

Intestinal Permeability (IP)

Published in “Village Views,” Spring 2017

“All disease begins in the gut,” Hippocrates said, and we are finally learning he was right. “Leaky gut” has been in the forefront in functional medicine for at least two decades, and now mainstream medicine has finally caught on. It even has a medical code and name – intestinal permeability, or IP.

So what exactly is IP? Tight junctions located in the mucosal lining in your intestines become weak and open up. This allows harmful toxins, waste and undigested food to slip across these junctions and leak into your blood stream, leading to inflammation throughout your body and a variety of diseases.

IP is very common with people who have varied bowel movements, such as constipation, diarrhea, bloating after meals, foul smelling gas, or abdominal pressure. Excess alcohol has been linked to IP, along with small bacterial overgrowth (SIBO), parasites and candida overgrowth. Other factors such as infections, toxins, steroids, non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (N-SAIDs), antibiotics, aspirin, antacids, pesticides and mercury, can also cause the intestinal barrier to split apart.

So what causes the initial symptoms? The first and foremost is food. Not all food is friendly to all people. Keep a detailed food and symptom log to help determine which food may be the culprit. In my practice, gluten, dairy, and soy are usually the prime suspects.

Along with the gastrointestinal disturbances mentioned earlier, the following may also be linked to IP:

- Skin issues (Eczema, psoriasis, acne)
- Autism
- Allergies and food sensitivities
- Asthma
- Autoimmune diseases (Rheumatoid arthritis, Celiac Disease)
- Thyroid imbalances
- Depression, anxiety, ADHD, ADD
- Lupus
- Difficulty concentrating
- Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, fibromyalgia
- Hormonal imbalances (PMS, PCOS- Polycystic Ovary Syndrome)
- Achy joints
- Migraines, headaches

➤ Chronic sinus infections, seasonal allergies

There is hope if you have IP. The first thing to do is remove all the triggers, both food and environmental. Yes, I know; you'll have to change your diet. But it's easier than you think. It all depends upon how you want to feel.

Most of my clients who have IP have substantial nutrient deficiencies. There are several tests that can determine which nutrients are inadequate and which may need to be replaced with supplements. Discuss this with your health care practitioner who specializes in gastrointestinal disorders.

It will take several weeks to repair, but once the "leaking" stops and you start to see improvement, it will all be worth it!