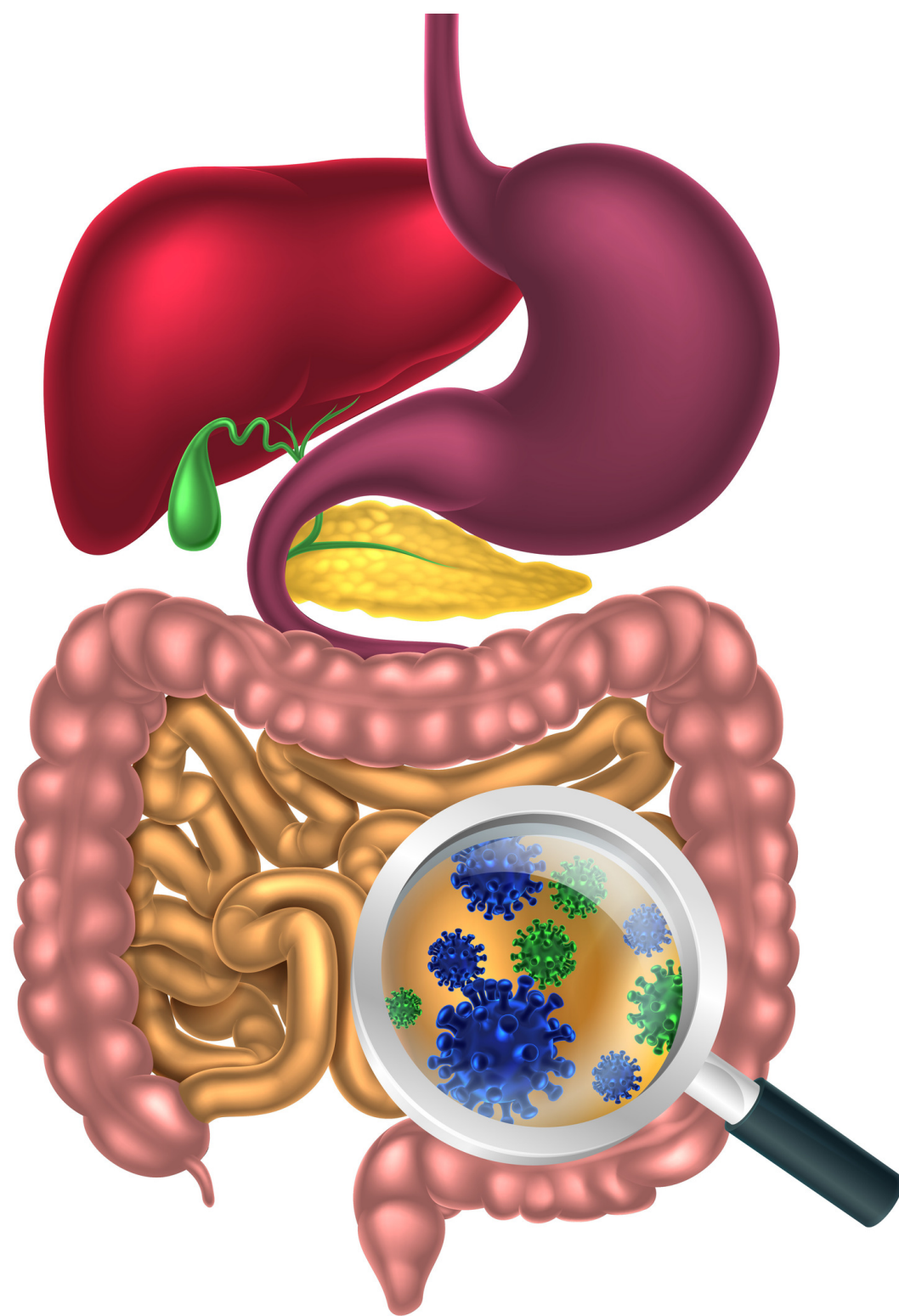


A Practitioners' Guide to
Gaining & Maintaining Wellness

Repairing Your Gut



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Is This Guide For Me?

Are you experiencing heartburn, reflux, belching, gas, bloating, constipation or diarrhea?

Have you been told by your doctor that you have an ulcer, gastritis, GERD, irritable bowel syndrome, Crohn's disease, colitis, or diverticulitis?

