

On tract

A gut health guide with GI insights,
recipes, lifestyle tips, and more



In this guide, you'll find:

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The content in this guide is for informational purposes only and not intended to serve as medical advice. Please consult with your doctor for medical questions and guidance.

Thanks for downloading our gut health guide!

Whether you're living with a chronic GI condition or experience occasional symptoms, you're not alone. In fact, 1 in 4 adults struggle with digestive issues. It's time to stop suffering – and you've already taken the first step by getting access to the science-backed resources on the pages to follow.

As a board-certified gastroenterologist and co-founder of Oshi Health, my goal is to help people get back to life uninterrupted by digestive symptoms. That's why I designed a different kind of GI care – one that addresses the root cause and provides continuous, integrated support.

That's just what you'll find in this guide – our revolutionary whole-person approach that's led to lasting relief for our members, and we hope will help you, too:

- ✓ Expert insights on the gut-brain connection
- ✓ Dietary guidance and gut-friendly recipes
- ✓ Tips for sustainable lifestyle enhancements
- ✓ And so much more

Your journey to better gut health begins now. And we're here to support you, every step of the way.



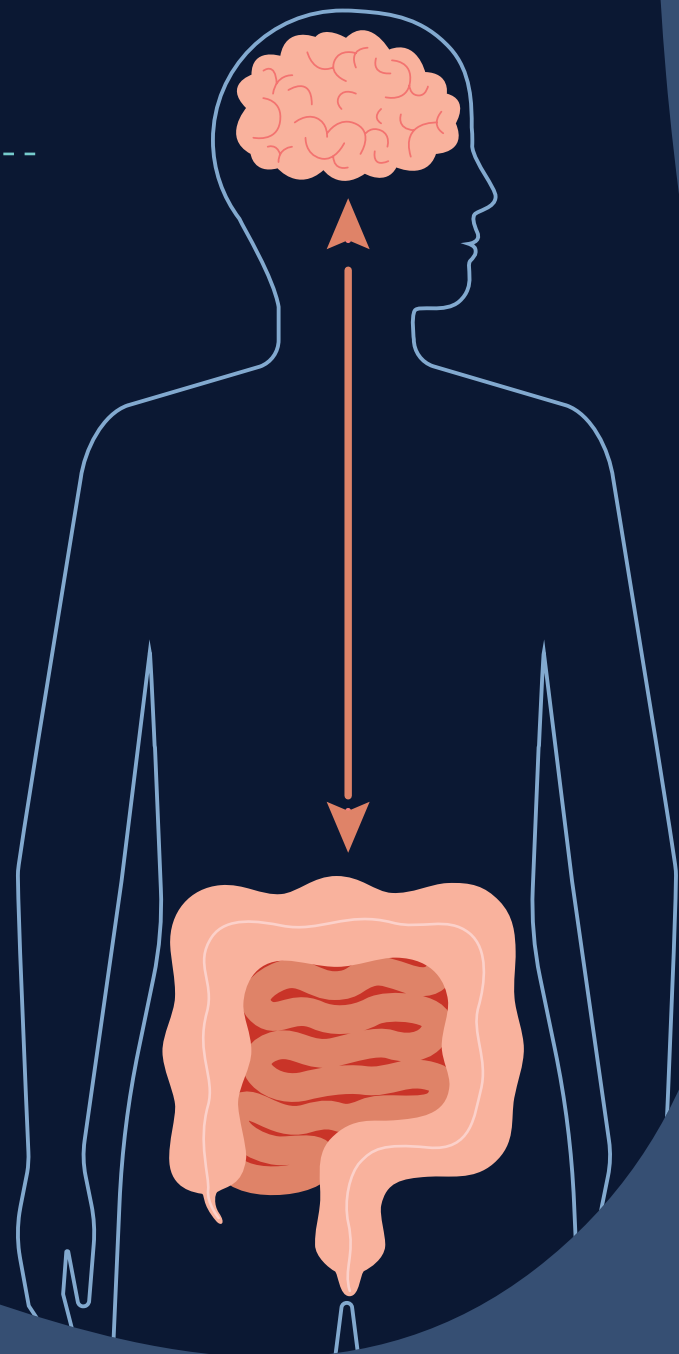
In good health,

Sameer Berry, MD, MBA
Chief Medical Officer

Want even more GI support? Visit oshihealth.com to get started.

The gut-brain connection

Have you ever felt a “pit in your stomach” when receiving unexpected news or experienced “butterflies” before a work presentation? If so, you’re feeling the impact of the gut-brain connection.



