

## 7 successful secrets for healing your microbiome with food



**Much, if not all, disease begins in the gut, and that's especially true for the modern diseases that plague us today.**

More and more, that root cause looks like a distressed [microbiome](#), and one of the most successful and least toxic ways to heal it is to alter what's going on in the gut by drastically changing the way you've been eating... Let's look at seven secrets for maximising your success.

### **1. Choose your carbs carefully.**

Complex carbohydrates ('good' carbs) are typically high in fibre and include foods like fruits, vegetables, some whole grains, beans and brown rice. From a microbial point of view, they're one of the most important foods for nurturing essential microbes.

### **2. Ferment your food.**

Fermented foods such as sauerkraut, kimchi and pickles are microbiome rock stars because they contain live bacteria (probiotics) and prebiotic fibre to nourish gut bacteria. You should try and include some of these fermented foods in your diet every day.

### **3. Manage your meat intake.**

There's only so much room on your plate, and it's vitally important to make sure that the microbe-boosting foods are well represented. So ideally, you should think of veggies as the main course and meat as a condiment. Make sure you're eating the best-quality, grass-fed meat available, with no antibiotics, since cows raised on corn or treated with antibiotics produce more pathogenic bacteria that can disrupt the microbiome.

### **4. Eat more plants.**

One can argue about the merits of eating or not eating meat when it comes to the microbiome, but there's no debate that eating more plants is the most important strategy for improving gut flora. Indigestible fibre from plants provides raw material for bacterial fermentation, which feeds your microbes... the diversity and number of plants you eat will be reflected in the diversity and number of bacteria in your gut garden, so you need to eat lots of different plants every day.

### **5. Choose food with dirt on it.**

These days, our produce travels long distances – sometimes thousands of kilometres from other continents – before it gets to us. The enzymatic activity and nutrient value of these foods starts to decline right after harvesting, and therefore its microbial value is significantly diminished. Buying locally grown food from small farmers generally means that the food has travelled a shorter distance to get to you, so more of the nutrients and bacteria are intact.

### **6. Say no to sugar.**

Sugar feeds gut bacteria – but not the kind whose growth you want to encourage. Studies have shown that a diet high in sugar can lead to overgrowth of yeast species and other pathogenic bacteria. Whether you gradually reduce your sugar consumption or do a more drastic sugar detox, your gut bacteria should eventually get to the point where the sugar-craving microbes are outnumbered and your cravings become easier to control.

### **7. Retrain the taste buds.**

Gradually training the taste buds to accept more bitter-tasting greens and cutting down on intake of added sugar are key elements of retraining a picky palate. And you really should think of this as

training – it can take months, if not years, for people to get to the point where they're eating vegetables at every meal without rebelling, or enjoying more savoury rather than sweet desserts.

It's also important to remember that food is medicine: you're not really feeding your picky eater; you're feeding his or her microbes to safeguard against future disease.

*This is an extract from [The Microbiome Solution](#) by Dr. Robynne Chutkan.*