Have you been taking acid reducers or a proton pump inhibitor, or advised to use one?

Unfortunately these treatment just alleviates the symptoms when they occur, but do not address the underlying problem.

If it is your desire to address the root of the problem,
then this guide is for you!

This guide will teach you why these symptoms occur and walk you through a four-phase process to healing your digestive tract with clinically effective treatments used by today's top holistic practitioners, including how to utilize food and supplements to be your own health advocate.

Once you have completed the four-phase process and healed your digestive tract, I encourage you to continue your momentum by working on improving any deeper health issues you may be dealing with.

So, how do you fix your gut?

The answer depends on your presentation.

The Gut is the Gateway to Health

This guide will help to reverse your digestive symptoms and instill an appreciation for how influential the gut is to the rest of your health. No matter what a person's symptoms are, any gut issues must be addressed first. So let's do an overview of the digestive tract.

Smelling and chewing food alerts your stomach that food is coming. Acid is secreted to kill any microorganisms and to cue the release of digestive enzymes to break down your food for absorption in the small intestine. Starchy foods, soluble and insoluble fibers make their way to the large intestine to feed your internal ecosystem, the Microbiome. The diversity and balance of your microbiome strongly affects your immune system's health.

The digestive system communicates with your brain via nerves and hormones. Below are a few examples showing how their communication can become compromised:

- Reduced bowel motility causing poor communication.
- Bacterial overgrowth impeding the absorption of your nutrients.
- Pathogenic bacteria secreting toxic byproducts causing chronic stimulation of your immune system.
- Head trauma causing brain inflammation that adversely affects the functioning of the body.

Having a healthy gut is not just about weaning off of acid reducers and stopping your symptoms, it is key to maintaining your general health!

The 4 R's

So let's get started!

There are four phases to healing the gut, known as the 4 R's:

1. Remove

During the Remove Phase your focus is to eliminate anything inflammatory and to reduce your carbohydrate consumption, which will reduce your bacterial overgrowth.

2. Replace

During the Replace Phase you are healing any inflammation, providing HCl with digestive enzymes and bitters to optimize the assimilation of your food, and providing the nutrients necessary to improve HCl production naturally.

3. Repair

During the Repair Phase your stomach acidity will be in the correct range, your enzymes will be available, the amount of bacteria in your stomach will be reduced, and your immune system will begin to repair any damage.

4. Restore

During the Restore Phase you will increase your carbohydrate intake by increasing fruits, starchy vegetables, and soluble fibers. This will provide food to your Microbiome increasing its strength and function.

Remove

The goal of the Remove Phase is to decrease inflammation and reduce your bacterial population. Processed foods, added sugar, and/or a high carbohydrate diet provide a surplus of sugar to the normal inhabitants of your stomach, allowing them to overgrow causing the following:

1. Impaired release of hydrochloric acid (HCl) = less acidity
2. Increased susceptibility to harmful microorganisms
3. Insufficient breakdown of nutrients
4. Impaired absorption of minerals
5. Impaired stomach/small intestine signaling to continue digestive process

These digestive impairments create many of the digestive complaints prevalent today.

This bacterial overgrowth, paired with impeded functioning, causes an accumulation of food in your stomach allowing your bacterium to feast longer. The process of bacteria eating sugar is called fermentation, and the byproduct is gas. This gas increases the pressure in your stomach forcing the valve between your esophagus and stomach to open, resulting in reflux. In an effort to eliminate this excess gas you may burp. If the gas remains trapped you may feel bloated and look distended. This gas can also cause constipation since there is a physical blockage in the digestive tract.

The first step to healing your gut is to reduce the amount of bacteria in your stomach and avoid inflammatory foods.

Remove

Food Sensitivities

One important step to decreasing inflammation in your digestive tract is to remove foods that you are sensitive to. Wheat and dairy tend to irritate the gut, and provide easy to digest sugars that you need to be reduced to decrease your bacterial population. Therefore, they are removed here.

Processed Carbohydrates & Sugars

Sugar is found in the following forms:

1. Fruit
2. Starchy vegetables (potatoes, rice, plantain, yuca, etc.)
3. Processed foods
4. Processed sugar
5. Sugary drinks
6. Sauces

Sugar is food to your *Microbiota*, cells and brain. Sugar from processed sources are easy to absorb leading to bacterial overgrowth in your stomach.