You might not know it, but **your brain and your gut are in constant communication with each other** — and scientists are beginning to understand how that communication affects GI symptoms.

“This doesn’t mean your symptoms are not real or ‘all in your head,’” explains Mariah Corneille, PsyD, Lead GI Behavioral Health Provider at Oshi Health. “Rather, think about it as a specific pathway between your mind and body that is disrupted.”

That pathway goes both ways. Stress signals in the brain that cause anxiety and other heightened emotions can trigger a response from the gut, resulting in GI discomfort. And, a distressed gut will send signals to the brain that cause emotional distress.

In other words, stress and digestive distress can become a vicious cycle.

Fortunately, **GI Behavioral Health providers have many gut-focused, evidence-based tools at their disposal** — and can tailor them to address your GI needs and goals. Here, our experts share a few insights and resources to help you manage the gut-brain connection for GI relief.

Meet Mariah Corneille, PsyD

Lead GI Behavioral Health Provider



“Focusing on the gut-brain connection doesn’t mean your symptoms are ‘all in your head.’”

A Licensed Clinical Psychologist, Mariah has specialized training in medical and health psychology. At Oshi Health, she is skilled at providing patient-centered care with a culturally informed lens that supports members and clinicians to achieve positive health outcomes.

What’s in a name? GI Behavioral Health providers are sometimes known as GI psychologists, too.

How to tap into your gut's GPS

Our minds and our guts are directly connected – a link that evolved from ancient times, when humans needed gut instinct to track and locate food without getting into danger. Scientists continue to learn more about the gut-brain connection, including how the vagus nerve—which connects the brain and gut—is involved in memory.

Think about the best thing you've ever eaten: you likely can recall with vivid details the location of this meal, who you were with, and even certain smells from that time. Ancient humans needed this form of communication system to reliably ensure their food supply and survival.

Today, **tapping into that same gut pheelings system (GPS) can help guide you when your body is experiencing stress or anxiety.** Stress can worsen GI symptoms and, conversely, your gut can signal emotional reactions to your brain. Your gut reacts – such as with an upset stomach, painful cramping, and digestive difficulties – when it wants you to steer a different direction.



By becoming more aware of this GPS communication between your brain and gut, you can control your emotional distress and your GI symptoms. **Relaxation strategies such as mindfulness meditation can help you to tune in to your gut feelings and focus on more positive emotions.**

Imagine listening to your GPS when you're feeling badly or experiencing uncomfortable emotions. By noticing (instead of ignoring) discomfort and embracing it with focused awareness while relaxing, you'll reduce those ancient human feelings that are causing your gut to go awry.

That very GPS that was once protective for our ancestors in dangerous situations can indeed protect you today, too. **You have the power to take control and learn to steer it and input your destination into awareness.**

Gut lost: Don't believe these 3 common digestive health myths

When you're looking to regain control from digestive issues, the seemingly endless stream of conflicting information online doesn't help – but our experts can. Here, they sort through the hype and set the record straight on 3 common GI myths:

MYTH VS FACT

1

MYTH: All fiber supplements act as laxatives.

FACT: Not all fiber is the same – there are two types. Soluble fiber can help slow digestion and alleviate GI symptoms like diarrhea. Insoluble fiber can have a laxative effect to help improve GI symptoms like constipation.

2

MYTH: Something is wrong if you don't have a bowel movement every day.

FACT: As a general rule, having a bowel movement anywhere from 3 times a day to 3 times a week is considered 'normal.' The most important thing is to take notice of your regular bowel pattern (time of day, number of times per day, consistency) and seek help when you're seeing pattern changes that last longer than a week.

3

MYTH: If your stomach rumbles, it means you're hungry.

FACT: A rumbling stomach sometimes signifies hunger, but not always. Because stomach rumbling can also occur when muscles contract to move contents forward in the GI tract, these sounds may happen when the stomach is full or empty – so, if you hear some gurgling, pause to think about if you need more to eat or just need time to digest!

