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# **Gutsy Strategies for Crohn's and Colitis**

**A natural approach**

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## **What is Crohn's?**

In Crohn's Disease you have inflammation (swelling), redness, irritation and sores (ulcers) in the intestines. It can happen in any part of your digestive system from mouth to anus, but it typically affects the small intestine and the upper part of the large intestine or colon.

Ulcerative Colitis is similar but affects the colon, starting at the anus and travelling upward in a continuous stretch of inflammation.

Both are very distressing conditions, not only because the symptoms are painful and embarrassing, but because these diseases are considered a life sentence (incurable) by conventional medicine. What a depressing thought!

**Is it normal to go through your entire life with an inflamed digestive system, unable to enjoy your food or your life?**

Of course not!

The attitude that there's nothing you can do about Crohn's or Colitis but put up with the symptoms makes no sense.

Why?

***Because your body is designed to heal itself.***

The human body is a self-healing organism. When you have a chronic condition like Crohn's or Colitis, something is getting in the way of that self-healing. (Usually more than one thing, but we'll get into that.)

**So, how can you help your body to do its own healing?**

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**Here are four key strategies you can work with:**

1. Support your digestion by going chemical-free
  2. Balance your intestinal microbes (gut flora)
  3. Eat foods that support digestive health
  4. Release toxic emotions and stress
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## 1. Support your digestion by going chemical-free.

If you're like most people with digestive problems, chances are good that you believe food is your biggest problem. Food is definitely part of the picture, but there are many people who have changed their diets, taken probiotics, and still aren't getting any results.

There's a good reason for that, and it has to do with all the chemical toxins in our daily lives.

Imagine if you were under water and someone threw a wet blanket over you. How hard would it be to swim up to the surface?

Practically impossible!

Chemicals are like that wet blanket covering you. They make it hard for you to function and get back to health. So even if your food is right and your probiotics are good, your body still has to struggle. And the digestive tract is very sensitive to chemical toxins.

Since WWII, there has been an explosion in the number of products that contain petro-chemicals, heavy metals, and antibiotics. You rarely hear about it, but these toxins in ordinary, every-day products are one of the biggest problems for people with digestive issues.

We innocently assault ourselves with chemical creams, soaps, plastics, artificially-scented laundry detergent and fabric softeners, harsh cleaning products, pesticides, lawn "care", renovation materials, fire-retardants, solvents, foods that contain preservatives and antibiotics, and many, many other sources of toxins, because we think they are safe.

But these products are hazardous to your intestines. In fact, we have rarely seen a client with digestive problems who was not chemically-sensitive.

Chemicals, heavy metals and antibiotics upset the balance of your gut microbes, killing off good bacteria and allowing the bad to flourish. This:

- helps fungus and Candida yeast to grow out of control, which makes digestive symptoms worse.
- promotes leaky gut syndrome, harming the lining of your digestive tract and leading to additional health problems.
- harms your brain and your immune system, an estimated 70 to 90 percent of which is in your gut.

So you can see how important it is to clear toxic products out of your life.

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**Strategy:**

Reduce and avoid chemical toxins, artificially-scented products, pesticides, and plastics:

- Detoxify your home environment by choosing unscented and natural personal care products, household cleaners and laundry products. Remember, your body is not a closed system. Just because something is outside of your skin doesn't mean it won't end up inside you, harming your gut.
- Throw out the fabric softener (yes, the liquid for the washer AND the dryer sheets) and stop over-drying your clothes if they have static cling. Or wear natural fibers. Everyone we've worked with who has digestive problems has reacted badly to fabric softener.
- Don't cook with plastic (i.e. no microwaving food under plastic wrap) or non-stick coated cookware.
- Drink, cook, and brush your teeth with good quality water. If your water is chlorinated, get a chlorine filter or put your water in a pitcher and let it stand for an hour to evaporate the chlorine. Avoid fluoride in water and toothpaste. Sodium fluoride is a controversial substance linked to constipation, diarrhea, nausea, and many other symptoms.

If you need more help with the detoxifying process, you'll find it in our e-guide, [\*Life-Saving Natural Remedies for Crohn's and Colitis\*](#).

Fortunately, more and more natural and unscented products are available every year which makes it easy for you to avoid the toxic versions.

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**2. Balance your intestinal microbes (gut flora)**

Did you know there's a whole universe inside your digestive system made up of different types of microbes or "flora"?

In fact, your body is only 10 percent human cells! The other 90 percent is microbes, most of which are in your intestines.

What does this gut flora do for you? It...

