

# **Signs You Have an Underlying Gut Issue**

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## Signs You Have an Underlying Gut Issue

**Rebekah Kelley:** Welcome to the Humanized podcast, all about personalizing your health. I'm your host, Rebekah Kelley, and today we have nurse practitioner Julie Davey, and we're going to be discussing Signs You Have an Underlying Gut Issue. But before I introduce Julie, I want to remind everyone to subscribe and get all the other variety of casts in audio, video and transcription at [HumanizedHealth.com](https://HumanizedHealth.com). I'd also like to thank our lead sponsor, Village Green Apothecary at [MyVillageGreen.com](https://MyVillageGreen.com).

So, a little bit about Julie. She's a nurse practitioner with over 25 years of experience. She's passionate about educating others on the power of food and natural medicine to heal the body. Her clinical practice primarily focuses on GI health, where she utilizes specialty lab testing to help clients get to the root cause of their symptoms. She creates tailored protocols and empowers individuals with the necessary tools to live a healthy and vibrant life.

Julie, thanks for being with us.

**Julie Davey:** Thank you so much for having me, Rebekah. This is my favorite topic, so I'm really excited to chat with you.

**Rebekah Kelley:** Well, I'm so excited to hear and let listeners hear, and let's start with just the simple term of gut health and what does that mean?

**Julie Davey:** Absolutely. So this is a term that we hear all of the time – gut health, gut health this, gut health that. Like, what does that actually mean? So just to break it down very simplistically, to have a healthy gut means that you have a good, healthy balance of bacteria. So we have trillions of bacteria in our gut in something called the microbiome. You may also hear that term. So when we have this healthy balance, we typically have more good or commensal bacteria than pathogenic bacteria. It also means that the gut lining is strong, that there's no leaky gut. And that we have a strong immune system and that we're digesting our food and absorbing nutrients optimally. So that's kind of what having a healthy gut or "gut health" means, just sort of in a very simplistic way. We want all of those pieces be in alignment.

**Rebekah Kelley:** I love that. And certainly, "microbiome" we hear all the time, right? Gut health, we hear all the time. I love that you kind of simplified it, but yet at the same time, it sounds really important for the rest of our health. And we know, especially coming out of the past several years, how important our immune system is.

So, how does this then, fall out with our overall wellness? How does this gut support that? What does that look like? What is that importance?

**Julie Davey:** Yeah, great question. So there's really no disease or condition that doesn't originate in the gut at a core or a foundational level. I mean, many people have probably heard the quote by Hippocrates over 2000 years ago. He said, "All disease begins in the gut." And

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we're finding out through more and more research really just how true and how on-point that is.

So having good gut health is crucial to, as you mentioned, a healthy and strong immune system. It's important for brain health, for hormonal balance, for digestion and elimination of toxins. So really, most all systems. Even heart health, it's important for. Most all systems in our body, we have to have a good gut, good gut health – but also that good foundation, I guess I should say, is a better way to say that. So yeah, extremely important to overall wellness.

**Rebekah Kelley:** So many things are supporting it, thus the foundation. So it's really, it's something we really need to know more about, which is why we have you here.

Can you talk to us then about what the most common signs and symptoms of maybe our gut health not being what it needs to be? What are the things that should flag to us, hey, you know, I really need to be focusing on my gut health.

**Julie Davey:** Sure. Absolutely. So we'll start with kind of the most obvious things. If you have a digestive issue, if you have, especially chronic digestive issues, so things like constipation or diarrhea. Our bodies are designed to have one to three bowel movements a day, and this is one of the major ways that we eliminate toxins from the body. So if you're not having one to three regular, soft formed bowel movements a day, then something is off. If that's a chronic issue for you, then there's something out of balance. There's something that's off. And I just want to say, in terms of these symptoms, this is something that is so normalized. I see people all of the time that say, yeah, well I only go to the bathroom like twice a week, but that's just normal for me. And I'm like, no, no, no, no, no, that is not normal, for you or anybody else. Even myself, I have a long history and that's probably why I'm so passionate about this. I had a long history of gut issues myself, and I had sort of normalized that, as well. Well, I guess I just won't have regular bowel movements. I guess that's just the way I am. And that's just absolutely not true. I think it's something that we do to... sometimes we just get used to feeling a certain way and we don't really know what to do about it. So we dismiss it and normalize it. But anybody that's listening, if this is you, it's not normal. There's something off balance.

