: What happens when we get enough food but not enough nutrients?

When we think of malnutrition, we usually have this image of people in poor countries that don't get enough to eat. But did you know that we can have 3 meals a day and still be deficient in nutrients? That's the case in many prosper Western countries with diets based in ready-made packaged foods that are high in calories but low in nutrients. In fact, many people with obesity suffer from malnutrition.

The SAD (Standard American Diet) is usually poor in micronutrients, the vitamins and minerals contained in whole foods. The lack of nutrients means changes in the absorption, distribution, or excretion of nutrients. And obesity-related inflammation alters micronutrient metabolism. In short, when your body is starved for nutrition, you will continue to feel hungry because even if your stomach is full, your body is still not getting enough nutrients to keep working properly.

Because microbes in the gut play an essential role in fermenting dietary macronutrients into usable metabolites (the substances formed during metabolism or necessary for it to happen), there is a direct relation between malnutrition and gut's imbalance. In fact, malnourished individuals have decreased enzymes and amino acids produced by the microbiome necessary for proper digestion and absorption of nutrients.

The key to overcoming malnourishment is to supplement your diet with vitamins and minerals. Improve the quality and quantity of nutrients in your diet by avoiding processed foods, increasing fruit and vegetable consumption, and decreasing sugar in the diet. Improving your gut health is key to ensure optimal nutrient absorption and provide your body with the right substances it needs to maintain all your bodily system in balance.

## How to Shape Your Microbiome for Sustainable Weight Loss.

If you struggle with weight loss and feel like you're just missing part of the equation, it could just be your microbiome. While fixing your gut environment probably won't result in instant weight loss, it can help boost your metabolism and lead to healthy, sustainable weight loss in the long run.

Making small but effective food and lifestyle changes will impact your microbiome diversity and make it either easier or more difficult to lose weight. The main goal is to eat whole, nutrient-rich foods that increase the abundance of health-promoting bacteria. Taking steps to enhance your microbial function will not only improve healthy weight management, but it will help reduce bodily inflammation and reduce your risk of various metabolic diseases as well.

By taking steps to start healing your gut can help you to stop stubborn weight gain, get rid of bad bacteria, break free from food cravings, re-balance hormonal dysfunction, boost immune system, regulate your mood, increase your energy, and feel satisfied and nourished after a meal.

Trust me, healing your gut is life changing!

