

# EAT DIRT: WHY LEAKY GUT MAY BE THE ROOT CAUSE OF YOUR HEALTH PROBLEMS AND 5 SURPRISING STEPS TO CURE IT BY JOSH AXE



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DR. JOSH AXE



Why **Leaky Gut** May Be the Root  
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## Review

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“*Eat Dirt* is a proven way to address the root cause of all disease. The first step to healing yourself is healing your gut. If you’re ready to learn some cutting edge concepts and take back your health, this book is for you.” (Mark Hyman, MD, author of *The Blood Sugar Solution*)

“If you’re struggling with a chronic illness like digestive problems, autoimmune disease or adrenal and thyroid conditions, this book can change your life. Dr. Axe lays out an easy-to-follow plan for addressing the root cause of disease where it starts in the gut. ” (Sara Gottfried MD, author of *The Hormone Reset Diet* and *The Hormone Cure*)

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That's because as we've shifted our focus to living a germ-free life, our bodies—specifically, our digestive systems—have taken a hit. Starved of actual nutrition, fed toxic levels of processed foods, and overtaxed by chemicals, stress, and excessive antimicrobial use, we've developed microscopic tears in our intestinal walls, leading to the widespread inflammation and weakened immunity that characterize a condition known as “leaky gut syndrome.”

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Dr. Axe explains that 70 percent of our immune system is located in the gut—when it's under attack, our health suffers. In leaky gut syndrome, a number of factors—including insufficient exposure to “dirt”—leads to the breakdown of the intestinal wall, allowing food, bacteria, and toxins to seep into the bloodstream. In *Eat Dirt*, Dr. Axe reveals that the solution, while counterintuitive, is almost effortless: we just need to welcome a little more “dirt” back into our lives.

From ditching hand sanitizers, using essential oils for personal products, reducing antibiotic use, and consuming local honey to spending more time outside, eating seasonally, managing stress, and incorporating probiotic-rich foods into our diets, Dr. Axe provides specific guidance to help everyone get a little “dirty.”

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National Bestseller

Doctor of Natural Medicine and wellness authority Dr. Josh Axe delivers a groundbreaking, indispensable guide for understanding, diagnosing, and treating one of the most discussed yet little-understood health conditions: leaky gut syndrome.

Do you have a leaky gut? For 80% of the population the answer is “yes”—and most people don’t even realize it. Leaky gut syndrome is the root cause of a litany of ailments, including: chronic inflammation, allergies, autoimmune diseases, hypothyroidism, adrenal fatigue, diabetes, and even arthritis.

To keep us in good health, our gut relies on maintaining a symbiotic relationship with trillions of microorganisms that live in our digestive tract. When our digestive system is out of whack, serious health problems can manifest and our intestinal walls can develop microscopic holes, allowing undigested food particles, bacteria, and toxins to seep into the bloodstream. This condition is known as leaky gut syndrome.

In *Eat Dirt*, Dr. Josh Axe explains that what we regard as modern “improvements” to our food supply—including refrigeration, sanitation, and modified grains—have damaged our intestinal health. In fact, the same organisms in soil that allow plants and animals to flourish are the ones we need for gut health. In *Eat Dirt*, Dr. Axe explains that it’s essential to get a little “dirty” in our daily lives in order to support our gut bacteria and prevent leaky gut syndrome. Dr. Axe offers simple ways to get these needed microbes, from incorporating local honey and bee pollen into your diet to forgoing hand sanitizers and even ingesting a little probiotic-rich soil.

Because leaky gut manifests differently in every individual, Dr. Axe also identifies the five main “gut types” and offers customizable plans—including diet, supplement, and lifestyle recommendations—to dramatically improve gut health in just thirty days. With a simple diet plan, recipes, and practical advice, *Eat Dirt* will help readers restore gut health and eliminate leaky gut for good.

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#### Most helpful customer reviews

76 of 76 people found the following review helpful.

Good book

By jared hobgood

This book introduces and explains the concept of Leaky Gut Syndrome, which it is hypothesized causes the

majority of major health crisis in this country. Microscopic tears in the intestinal walls cause inflammation and a weakened immune system. The book also explores ways to cleanse the digestive system to overcome Leaky Gut Syndrome. One of the best ways to begin this cleansing process is with a month long Ultra Cleanse Nutratech Ultra Cleanse –Help Support Weight Loss, Digestive Health, Increase Energy Levels, and Entire Body Purification – you will look and feel much better and be happy that you did.

273 of 288 people found the following review helpful.

I got my life back

By Gina A.

I have been obsessed with Dr.Axe since discovering his YouTube channel. I have been anxiously awaiting Eat Dirt and it does not disappoint. This time last year I was 35 pounds lighter, muscles were well defined and I felt great. All of that started to change in May of 2015. I compete in ocr & exercise 5-6 days per week as well as eat very clean. That did not change, however weight started to come on. After 15 pounds, I went to my primary and she reluctantly tested my thyroid. When it came ask normal, I took that to mean it was within my control. I dug in deeper with my nutrition. I went vegan. I worked out more. I started experiencing depression and anxiety, extreme fatigue, horrible pms. I was up 27 pounds and went back to my primary. She reluctantly ran a full thyroid panel, although she felt it was unnecessary as we shouldn't worry until I was up 100 pounds...what?? I asked her if it's not my thyroid, what could it be. Her response, "I don't know." She referred me to an endocrinologist. 3 days later my labs come back normal and they inform me that the endocrinologist will not schedule with me because my thyroid is fine.