**Rebekah Kelley:** I love that you bring that up. Because there is nothing, and we don't really talk about it, but there is nothing like a good poop. There is nothing like it. And, and if you can at least have one to three of those a day... [laughs] and you can even feel it when things aren't quite right, you're just like, wow, I'm not getting rid of stuff. I'm carrying too much. It feels off. And if that becomes normalized, then that probably just means it throws you off your whole day. I would think, right?

**Julie Davey:** My goodness, you are so right and I mean, there is nothing worse than not eliminating every day. And it is really a game changer. It will make you feel a thousand times better just correcting that issue in and of itself. I mean, I work with clients all the time that are...

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they have brain fog and fatigue and abdominal pain and all of these things. And once we get them to eliminating every day, one to three times, it's like, oh my gosh, I feel like a new person. So that is huge. You're absolutely right.

**Rebekah Kelley:** Okay. Flag number one. Things need to be coming out.

**Julie Davey:** That's right. Number two, I would say one of the most common things that I see is bloating. Now, certainly we all have bloating from time to time. If we eat something maybe that either didn't agree with us or something like legumes that are known to produce some extra gas and bloating. That's not what we're talking about here. We're talking about this frequent, constant, this is a kind of an ongoing thing. A lot of people I see will say, you know, I wake up in the morning, my stomach's pretty flat. I'm not bloated. Then as soon as I put food into my mouth, I bloat and it doesn't matter what I eat. You know, that's kind of a very common thing. I had that for over 20 years. It's a sign that there is a deeper issue. And it could be different foods. It could be that maybe you're intolerant or sensitive to certain foods. It could be that there are pathogens present. It could be from stress. I mean, stress will really wreak havoc on your gut, and of course your overall health. But that's another big one. Indigestion, gas, abdominal pain, any of these issues digestive-wise that you are having more frequent, let's say more than once a week, then there are issues, underlying issues.

And then, the ones that I'm going to talk about next are probably things that maybe people don't always make the connection that it could be an underlying gut issue.

So the first one is your mood. Mood swings, anxiety, depression, I see that a lot as well. Because remember, there's this huge gut-brain connection, right? And I see, especially in my patients who have H. Pylori, which is a very common bacteria. And maybe we'll do another episode just on H. Pylori, because you could literally talk for a while on H. pylori. But that particular pathogen causes inflammation of the nervous system. And when that happens, you can get these mood swings, anxiety, depression, even panic attacks. Those things can happen.

The skin. We were talking about the skin before we actually started the podcast. The skin is our largest organ, and so it's really one of the biggest ways that our body attempts to detox. So when we start to see these skin manifestations, like breakouts, it could be anything from acne to rashes, to eczema, to psoriasis. We need to be thinking about the gut and is there something going on on a deeper level, especially in patients who have candida overgrowth. We see a lot of skin manifestations with candida overgrowth.

The next one, fatigue. Fatigue, brain fog, lack of focus. Yes, you can be tired from having poor gut health, from having what we call dysbiosis, which is just an imbalance of good and bad bacteria in the gut. Now also remember that the majority of our serotonin that affects our mood and our sleep is made in our gut. So again, if our gut health is not good, if our gut is not

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strong, then we can certainly maybe not be making enough serotonin, and so we're going to be tired, we're not going to feel good.

Next, joint pain.