Sugar from fruits and starchy vegetables are more complex in structure, therefore bypassing the stomach bacterium to be consumed by your *Microbiota*.

During the Remove Phase you will follow a low carbohydrate diet which eliminates processed carbohydrates and sugars, and reduce your carbohydrate intake to 15% of your total calories, which you will obtain from fruits and starchy vegetables.

15% carbohydrates

Remove

The easiest way to determine how many calories you consume a day is to utilize a commercial application such as My Fitness Pal. You will input the foods you eat in a typical day to assess your average total calories. My Fitness Pal also allows you to program your macronutrient ratios – percentages of carbohydrates, fats and proteins. You will set the carbohydrates to 15%.

2600 calorie diet = 65–100 grams

2000 calorie diet = 50–75 grams

1/2 cup = 15 grams

1 cup = 30 grams

Once you determine how many grams of carbohydrates you can consume a day, review the food chart below and shop accordingly. Non-starchy vegetables (greens) do not provide many calories considering the amount of energy used to break them down. Therefore you may eat as many greens as you like.

Caution:

A Low carbohydrate diet long-term is problematic.

A low carbohydrate diet is not providing an adequate amount of sugar to a healthy Microbiota, and should only be used to decrease bacterial overgrowth.

To optimize your progress, your fat and protein percentages can be divided according to your internal physiology.

Schedule a consultation to determine your macronutrient ratio percentages.

FRUIT	AMOUNT	GRAMS
Banana	1 medium	27
Pear	1 medium	27
Pomegranate	1/2 fruit	27
Mango	1 cup, sliced	25
Apple	1 medium	25
Pineapple	1 cup, chunks	22
Orange	1 medium	18
Grapes	1 cup	16
Papaya	1 cup sliced	16
Peach	1 medium	14
Cantaloupe	1 cup, cubes	13
Strawberries	1 cup, halves	12
Watermelon	1 cup, diced	12
Blueberries	1/2 cup	11
Raspberries	1/2 cup	8
Plum	1 small	8

VEGETABLE	AMOUNT	GRAMS
GRAIN		
White potato	1 large	58
White rice	1 cup cooked	50
Plantains	1 cup, sliced	48
Taro	1 cup, sliced	46
Yuca	1/2 cup, cubed	39
Sweet potato	1 large	37
Yam	1 cup, cubed	37
Acorn squash	1 cup, cubed	30
Butternut squash	1 cup, cubed	22
Pumpkin	1 cup, cubed	8

Remove

Industrial Oils

These are highly refined seed and vegetable oils ubiquitous in modern processed and packaged foods. They are devoid of nutrients and create inflammation in the body. This is the biggest issue with eating out at restaurants!

Focus on using healthy fats instead.

For Cooking:

- Coconut Oil
- Ghee - clarified butter
- Lard
- Tallow
- Palm oil
- Olive oil

For cold use:

- Avocado oil
- Macadamia nut oil
- Olive oil

Medications - Acid Reducers and NSAIDs

To restore your stomach's function, you must work to reduce and discontinue the following medications:

- Acid reducers and proton pump inhibitors both suppress HCl production which impedes digestive function.
- Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs) damage the stomach lining making you susceptible to ulcerations.

The longer you have used acid reducers, the longer it will take to wean off of them. Without the processed carbohydrates and sugars you will need less, or none at all.

Remove

Chronic Infections and Pathologic Species

Whether you have eaten poorly for years, even decades, or had a stomach bug at some point in your life, you might have a pathogen in your gut that needs to be eradicated. This can be determined with a stool test. If and when you should get a stool test is dependent upon your history and presentation. If you have an overgrowth of bacteria, yeast, fungus, or a parasite, I will devise a treatment plan to remove the pathogen. Schedule an appointment with me if you believe this might be necessary.

Ready to Provide Resources

Now that you have removed the easy to digest sugars, extra carbohydrates, inflammatory foods and oils, and any medications that reduce your stomach's acidity, you are ready to provide the resources to improve your stomach's health and function.

Replace

The goal of the Replace Phase is to:

- Heal an inflamed stomach, or ulcer, with mucinogenic herbs.
- Increase the assimilation of your food by providing HCl, digestive enzymes and bitters.
- Provide the nutrients necessary to produce HCl normally.

How do you know if you have an inflamed stomach?

