

The gutsy challenge

Gut bacteria can have a direct effect on your health, energy levels, and even your moods and well-being.^{1,2} *The Gutsy Challenge* was created to help you focus on some basic changes you can make to help cultivate a healthy gut. It's a four-week challenge. Each week, you focus on one area of your life that affects gut health. Pick at least one lifestyle change to try. Consider involving friends, co-workers, and family. They may be a great source of encouragement!

Week 1: Maintain a healthy diet²

Goal: Use at least one suggestion each day to help maintain a healthy diet!
Insert a check mark if you complete the item.

	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
Eat at least 5 servings of super foods that super charge your gut: asparagus, onions, leeks, artichokes, bananas, blueberries, beans or polenta.							
Make half your plate broccoli or other cruciferous vegetables.							
Try a fermented plant food such as kimchi, sauerkraut or tempeh.							
Have active yoghurt as a dessert alternative.							
<i>My own goal:</i>							

Week 2: Focus on your sleep

Goal: Use at least one suggestion each day to focus on sleeping habits!
Insert a check mark if you complete the item.

	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
Ensure you are in bed for at least seven hours a night.							
Limit stimulants such as caffeine two hours before bedtime.							
Limit electronic screen time an hour before bedtime.							
Give yourself time to unwind before going to bed.							
<i>My own goal:</i>							

Week 3: Increase your physical activity

Goal: Use at least one suggestion per day to increase physical activity!
Insert a check mark if you complete the item.

	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
Go for a walk with a family member, friend or co-worker.							
Take the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator three times a day.							
Schedule at least 3 workouts for the week and commit to complete each.							
Ask a friend to join you for a workout.							
<i>My own goal:</i>							

Week 4: Reduce your stress

Goal: Use at least one suggestion per day to help reduce stress!
Insert a check mark if you complete the item.

	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
Practice gratitude by writing down 3 good things that happened today.							
Set aside 5 – 10 minutes to pray, meditate or just reflect on someone you love, while practicing deep breaths.							
Watch a funny movie with a friend or family member to laugh!							
Share your concerns or feelings with a trusted friend.							
<i>My own goal:</i>							

1. Healthline, "Why the gut microbiome is crucial for your health," June 2017, accessed at https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/gut-microbiome-and-health#TOC_TITLE_HDR_10, October 2020
2. Prime, "Immediate Benefits of Improved Gut Health", accessed at <https://keepmeprime.com/benefits-improved-gut-health-immediate/>, February 2021
3. Unless otherwise noted, the information in this chart is derived from: Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, "Gut Bacteria," accessed October 2020

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