

5 Secrets to Getting Your Gut in Gear

To get and keep our brain in gear we first must get our gut in gear. Yet change is hard and a change to our diet can be intimidating, even severely challenging. And if we do go on a diet and starve ourselves of our favorite foods and our comfort foods, we end up throwing up our hands, going back to our old ways of eating where the gut brain and the head brain are just as bad of if not worse.

Yes, we all know we need to eat better. And that does mean we need to make a change. But Rome was not built in a day, rather brick by brick. Plus, progress is not built on top of perfection, it's built on top of action. Instead of making drastic changes, making smart and easy lateral shifts will help you on your journey to gut-n-gear health.

Here are 5 simple ways or secrets to getting your gut-n-gear.

1. Ice Cream (YES!)

We know you're going to want that ice cream still - after taste-testing hundreds of ice creams this is the best one: **Ben and Jerry's Non-Dairy Ice Cream**

Why go through this effort? We know dairy contains these two troublesome components: casein and lactose.

Casein is a protein which suffocates antioxidants, especially those found in berries, so those health benefits you'd get from eating those fresh blueberries aren't helping your brain.

Lactose is a sugar and you need the enzyme lactase to digest it. Many folks, actually 65% of the human population, do not synthesize this enzyme and therefore suffer esophagus reflux, diarrhea, bloating, cramping...just general discomfort.



You might not know: You can develop lactose intolerance suddenly as an adult. The best way to find out if you are lactose intolerant is to remove all dairy for a few days (5 is optimal) and then have a single serving of a dairy product and evaluate how you feel.

2. Double-up the Veggies

Double up your vegetables: quantity and type. We all know we need em but we often dramatically underestimate how much we need. Next time you are in the produce section pick up 2 vegetables you didn't eat last week. Alternating the types of vegetables you eat will help you intake more nutrients that your body craves.



You might not know: When was last time you had turnip roots? Expecting standard flavorless white potato variety, my family had no idea they were eating turnip roots the first time I served them as 'fries'. They ate them all up and asked for more. Try it for all the B vitamins and low carbohydrates.

For the fries, simply cut them into 'french fry' pieces, toss them in a touch of olive oil with garlic salt and bake till tender. As an alternative, I'll sprinkle some rosemary on them to accent the garlic.

3. Packaged Gluten Free Bread

It's the hardest substitute for many because... is there anything like a sandwich? Especially for the convenience. Ezekiel breads have done the trick for me and my family. There are many types, see what type your grocery hosts, be sure and double check in the freezer section, try many and find a favorite.

Of course I mainly buy for gluten free and non GMO but I especially like Ezekiel brand because they offer sprouted grain which, while holding the nutrients, is so much easier on your digestion.

Keep a loaf in the fridge or freezer for when only a sandwich will satisfy. I always am drawn to a sandwich when I have leftover turkey or chicken from a supper - add lettuce and tomato and you've got quite the sandwich to bite into.



4. About your juice.

I have bad news. Your store bought oj? It's full of chemicals, preservatives and additional sugars that are really putting our guts and in turn our memory through the ringer.

You might not know: If the idea of giving up all juice makes you feel sad, try 4oz of pomegranate juice each day. Pomegranate juice has more antioxidants than green tea or red wine and actually helps repair your DNA by calming inflammation and changing the path of some inflammation.



But nothing beats a glass of water for hydration and if you'd like to give it a little flavor can I suggest adding a squeeze of lemon or muddling a blackberry when it's in season.

5. Pizza

Can't get away from pizza? Me either.

In my kitchen, you can find me cooking up a delicious head of cauliflower for the crust and adding some homemade simple tomato sauce with no added sugar, topped by whatever fresh ingredients I have on hand. Let's be honest, the pizza is made by the pepperoni.

Next time you're in the mood for pizza see if your trusted brand has a gluten free alternative. Many do, including Papa Murphy's, Papa John's and the brand they use, Udi's Gluten Free Pizza Crust which is also available in many grocery stores.



You might not know: If gluten-free is not a choice for you, go for the thinnest crust available. I have found Papa Murphy's to be the tastiest low-carb thin crust option; yes, it still has gluten but like I said in the intro: Progress is not built on top of perfection, it's built on top of action. Making smart and easy shifts will help you on your journey to gut-n-gear health.



Bonus Secret #6 - Get Moving to Get Things Moving

Not to over-share here but being active helps your entire digestive system get moving, get your biology flowing. This doesn't mean moving your clothes off the treadmill. Here are simple ways you can get more steps to get moving more.

- Take the first flight of stairs, or as many as you can and then ride the elevator the rest of the way to your appointment.
- Park in the farthest spot away from the restaurant/grocery/department store entrance.
- Walk to your market or grocery store and weave around all that fresh produce to see what you discover.
- Take a quick stroll around the block after dinner.
- To keep you committed, join a running club and just walk. Mine meets every Tuesday and is chocked full of walkers.
- Injury or discomfort got you down? Just start...begin to the mail box and back for a few days. When that is a piece of cake, walk down the block and back slowly building increments and setting goals for yourself.



The method is in the mindset.

Yes, the method to eating for the health of your head brain and your gut brain is in your mindset.

Don't be overwhelmed, just start slowly, add lateral shifts of change and build up. Begin. Easing through small measures first will give you success. Your confidence will build and lay a foundation for the continual change of lateral shifts.

We know Rome was not built in a day, but brick by brick. So ...just get started!

Here's to getting your gut-n-gear, to your good brain health.



Janet Rich Pittman is on a mission to help people fight the effects of aging by powering up their brains. As a Licensed Dementia Administrator and Certified Dementia Practitioner, she has seen firsthand what dementia can do to its victims and their families—and her years of research have taught her that it's possible to prevent dementia, even REVERSE IT and reclaim your brain.

Counseling individuals, families and couples on how to restore their memory, regain their brain energy and reclaim their brain health is Janet's service now. Schedule a free call here with her to see how she can help you or yours.