- Have been diagnosed with gastritis or an ulcer?
- Do you have a strong desire for cold drinks?
- Do you feel hungry within an hour of eating a filling meal?
- Do you have a history of taking NSAIDs?

If you answered yes to any of the above, begin supplementing with the following mucinogenic herbs:

- Slippery Elm
- Marshmallow Root
- Deglycyrrhizinated Licorice (DGL)

They are commonly found together and should be taken for a few weeks to heal your stomach inflammation.

I also recommend bone broth 1-5 times a day. You can buy fresh from a butcher or natural market, or buy it in a powder or concentrated form. It provides easy to absorb nutrients that will repair your gut wall, expediting the healing process.

Replace

Digestive Bitters

Digestive bitters increase the flow of digestive juices, including HCl, bile, pepsin, gastrin and pancreatic enzymes. If you have issues breaking down fats, or had your gallbladder removed, digestive bitters can improve fat absorption. Bitters should be taken with your mucinogenic herbs, 15 minutes before meals. I recommend Herb Pharm's Digestive Bitters or Urban Moonshine.

Do I have issues breaking down fats?

Fats are one of your three macronutrients, the other two being proteins and carbohydrates. Fats are found in cooking oils, olives, coconuts, avocados, dairy, fatty parts of meat, fatty fish, et cetera. If you experience the following symptoms you may have difficulty breaking down your fats:

- Abdominal pain after a high fat meal
- Stools that float
- Clay colored stools
- Stools that look greasy

Can I take HCl?

If your stomach is not inflamed, and you don't have a history of taking NSAIDs, then you can directly increase your stomach's acidity by completing the HCl Challenge. I recommend using Doctor's Best Betaine HCl Pepsin and Gentian Bitters.

Replace

HCl Challenge

The goal of the HCl Challenge is to incrementally increase your stomach's acidity until you have optimized it.

Here is the process:

- Take one 650 mg tablet of HCl with enzymes before each meal for 3 days.
- If you do not feel any heartburn, increase the dosage to two 650 mg tablets before meals for 3 days.
- If you do not feel any heartburn, increase the dosage to three 650 mg tablets before meals for 3 days.
- Continue this pattern until you experience heartburn, then return to the prior dosage. Continue this lower dosage until you feel heartburn and continue downward until you discontinue the supplement.

If you feel heartburn with 1 capsule, find a product that has a lower dose of HCl with enzymes.

Caution:

HCl should not be used if you have an ulcer or if you have taken any anti-inflammatory medications.

Multivitamin

By taking a whole-foods based multivitamin, you will be providing the nutrients necessary in the production of stomach acid: niacin, chloride, sodium, potassium, zinc and iodine. Pick one that has folate versus folic acid.

Replace

What to Eat

Ideally your nutrients would come from your food. The more nutrient-dense your food, the less food you need to eat, allowing your digestive system to focus on repair, versus digestion.

The most nutrient-dense foods are:

- Organ meats
- Shellfish
- Herbs and spices
- Pasture-raised, grass-fed animal products
- Starchy vegetables – no more than 15% of total calories

What else can I eat:

- Non-starchy vegetables – as much as you want
- Nuts and seeds
- Fermented vegetables – especially sauerkraut and pickles
- Kefir – fermented dairy

Raw Apple Cider Vinegar (RACV)

RACV contains acetic acid which works as a natural antibiotic, killing unwanted bacteria. Acetic acid can also balance your blood sugar. RACV also contains enzymes and probiotics that can directly improve heartburn and reflux symptoms. Finally, it stimulates the liver and bowel's motility thereby increasing detoxification.

Add one tbsp to a cup of water and drink it five minutes before your meals to avoid acid reflux. If you use this regularly, drink it through a straw to protect your teeth.

Key Nutrients and Where to Get Them

Vitamin A

Liver

Egg yolks

Extra virgin cod liver oil

Vitamin D

Extra virgin cod liver oil

Cold water, fatty fish – salmon, sardines, mackerel

Shellfish – oysters, clams, shrimp, etc.