**Rebekah Kelley:** You know, those last three that you mentioned, those just to me, aren't inherently something that you connect to the gut issue, right? Like you think that a feeling or depression or something, or skin, it's so easy to think that that's something else, right? So the fact that that could be connected to the gut... You know, you'd just be like, oh, I just had some sad news, or like, you don't even think, hey, my gut's not healthy and so therefore things aren't functioning very well and it's showing up as depression or lowered serotonin. Just you saying that is so important. And I remember I used to break out on my chin until I discovered I have a dairy [sensitivity], but it's cow, it's not goat. But like those things, as soon as I quit doing cow's milk, I quit breaking out on my chin. My body was telling me, hey, like this isn't working for you. And I just didn't, I wasn't reading those signs that you're so eloquently sharing. It's not inherent.

**Julie Davey:** No. It definitely is not. And how many times do we... when we have these issues, of course, we're often seeking answers. We're going to our medical provider. I mean, how many times are we getting band-aid approaches? Oh, here, put this cream on your skin. But we're not really looking at, sometimes, what is the cause of this? And if we don't get to that deep, root underlying cause, then likely we're not going to heal and correct the issue fully, at least.

**Rebekah Kelley:** Well, my dermatologist was telling me that I was putting my hands on my chin. That's what it was, right? You're putting your hand on your chin. And it's like, no, it was my gut, like it was very clearly. So those are amazing flags.

Okay, what's next? I'm sorry, I interrupted you.

**Julie Davey:** Well, one last thing I want to say to that, and just say to anybody who's listening, you know your body better than anyone else. And so I think one thing that's really important when you partner with a medical professional in whatever area that may be, that it's just that, that it's a partnership. I, as a medical provider, don't expect a patient to tell me all their symptoms and then say to me, okay, now figure out what's wrong with me. This is a back-and-forth communication. Hey, let's talk about this. Hey, how do you feel in this area? What's going on here? Because that's the only way to really figure out what's going on. I mean, we can certainly do testing and things like that, but again, it's a partnership.

So, let me go over the rest of these things that you may be experiencing that you're not connecting to your gut. Joint pain is another one. So, parasites can actually feed on red blood cells, which causes anemia and also causes some joint pain. So, there's a very big link between parasitic infections and arthritis joint pain. I actually had two parasites 5 years ago when I first really started diving into this gut health more. And, I had a lot of joint pain then. And probably a



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lot of it was inflammation, as well. Corrected that and got rid of the parasites and the joint pain went away. So I can speak to that from personal experience.

A weak immune system. We already mentioned how important our gut health is to our overall immunity. And you may have heard 70 to 80% of your immune system lives or is housed in your gut lining. And we often do testing, where we can actually look at markers of that. There's a marker called a secretory IgA [sigA] and that will kind of give us an idea of how strong your immune system is and do we need work on kind of boosting that.

Hormone imbalances. We know again that the gut regulates not only serotonin, 90% of your serotonin is made in your gut, but it also regulates estrogen levels and the detoxification of estrogen.

And then lastly, I would say, difficulty losing weight is another one that people don't sometimes connect the dots. And there are actually several studies on this showing that dysbiosis, that imbalance of good and bad bacteria, plays a major role in weight gain and in healthy weight management. So, these pathogens contribute to sort of this low-grade inflammation in the body and it causes our body to hold onto excess weight. It is very interesting if you look, there are certain microbes that are found more predominantly in obese individuals and then certain that are found more predominantly in lean individuals or those who maintain a good BMI. So that's really interesting. And again, when we look at testing, we can see that. I see that all the time in clients. If I see somebody who's overweight, there are certain bacteria that are typically off on their test.

Those are probably the biggest ones that, if you have any of these issues we mentioned, you really need to look at your gut and think maybe it's an underlying issue in the gut.

**Rebekah Kelley:** Wow. Thanks Julie. Those are really valuable insights. Julie Davey can be found at [www.JulieAnnWellness.com](http://www.JulieAnnWellness.com). I'm going to spell that. J U L I E A N N W E L L N E S S.com. Let me remind you to subscribe and get access to all our Humanized videos, podcasts and transcriptions from all of our thought leader leaders on personalized health at [HumanizedHealth.com](http://HumanizedHealth.com).

Thanks so much for being with us. Come back and talk to us about all these other things you mentioned.

**Julie Davey:** Yes, absolutely. Thank you for having me.