Leaky Gut Syndrome: 
Unraveling the Cause of Chronic Disease & Harnessing the Power to Heal

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Leaky gut syndrome, also referred to as leaky gut or intestinal permeability, is arguably the most prolific killer in the United States. Leaky gut syndrome is a condition that affects you and everyone you know, and it can take decades off your life and cause untold misery. However, you probably know it by another name, or names. It is called food allergies, arthritis, asthma, autism, cancer, Crohn’s disease, dementia, depression, diabetes, fibromyalgia, IBS, inflammatory heart disease, multiple sclerosis, psoriasis, schizophrenia, scleroderma, ulcerative colitis, or any of the hundreds of autoimmune diseases identified to date. More than two millennia ago, Hippocrates said that “All disease begins in the gut.” If he was around today, he’d need to revise that famous quote to, “All disease begins in a leaky gut.”

The chronic and systemic inflammation resulting from a leaky gut is now believed to be responsible for nearly every type of allergy, autoimmune disease, and chronic health condition. The growing problem of leaky gut syndrome (LGS) has triggered a health crisis, the likes of which we may be wholly unprepared to deal with. Many physicians now agree that nearly everyone will die of an autoimmune condition. Moreover, there will be untold physical and mental pain, disability, and suffering along the way. Shorter lifespans and unfulfilled human potential doesn’t have to be our fate, but we need to take action early and consistently to heal and protect the gut.

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Statistics show that the incidence of LGS-related conditions is exploding. For example, one in five adults has arthritis; one in twelve adults has asthma; one in sixty-eight children has autism; one in ten adults has type 2 diabetes; one in three-hundred children has type 1 diabetes; and one in eight adults over sixty-five has Alzheimer’s. Diseases that were once considered rare, are now becoming increasingly prevalent, and many people have more than one. As of 2012, nearly half of all American adults (117 million) had one or more of ten different chronic health conditions, and one of every four adults had two or more chronic health conditions.¹

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Leaky gut is perfectly normal in newborns. In fact, they have a leaky gut for approximately the first seventy-two hours of life, and it’s the foundation for health. This time frame allows for mothers’ colostrum to provide the immunoglobulins and antibodies which initiate the immune system by passing freely from the gut into the bloodstream. Subsequently, the epithelial growth factors in colostrum seal up the natural holes and the continued supply of growth factors in breast milk keep the holes from reopening. Preventing intestinal permeability in infants is important so that the milk proteins in breastmilk will not enter the bloodstream and trigger an immune response. Additionally, mothers’ colostrum and breastmilk contains a plethora of immune and growth factors which assist in the healthy development and growth of the infant, including beneficial bacteria which seed the gastrointestinal tract.

Intestinal permeability has a critical purpose in the first seventy-two hours, but not beyond. During childhood or in adulthood, the holes in the gut can re-open and cause intestinal permeability. Essentially, without a consistent supply of immune and growth factors in the diet, everyone will develop LGS. Currently, the most critical and commonly utilized test for LGS is food sensitivity testing. The reason being that food sensitivity or food allergy are a symptom of LGS. When undigested food particles cross the intestinal barrier and enter the bloodstream, the immune system recognizes them as foreign and initiates an immune response and creates antibodies against them. The antibodies are initially effective against allergens, but over time, may begin attacking healthy tissue within the body, which eventually leads to autoimmunity.

Everyone has leaky gut. And I can prove it. My experience with the more than 187,000 food sensitivity tests performed by Rocky Mountain Analytical in the early 2000’s showed that only two tests did not indicate LGS. Obviously, 187,000 positive food allergy tests don’t lie. The data made it clear that for anyone experiencing any type of food allergy, autoimmune disease, or chronic health condition, there’s no need to perform food sensitivity testing. Moreover, recommending food avoidance or elimination diets may provide some symptom relief for patients, but it doesn’t do anything to heal a leaky gut.

Since immune health is directly related to gut health, understanding what causes intestinal permeability and how LGS contributes to disease is critical to identifying a viable solution for the millions of affected people. Ongoing intestinal permeability is akin to sewer pipes that are chronically leaking their contents into the body. The leaks may be few and far between at first, but over time, become more prolific. As the immune system’s inflammatory response to the sewage becomes chronic, there is disruption in the normally beneficial immune response to foreign material. Otherwise healthy cells, tissues, and organs are attacked as the immune system malfunctions, and disease(s) develops. At some point, the damage is so great that a patient’s symptoms necessitate a doctor’s visit and/or a diagnosable condition can be elicited.

Once practitioners understand that everyone has leaky gut syndrome and that LGS is the cause of disease, the next question to ask is what’s causing such disruption in the G.I. tract to bring about intestinal permeability. Infection by gut-based pathogens is the number one cause of G.I. disruption. The offending microbes include Candida albicans, Rotavirus, Cryptosporidium, C. difficile, E. coli, Salmonella, and Shigella, and although relatively few people in the United States die from these pathogens, they can cause a persistent, low-grade gut infection that eats away at the gut lining. The misuse of antibiotics in both humans and in animal husbandry has been a significant factor in changing the balance of gut bacteria towards an unhealthy composition. The emergence of superbugs was an unintended consequence, and it remains to be seen whether it may be our undoing.
The number two cause of G.I. disruption is what we eat, often man-made antagonists, that causes damage to the gut bacteria and the gut lining itself. These include glyphosate and other herbicide or pesticide-contaminated foods, GMOs, oral antibiotics, antibiotics in foods, over-the-counter and prescription pain medications, corticosteroids, refined carbohydrates and simple sugars, alcohol, soda, caffeine, and other gut irritants. Many of these are a consequence of our modern lifestyle and thus, unavoidable to some degree.