4 tips to manage stress — and improve gut health

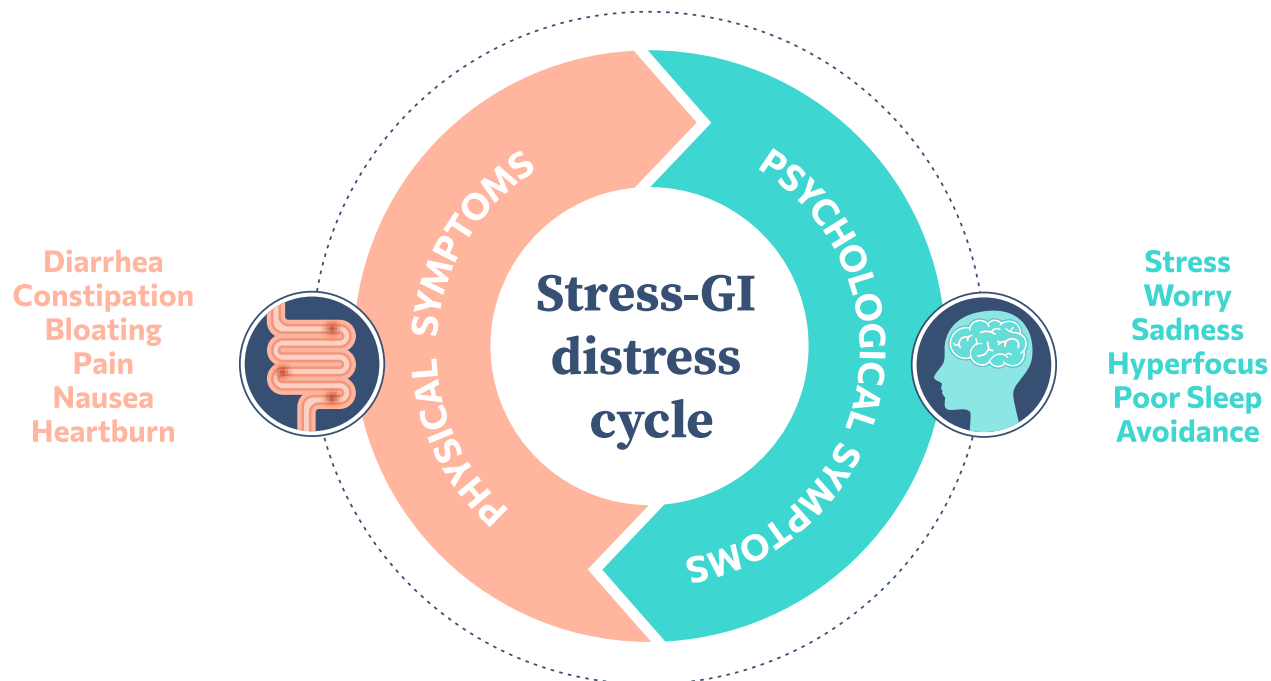
Living with chronic GI symptoms is stressful. And while stress doesn't cause GI issues, it may worsen symptoms and impact your quality of life. To improve your gut functioning and overall well-being, try these 4 tips to keep your stress in check.

1 Acknowledge your stress

Check in with yourself and identify how you're feeling. Once you've validated your feelings, concentrate on next steps. For example, ask yourself, "What do I have control over in my life?" or "What can I modify?" Let go of what you can't change and focus on what you can.

2 Plan ahead

Try to head off potentially stressful situations by preparing for them. Busy mornings? Pack lunch at night, and build in extra time for rest at other times. Getting dinner with friends? Map out bathrooms. Going on vacation? Make sure you have enough medication and supplies for the trip. A little organizing up front can ease your mind down the line.



3 Lean on your social circle

Reach to your support system to ask for help when needed, or just to talk. If you're up for it, be open about your situation with family and friends, and share specifics about what would be helpful for you. Whether you need a sympathetic ear or a nap, making clear requests takes the onus off others — and can help you feel better, faster.

4 Try relaxation techniques

Many patients find certain practices help reduce stress, such as meditation, guided imagery, soothing recordings, belly breathing, or progressive muscle relaxation. Even just setting time aside every day to do something you enjoy can help.

Traditional therapy vs. gut-focused therapy — and why it works

While traditional therapy is often ongoing, **GI Behavioral Health treatment is short-term and skills-based**, designed to help people take a proactive approach to symptom management. Common gut-brain tools include: belly breathing, relaxation training, and learning to reframe your thinking as it relates to your gut.



Gut-friendly dietary guide and recipes

If you have a GI condition, understanding how to eat to manage your symptoms can feel stressful and overwhelming. To help cut through the clutter, our GI Registered Dietitians are sharing some of their top dietary and nutrition guidance, and gut-friendly recipes.



5 tips for dining out with a GI condition



Many people look forward to eating at a restaurant for expertly prepared food with no kitchen clean-up required. But if you live with chronic GI symptoms, dining out can feel anxiety-provoking. These 5 tips can help you manage – and hopefully even enjoy – eating away from home.