- helps you digest your food so your body and brain get the nutrients they need to work properly
- produces vitamins that nourish you
- enhances your immune system by making natural antibiotics
- breaks down viruses and other pathogens that make you sick,

- coats the inside of the digestive tract to protect it from invaders like parasites, undigested food, and toxins from foods, chemicals and heavy metals
- suppresses many carcinogenic (cancer-causing) substances

As you can see, these microbes are *incredibly* important to your health!

*According to some researchers, having a dog can help to increase the variety of bacteria in your system. A diverse population of microbes is good!*



But for all the “good guy” microbes in your intestines, there are bad ones, too. And when the bad ones – or pathogens – take over, watch out! That’s when you end up with painful symptoms and debilitating chronic conditions.

And here’s the huge problem for most people who live in industrialized countries:

The microbes in our guts are in a big mess – they are WAY out of balance. So they’re not helping you. In fact, they are making you sick.

What causes your intestinal microbes to go out of balance? Dr. James LaValle cites:

- antibiotics, birth control pills and pain relievers
- chemical and heavy metal pollutants
- constant stress
- allergens, mould
- overconsumption of sugars and alcohol

- food additives
- H. pylori infection
- chemo and radiation

What's more, the microbes in your gut may never have developed properly in the first place. This is why children can have serious digestive problems.

What stops those microbes from developing?

- Being born by Caesarean (C-section). No contact with the mother's vaginal secretions that provide the baby with needed microbes.
- Being bottle-fed instead of breast-fed. Mother's milk has both prebiotic and probiotic qualities that help good bacteria develop in the infant.
- Parents that have dysbiosis or unhealthy flora, which they may have inherited from their own parents. This gets passed down the line to the next generation so that the baby does not get the microbes it needs to develop a healthy population of bacteria in its own gut.

If you have had any of these things in your life, they are affecting your digestive health. Fortunately, you can take action to improve your intestinal flora now.

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### **Strategy:**

It's very important to help restore the lining of the bowel and its bacterial balance with good-quality probiotics and nutraceuticals. Since dairy is often a problem for people with digestive issues, you may be better off with a probiotic that is dairy-free. Also, when it comes to probiotics, do your research. Many products do not contain the amounts of bacteria claimed on the label. This is why people complain that, when they take probiotics, nothing changes for them.

(However, when you lift the chemical stress from your body, you'll tend to get better results with your food and your supplements.)

Is there another choice to get the probiotic bacteria you need?

Yes. Instead of taking probiotics as a pill or powder, it can be more helpful (and less expensive) to eat probiotic (fermented) foods. According to Sally Fallon, nutrition researcher, fermented foods provide more probiotic value than you get in a capsule. (Sorry, but that does not include alcohol.)

Can you get your probiotics from commercial yogurt? Dr. David Dahlman says no, since even the supplemented yogurts don't contain anywhere near enough active microbes to really make a difference. If you're okay with dairy, one solution is to make your own yogurt and let it ferment for a good long time to increase the probiotic level. Try using unhomogenized or even raw milk, if you can find it.

Another idea is to make fermented vegetables, such as carrots with ginger. Sauerkraut is a traditional food in many cultures, however, when you have digestive issues, you may have trouble with cabbage. If you like sauerkraut, you can try taking a daily spoonful of the juice to start with, and slowly build up to eating the shredded vegetable as your digestion improves.

If you buy sauerkraut, make sure it is fermented the traditional way in water, NOT in vinegar, so the cabbage actually is fermented. (Check the label.)

It's also important to take action on the other three strategies, which will help to restore the balance of your gut flora.

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### **3. Eat foods that support digestive health.**

Food reactions often go undiagnosed yet, according to Dr. Doris Rapp, they cause pain, gas, bloating, anxiety, depression and all sorts of other physical, mental and emotional symptoms. These symptoms are especially confusing, embarrassing, and distressing because they are often dismissed by health professionals.

Dr. James Braly targets cereal grains as a major cause of bowel problems. He says that as many as one out of three people react to grains, *whether or not standard tests show any allergy*. He and other researchers have linked refined foods such as white flour, sugar, and other processed foods to Crohn's and Colitis.

Biochemist, Robb Wolf, says that grains, dairy, and legumes (beans) damage the lining of the intestines, helping to cause leaky gut syndrome and inflammation. That means you can't absorb your nutrients properly, so you lose too much weight. You may also develop allergies or other auto-immune problems when undigested food proteins leak out into your bloodstream.

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#### **Strategy:**

To help reduce symptoms, find out which foods you react to and eliminate them from your diet. This will also help to relieve dysbiosis (unbalanced gut flora.)