Even if one treats his body like a temple -- lives a healthy lifestyle, avoids the man-made antagonists as much as possible, and mom breastfed him for at least two years, the holes in the gut can still reopen. It is the lack of a consistent supply of immune and growth factors in the diet that allows LGS to rear its ugly head. From the earliest of times until the early part of the last century, most people had a cow, goat, yak, or other ruminant animal that provided the family with raw, fresh milk every day. The colostrum and milk were the mainstay of the human diet, and the immune and growth factors were plentiful. As people left the family farm and moved to cities, diet composition changed greatly. The mass production and widely available pasteurized, homogenized milk and other dairy products guaranteed the disappearance of the critical immune and growth factors. And with this disappearance came the emergence of allergies, autoimmune diseases, and other chronic health conditions.

The question then, is how do we get these critical immune and growth factors back into the diet? The answers is really quite simple, yet only recently rediscovered. And as everything that was once old is now new again, bovine colostrum is the missing link to optimal health. Ayurvedic doctors have used bovine colostrum for thousands of years in India. Prior to the discovery of penicillin and antibacterial sulfonamides, mainstream medical doctors in the United States and around the globe utilized colostrum as a natural antibiotic.

In 1950, Dr. Albert Sabin used the immunoglobulins in bovine colostrum to make his first oral polio vaccine. In the words of my mentor, Dr. Robert Heinerman, Ph.D., “Colostrum is the most powerful healing substance in the world. If it were not for colostrum, the human race wouldn’t even exist.” Although not widely utilized prior to the 2000’s, there was an increasing interest in the possibility that whole colostrum or some of its isolated components would be advantageous in treating a wide range of intestinal conditions, including inflammatory bowel disease and chemotherapy induced mucositis, in addition to nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug–induced gut injury. Later, it was discovered that intestinal permeability could be caused by heavy exercise, and colostrum was shown to be effective in preventing heat stroke and enhancing athletic performance.

With the emergence of antibiotic-resistant bacterial strains and deadly viral pathogens, interest in bovine colostrum began to gain traction in the early 2000’s. Antibodies to at least nineteen specific pathogens, including Escherichia coli, Cryptosporidium parvum, Shigella flexneri, Salmonella species, Staphylococcus species, and rotavirus, were identified in the colostrum of pasture-fed cows. Anti-viral research showed colostrum supplementation, both in healthy subjects and high-risk cardiovascular patients, was at least three times more effective than vaccination to prevent flu and is very cost-effective. Follow-up studies showed that patients receiving either colostrum plus probiotics or colostrum plus probiotics plus vaccination fared better than those receiving vaccination alone or no treatment at all. They experienced fewer...
incidences of flu and fewer flu days. Those receiving a vaccination had twice as many episodes of flu than those receiving the colostrum and probiotic supplement. Research in HIV/AIDS suggested that proline-rich polypeptides in colostrum could help enable a patient’s immune system to recover sufficiently to fight HIV on its own. The apparent mechanism was stimulating the production of new helper T-cells. Rotavirus infections are common in HIV/AIDS patients in developing countries; colostrum has shown to be effective in eliminating the virus, thereby eliminating the massive diarrhea that may otherwise cause dehydration and death.

Human clinical trials showed that bovine colostrum was a novel and inexpensive approach for the prevention and treatment of the injurious effects of NSAIDs on the gut, with a possible role in the treatment of other ulcerative bowel conditions.

With bovine colostrum recently rediscovered and with access to raw fresh colostrum extremely limited, practitioners and their patients need to know how this vital liquid can be made into a more widely-available supplement. They also must know if supplements are as efficacious as raw fresh colostrum. Colostrum can be dried into a powder, but that doesn’t necessarily mean that it will exert a healing benefit. Two of the most critical processing techniques for colostrum supplements are low heat drying and an applied phospholipid coating (liposomal delivery). If high heat is used, the growth factors are destroyed and only a limited quantity of immunoglobulins remain intact. If the colostrum particles are not coated with phospholipids, the harsh stomach acids destroy the immune and growth factors. So, in order to ensure a biologically active supplement, the finished product must contain high levels of the active components which are capable of reaching their target cells. Liposomal delivery also allows verifiable results with lower dosages.

Over the past two decades, I have perfected the process of liposomal delivery and developed a proprietary system for protecting the delicate immune and growth factors. Thorough examination of mammalian colostrum revealed that it is surrounded by liposomes. An infant’s digestive tract is certainly less harsh than that of an adult, so we knew that a liposomal delivery system would be critical to the healing benefits of colostrum supplements for more mature digestive tracts.

In conclusion, the Sovereign Health Initiative Foundation advocates returning to life’s basics and taking control over one’s health. It is critical that infants begin breastfeeding within one hour of birth and breastfeed exclusively for the first two years of life. Such action by new mothers is probably the best health decision they will ever make for their children. Beyond infancy, and especially in formula-fed infants, supplementing with Colostrum-LD™ is recommended. Avoiding the man-made antagonists that contribute to leaky gut syndrome is vital as well. Committing oneself to a healthy lifestyle and supplementing with bovine colostrum is arguably the best and perhaps only means of surviving in a harsh environment that presently favors quantity of life over quality of life. We may be living longer but not necessarily better. Hippocrates also said, “Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food.” Could he have been referring to colostrum?

P.S. If you are wondering, as I suspect you may be, whose two negative allergy tests belonged to… that would be my wife’s and mine. We harnessed the power of colostrum to heal, and so can you, your family, and every one of your patients. For more information, visit ColostrumTherapy.com or MySovHealth.org.
Endnotes