- 1 Research menus ahead of time**
Before you go, look at menus online to see if there will be appropriate food choices for you. If you're not sure, give the restaurant a call to ask about modifying a dish to meet your needs. Find out ahead of time if they will be able to prepare food in a way that won't set off your symptoms.
- 2 Locate the bathroom as soon as you arrive**
Pick a restaurant you've already been to or, if you're trying a new place, arrive early so you can find the bathroom. That way, you'll have more peace of mind if you need to get up to go.

3 Don't go hungry

Try to stick to a consistent meal schedule in advance of your dinner by eating at regular intervals throughout the day. By staying satiated, you won't be as likely to have a large meal, which can be harder on digestion.

4 Try to calm your mind – and your digestive system

Prior to eating out, try activities like deep breathing, yoga, or a short nature walk to help quell any nerves. With such a strong connection between our brain and our gut, remaining calm and relaxed before and while you're out to eat can make a real difference.

5 Order wisely

Many people find it helpful to order food that's prepared simply – for example, grilled or baked food is typically easier to digest than fried foods – and to limit or avoid alcohol.

To really know what works for you, a GI Registered Dietitian can help you understand the relationship between what you eat and how you feel – and make a sustainable diet plan.

Meet Kaitlin Voicechovski, MS, RD, LDN
Lead GI Registered Dietitian

Kaitlin improves the lives of people living with GI conditions through evidence-based nutrition guidance. She believes in whole-person, integrated digestive care – and is passionate about helping Oshi Health members feel empowered to navigate their diets with confidence.

Did you know? Dietitians can specialize in different areas, including sports nutrition, diabetes support – and the gut!



What to know about fiber and your digestive health

Eating a high-fiber diet that incorporates both soluble and insoluble fiber can help maintain bowel health and regulate bowel movements. If you're thinking about adjusting the fiber in your diet, try these tips to get started.

High-fiber foods

Are you looking to increase your fiber intake? Start by eating a variety of these foods:

- Beans, chickpeas, and lentils
- Dried fruits, such as dates, prunes, and raisins
- Fruits, such as apples, pears, oranges, grapes and berries
- Green beans
- Grains, such as oats, brown rice, quinoa, farro, barley, and bulgur
- Nuts, seeds and popcorn
- Vegetables, such as artichokes, broccoli, carrots, celery, corn and zucchini
- Whole wheat breads and cereals

Pro tip: Make sure to add fiber slowly over the course of a few weeks to avoid uncomfortable symptoms like gas, bloating, and cramping. And, drink plenty of water to help your body process it.

Low-fiber foods

Even though fiber is generally part of a healthy diet, some digestive issues actually require limiting your fiber intake. A low-fiber diet should focus on:

- Canned or well-cooked, skinless, seedless vegetables
- Canned or well-cooked, skinless, seedless fruits
- Cheese, yogurt and milk
- Eggs
- Fish, poultry and meat
- Pancakes or waffles with white refined flour
- Potatoes without skin
- Pudding
- Tofu
- White bread, pasta and rice

Pro tip: Be sure to read food labels, as fiber can crop up in unexpected places, like yogurt, cereal, and certain beverages. Once your digestive health is back on track, your dietitian may recommend slowly adding more high-fiber foods back into your diet.

Quick gut-healthy recipe: Tex-mex bowl



Begin with a scoop of brown or white rice in a bowl

Add in your protein of choice: grilled chicken, steak, or tofu work well!

Add in your favorite vegetables- grilled peppers, onions, chopped lettuce & tomatoes are a few that work nicely in this case

Top with 2-3 Tbsp of shredded Monterey Jack cheese and 1 Tbsp of sour cream (lactose-free if needed)

Garnish with fresh cilantro and lime juice

Quick gut-healthy recipe: Veggie pasta medley



Preheat oven to 400 F. Fill a pot and start to boil water for pasta.

Chop carrots, cherry tomatoes, zucchini and eggplant. Toss them with olive oil, salt and pepper.

Roast veggies on a sheet pan in the oven until tender, checking regularly (approximately 20 minutes)

Cook penne pasta according to instructions on the package (Looking to boost your fiber intake? Opt for a whole wheat or bean-based pasta. Gluten free? Use a GF rice, quinoa, or bean-based pasta instead)

Combine pasta and veggies. Top with sliced grilled chicken, salmon, or tofu for protein

Garnish with a sprinkle of pecorino cheese

Quick gut-healthy recipe: Egg cups

Spray a muffin tin with cooking spray. Preheat oven to 375 F.

In a large bowl, whisk together eggs, shredded mozzarella cheese, chopped baby spinach, and diced red bell pepper. Season with salt and pepper.