The most common food allergens are:

- dairy (top problem food)
- wheat and other cereal grains (one out of three people have a problem)
- corn (Yes, it's a grain. And it's often mouldy, which doesn't help.)
- sugar



- caffeine
- artificial sweeteners and additives
- processed foods and junk foods
- soy
- citrus
- shellfish

Electrodermal testing or an elimination diet will determine your personal food sensitivities. If you are concerned about the expense of testing, you could simply start by taking grains, dairy, and sugar out of your diet. These are three of the biggest culprits for people with digestive issues.

They are also some of the most difficult items to stop eating.

Why?

Because grains and sugar actually have addictive properties. They affect your brain chemistry just like drugs! They also are the food of the bad bacteria, yeasts and fungus in your digestive tract, and those problem microbes will make you crave sweets and flour-based foods like crazy.

*When you know what they really do to you, cookies are **not** a treat!*



Here's an article about [what to expect](#) when you go off wheat.

You may also want to avoid gas-causing foods (legumes, cruciferous vegetables like broccoli and cauliflower) until you are better.

Here's an anecdote about food and digestion. I have a relative who's a doctor. She also has had lots of digestive problems including diverticulitis. After her resection (removal of a blocked portion of the bowel), I asked her if she needed to change her diet. She informed me, quite seriously, that food has nothing to do with digestive problems. Well, okay... Then why did *my* digestion improve so much when I changed my diet? I didn't ask her that.

But, as you've seen, there is definitely more to digestive problems than food. In fact, your emotions and stress levels can have just as powerful an effect on your digestion as the foods and other substances that go into your body.

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#### **4. Release toxic emotions and stress that affect the gut.**

Have you ever been so stressed you got a stomach ache, stomach cramps or diarrhea? On the other hand, some people are constipated by their emotions.

You've probably heard or used the expression, "I knew it in my gut" or "I felt it in my gut" or "Trust your gut."

These are all examples of the fact that your digestive tract is very much affected by your emotions. In fact, even though it was once believed that all of our neurotransmitters were in our brains and nervous system, science has now shown that more than half of them are in the gut.

Neurotransmitters are what Candace Pert, PhD, calls "molecules of emotion."

Why is this important to you when you have Crohn's or Colitis?

Because how you feel has an enormous impact on your digestive system.

Trauma from the past may be affecting you. But an equally big issue for people with Crohn's and Colitis – and one that is often not dealt or even recognized by health professionals – is that these diseases are extremely stressful and distressing.

Having Crohn's or Colitis can "re-traumatize" you. You may have felt despair, hopelessness, embarrassment, rage, betrayed by your body, and other emotions because of the symptoms, treatments, and even the information you've received from well-meaning people.

These emotions not only make you feel bad, they can actually harm you physically. Fortunately, you can quickly and safely release stress and toxic emotions.

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#### **Strategy:**

One of the most effective ways we've found to release emotions and stress so they don't damage you is to use EFT Tapping.

Tapping is a technique you can do yourself, although you will speed up the process considerably by working with a skilled practitioner who is familiar with digestive issues, even for a handful of sessions.

EFT Tapping is a method that is used successfully by people all over the world to deal with physical and emotional stresses. It is a powerful new technique that has emerged out of the five thousand-year-old tradition of energy medicine. Many forward-thinking doctors call it “the medicine of the future.”

You can learn all about EFT Tapping and how to apply it to your symptoms in our [ebook](#). Or you may apply for a **free 20-minute strategy session** with a qualified EFT Practitioner who knows about digestive problems. [Click here](#) to apply. Please put “*Request for Crohn’s strategy session*” in the email form and make sure you include your name and phone number.

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### **The Next Step:**

The next step is to put the four strategies above into practice. In working with people who have Crohn’s and other digestive issues, we’ve found that they get the best results by doing all four. When you want to encourage your body to heal itself, **take action** on chemicals, gut flora, food, and stressful emotions so they all work together to help you.

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### **Who we are:**

Kathy Raymond (left) and Karen Alison are two Certified EFT Practitioners with over 20 years experience in energy medicine and natural health. We offer energy techniques and lifestyle information for self-healing through private sessions, public workshops, books and audios.



Clients come to us with a range of digestive and other ailments, including irritable bowel syndrome, colitis, Crohn's, chronic constipation and diarrhea,

sleeplessness, fatigue, anxiety, emotional eating, self esteem and success issues.

We are the authors of three books: *How to Stay Healthy and still Eat Chocolate*; *Treatment of Irritable Bowel Syndrome IBS*; [Life-Saving Natural Remedies for Crohn's and Colitis](#); and *The No IBS Program*, an audio program for IBS sufferers.

Visit us at [www.no-ibs.com](http://www.no-ibs.com)

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May you be well.