Vitamin K2

Grass-fed dairy

Poultry liver

Natto: fermented soybeans

Magnesium

Dark leafy greens

Nuts and seeds (especially pumpkin seeds)

Cold water fatty fish

Avocados

Yogurt

Bananas

Dark chocolate

Molasses

Figs

Key Nutrients and Where to Get Them

Vitamin C

Citrus fruit

Bell peppers

Dark leafy greens

Kiwi

Broccoli

Berries

Tomatoes

Papaya

Brussels sprouts

Cantaloupe

Iodine

Seaweed

Cold water, fatty fish

Shellfish

Potatoes

Cranberries

Organic dairy products

Supplementation

Multivitamin

Whole food based

Folate (not folic acid)

No calcium or iron (unless you know you deficient)

Magnesium

Glycinate

Citrate, if constipated

Extra Virgin Cod Liver Oil (EVCLLO)

Take EVCLLO unless you eat liver once a week.

Capsules: Dropi or Vital Choice Wild Salmon

Liquid: Rosita or Carlson

Vitamin C

Vitamin C improves a lot of chronic health conditions.

500-1000 mg a day is well tolerated by most people

Loose stools can be a side effect

Iodine

Iodine is often lacking in the diet. Add iodized salt or kelp flakes into your cooking, or take 800mcg a day of Iodine.

If you have an autoimmune condition, please consult your doctor.

Recommended brand: Seeking Health Optimal Iodine

Probiotic

Beneficial bacteria protect against potential pathogens through competitive inhibition.

Recommended brand: MegaSporeBiotic

Avoid products with Lactobacillus Acidophilus during reset

Repair

The goal of the Repair Phase is to not only repair the digestive tract, but also to repair the gut's connection to the brain and the rest of the body.

The brain receives information from the vagus nerve about the amount of food eaten and its nutrient content. It also sends information to the body about whether or not the gut should be processing its food, or managing a stressor.

Healthy communication between the brain and the gut allows for smooth transition between a stressed and relaxed state. Cortisol is your number one hormone utilized by the body for chronic stress, but it has many other roles too.

Cortisol and Stress

Your stress system is designed to increase your chances of survival. If you are going to fight or run, you need energy (sugar), oxygen (to exchange good stuff for bad stuff), and increased awareness. Cortisol provides the sugar and helps with the awareness.

Today, we deal with chronic stress more than acute stress, but the same process occurs. Your body shifts resources to the stress system, taking away resources from the digestive system. You can easily turn on your digestive system by taking three abdominal breaths over your food prior to eating.

Repair

Cortisol and Blood Sugar

Cortisol stimulates the secretion of sugar into the blood to be picked up by insulin, then transported to the necessary cells for energy. You can decrease cortisol utilization by reducing your stress, and by regulating your blood sugar.

Eat a high protein breakfast within two hours of waking up. Feel free to add some real food sugars, like fruit. You will have to decide whether or not to eat three meals a day or have numerous smaller meals, depending upon how you feel. If you need assistance with this, please read the content on my website. Finally, eat a starchy vegetable at dinner to provide a slow release of sugar while you sleep.

Cortisol and Sleep

Another one of cortisol's responsibilities is to wake you up in the morning. 50% of what you secrete in a day occurs 30 minutes after waking. As the day progresses, cortisol decreases and melatonin, our sleep hormone, increases. You can balance these hormones by going to bed and waking around the same time every day.

Cortisol and Inflammation

Cortisol is your number one anti-inflammatory. By repairing your gut you are removing inflammation decreasing the secretion of cortisol.

Cortisol Regulation

As you can see, cortisol has numerous functions and can be easily overused. Your hormonal system prioritizes the production of cortisol over other hormones which can cause imbalances elsewhere. If your sex hormones or thyroid are imbalanced, the gut could be the source.

Restore

The goal of the Restore Phase is to increase the population of your gut bacterium. Your low carbohydrate diet has supplied real food sugars to keep your Microbiota fed, but you'll want to increase their population by adding soluble fibers, fermented vegetables and dairy.

Yogurt and Kefir

Yogurt and kefir contain more beneficial microorganisms than any probiotic supplement on the market. They also supply nutrients such as vitamins, minerals, protein, amino acids, L-carnitine, fats and conjugated linoleic acid (CLA). If you do not digest dairy well, water kefir is an option.

Recommended starters: Lucy's Kitchen Shop or Dom's Kefir site

Water Kefir: Cultures for Health

Fermented Vegetables

Eat a fork-full of a fermented vegetable daily. Sauerkraut, pickles, kimchi, carrots, beets, or mixed vegetables all provide helpful bacterial species. You can even go the liquid route and drink kombucha or beet kvass. Diversity is key so switch them up!