Fill muffin tins $\frac{3}{4}$ full and bake until centers are fully cooked (approximately 20-25 minutes)

Enjoy with a side of fruit



Lifestyle tips for digestive health

We know that managing chronic GI issues can feel like a full-time job, but it doesn't have to. Our goal at Oshi Health is to help you get back to the life you want, by getting rid of your symptoms. Here are a few lifestyle tips to help you live well with a digestive condition.



Top digestive tip: Prioritizing sleep for better gut health

Sleep troubles are common in people with GI conditions, which can then lead to fatigue — and can in turn make symptoms worse.

To sleep better, keep your room quiet, cool and dim. Try to stick to a consistent bedtime and wake-up time, even on weekends. And, if you can, nix caffeine, screens, and big meals in the hours before bed.

Having conversations about your digestive condition

While some people find it hard or embarrassing to talk about their GI condition, telling your friends, family, and even your coworkers about your condition and how they can help you may reduce stress in the long-run. Here are 5 tips to help the conversation go smoothly.



1 Regain confidence by combating shame and embarrassment

For some people, living with digestive issues can result in feelings of shame or embarrassment. Remember that you didn't choose to have these issues and by sharing this information with your friends, family, or colleagues now, you're avoiding more stress or questions in the future when emergency situations might arise.

2 Keep it general

You don't need to say the specific condition you have, if you don't feel comfortable. Rather, feel free to leave it as "digestive issues," "cramps," or a "GI condition," as that's usually the most detail that people need to hear anyway. Remember: you can share as much or as little as you'd like.

Meet Jessica Lash, NP

GI Nurse Practitioner

Jessica worked as a registered nurse for 6 years before becoming a nurse practitioner focused on gastroenterology. She loves working at Oshi Health, where she cares for patients with a wide range of GI conditions and also leads interactive education sessions for our clinical team.

Trivia: Did you know? There are more 355,000 registered NPs in the US.



3 Explain how it can impact your plans or time together

Having digestive symptoms likely means frequent trips to the bathroom, saying “no” to certain events because you don’t feel well, or other disruptions in how you spend time together. Make it clear to others how your issues or condition might require them to show extra empathy or flexibility so that you can feel more at ease when going out in public or when you need to stay in.

4 Think about what you’ll say ahead of time

Having a list of talking points can help the conversation go smoothly. While the script will vary for each person, keeping things short and sweet can often be the best way to go. You can say things like, “I’m doing what I can to control my digestive symptoms, but sometimes they act up or get worse unexpectedly.” You can share when and how you feel most comfortable.

5 Be specific about how your family and friends can help you

In addition to providing information about your struggles and an opportunity for open conversation, make sure to let your family, friends, or colleagues know how best they can support you. Is it showing emotional support? Carrying a back-up emergency bag for you? Let your loved ones know specifically how they can help as part of your support system so you feel more at ease.

Meet Michael Currier, PA-C
GI Physician Associate



“At Oshi, I have longer visits with my patients – and access to a full team, including dietitians, behavioral health providers, and more. This **patient-centered approach** translates to sustainable results.”

With more than 12 years of experience as a GI Physician Associate, Michael is passionate about patient-centered GI care and improving the quality of life for people living with IBD and other chronic digestive diseases.

Fun fact: He was a recipient of the Crohn’s and Colitis Foundation Honored Hero Award in 2014.

**Ready for even more whole-person GI support?
Visit oshihealth.com to get started.**

The Oshi Health experience:

- Dedicated care team**
Holistic support from a team of GI providers that works together for you
- Virtual visits and chat**
Meet and message with your care team as needed without leaving home
- Get seen right away**
Available appointments and on-demand care so you can find lasting relief

Oshi Health is life-changing digestive care – but don’t just take our word for it. Here’s what our members are saying:



“After more than 24 years of struggling, I **finally received the care and attention** I have been seeking for so long with Oshi. I cannot thank you all enough for how you have helped me get my life back!”
– Zoe, Massachusetts



“**Oshi is ground-breaking digestive care.** It came at a time when I had nowhere else to turn. People need to understand how different this is compared to the traditional GI visits they’re used to.”
– Scott, Pennsylvania



“I’ve been struggling with digestive issues for a while now. My Oshi Health providers listened to me, and made me feel like I had a whole team behind me. **I finally found symptom relief** – all without needing costly procedures or just being prescribed another medication.”
– Jennifer, Texas

91% of Oshi Health members gain control over their GI symptoms within 10 weeks.

Oshi Health is an in-network provider for Aetna® members and coming soon to UnitedHealthcare.