Soluble Fibers

Soluble fibers form a gel-like substance that coats the digestive tract improving gut issues. They also provide food for your gut bacteria that, when eaten, create a byproduct that works as an anti-inflammatory for your gut lining. Just like food, diversity is best. Start with PHGG or Glucomannan and incorporate others later.

Restore

Helpful Soluble Fibers:

- **Glucomannan**

It is also helpful for regulating your blood sugar.

Recommended brand: NOW

- **Partial Hydrolyzed Guar Gum (PHGG)**

This is the most tolerated form of soluble fiber and also the most palatable.

Recommended brand: Healthy Origins

- **Psyllium**

This is an ingredient found in the product Metamucil. It can cause bloating.

Recommended brand: Look for pure, organic psyllium.

Metamucil contains sugar and artificial flavors.

- **Acacia Fiber**

Well-tolerated and does not tend to cause gas and bloating.

Recommended brand: NOW

- **Modified Citrus Pectin**

Pectin is a naturally occurring substance found in the cell walls of most plants and concentrated in the peel and pulp.

Recommended brand: PectaSol

How To Obtain Faster Results

The information in this guide may be all you need to heal your gut, but if you are not improving, do not give up! Schedule a session with me and let me help you get back on track!

Session with Me

Understanding your past medical history, diet and lifestyle, is important to understand where you are now.

Understanding your current diet, lifestyle and health challenges enables me to provide specific advice that is easy to implement because you will appreciate why you are doing it and what to expect.

Additional analysis, such as blood work interpretation, physical examination, and Chinese medical diagnostics would provide more detailed information which I would use to devise a personalized treatment plan to expedite results.

To Schedule

- Visit my website at jenngibbons.com
- Go to Patient Registration and follow the instructions

Services I Provide

Health Review & Examination

My intake process includes a thorough health history with detailed questionnaires to determine your current functioning. The examination includes an assessment of your structure and a Chinese medical analysis of your pulse and tongue.

Blood Work Analysis

I will review your past blood work and provide a detailed analysis including advisement for your next blood test.

Personalized Nutritional Plan

Based on your health analysis, lifestyle and goals, I will create a personalized nutritional plan, including ideal caloric intake and macronutrient ratios.

Supplement Regime

Based on your past and current diet, health conditions and goals, I will create a personalized supplement regime.

Botanical Prescription

Herbs are one of the most nutrient-dense foods available. A botanical formulation can be used to affect specific symptoms or to stimulate a specific body system.

Acupuncture and Massage

Acupuncture can be used to break up muscular tension, calm the mind, improve digestion, clear accumulation, improve the connection between the brain and the body, and/or stimulate a specific system.

Stress Management

Acupuncture is a great stress relieving tool, but you need something for when you are not on my table. In addition to teaching you behavioral techniques, I will recommend an herbal supplement (adaptogens) that will improve your stress system.

Movement & Mindfulness

I will teach you how to balance mild, moderate, and high intensity exercise based on your current health and goals. I will also teach you how calm your mind with qi gong and tai chi forms.

Diagnostic Testing Advisement

If you have plateaued with your improvement, diagnostic testing can uncover stealth infections or imbalances. Learn which tests you should obtain and why.

Chinese & Functional Medicine Practitioner



Who Am I?

I am a Chinese & Functional Medicine Practitioner with a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and a Master's degree in Traditional Chinese Medicine. I am a Licensed Acupuncturist, Certified Herbalist, Functional Medicine Practitioner, and a Health Coach.

My Training

The body functions as an integrated unit. Typical primary care doctors are well versed in the whole body, but as separate systems. Between their lack of time to truly understand your past and current health, and their simplistic perspective, they base their treatments on your symptoms, not the root cause of your symptoms, and prescribe pharmaceuticals that often create new issues.

My training in Traditional Chinese Medicine and Functional Medicine has taught me to look at the body as an integrated unit and to determine the root cause of a patient's symptoms. I have integrated my training in Psychology to devise a program that corrects common ailments and improves bodily functions, in a structured format that optimizes discipline and follow-through.

To learn more visit jenngibbons.com

Please consult with your doctor before implementing the strategies outlines in this guide.