That's where conventional medicine left me.

I started researching and stumbled upon Dr. Axe. I immediately started implementing his recommendations into my daily routine. The depression and brain fog started lifting. The weight gain stopped. The energy started coming back. I got my life back!

Now I'm ready to kick this weight to the curb by implementing what I have learned in Eat Dirt.

Some of my favorite quotes in the book:

"We CAN heal. We just need to summon the collective will to change some of our long-standing but extremely damaging habits – especially our deadly addiction to being clean. "

"On a cell for cell basis, we are 90% microbial. We don't just live on the earth – the earth lives in us."

"While this is cutting edge science, the solutions could not be any simpler. All we need to do to load up on our old friends and get more of these microexposures is easy, fun stuff we probably already love to do: get back to eating seasonally and locally. Spend more time outdoors. Hug our dogs after they roll around in the leaves. Let our kids to make mud pies get their hands dirty on the playground."

"Go "forest bathing." Go on a short walk in the woods, and take many deep breaths, consciously bringing the scent of the trees into your lungs. This form of aromatherapy is a practice called "shinrin-yoku," or "forest bathing," in Japanese. Researchers there found breathing in the antimicrobial organic compounds called phytoncides - the woods' essential oils - decreased cortisol levels and blood pressure, enhanced immune system function, and stabilized nervous system activity.

I found a local doctor of functional medicine and I was diagnosed with estrogen dominance, low progesterone, low DHEA, adrenal fatigue and leaky gut. If you are suffering from any of these issues, you need this book.

I will return to this review in a few weeks to report how I feel with the Eat Dirt plan.

372 of 396 people found the following review helpful.

I Failed the "Leaky Gut Questionnaire"

By Bassocantor

At first, I thought this book was only mildly interesting. Then, I decided to take the "Leaky Gut" test. The author uses these simple questions to check the likelihood that the "good" microbes in your gut have been harmed. To my astonishment, I had many of the leaky gut symptoms noted in the test (and which my current physician has not resolved.)

Okay, at this point, I got a LOT more interested in what Dr. Axe had to say.

Dr. Axe's main point is that we need to get back to the bacterial DIVERSITY that we used to have: "Bacterial diversity keeps the whole system in balance." The idea is, this balance requires lots of different bacteria. This used to happen naturally in our environment and diet, but when we started to use tons of chemicals, and changed our food composition, we began to reduce the types of bacteria in our gut.

EAT DIRT contains a pretty detailed technical discussion about how our digestive system works, and the important layers in our gut. The doctor explains that these layers protect our body from dangerous pathogens. The health of this barrier is affected by certain chemicals. Research shows that these chemicals are released by the over-consumption of gluten. When the protective wall thins, this leads to the "leaky gut" syndrome, with all the nasty symptoms.

The author cites quite a bit of scientific studies, but he admits that the field is changing, and that tons of research is ongoing. In fact, he notes that there have been over a thousand new research studies in the last year alone. There are lots of interesting studies cited that seem to support the author's ideas. Perhaps the most intriguing, for me, was one study that linked bacterial diversity to lower body weight and lower fat.

The author recounts the experiences from different patients in his medical practice. He is careful to note that one patient's experience--no matter how impressive, should not be generalized to everyone. He cautions the reader to not jump to broad conclusions based on just a few anecdotal cases. I thought this was wise counsel.

EAT DIRT has links to "replacement foods" so that you can switch-out your current menu items for more healthy choices. Besides these links, the doctor also discusses alternatives for common foods. For example, instead of drinking the usual milk, he discusses the advantages of coconut and almond milk, as well as more unusual alternatives.

I never understood the fuss about wheat and gluten. After all, I thought, how can something so natural really be harmful? Well, the author explains that it's not the SAME wheat, and it's prevalence is not the same as it used to be--its use is far more widespread now. Okay--I appreciate this information. I admit I did not know that.

I found EAT DIRT to be a serious work that will require serious study. There is a LOT to absorb in this book. The author makes many good points, and he does a good job of supporting his theories. The appendices contain lots of notes and further research information.

I have decided to follow the author's advice, and make some changes in my diet and lifestyle. I will especially try to get more diverse bacteria by making some simple dietary changes. Fortunately, many of Dr. Axe's food recommendations are tasty. I like Kefir, and I'm buying more.

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"If you're struggling with a chronic illness like digestive problems, autoimmune disease, or adrenal and thyroid conditions, this book can change your life. Dr. Axe lays out an easy-to-follow plan for addressing the root cause of disease where it starts—in the gut. His natural prescriptions using plant-based medicine, a gut-friendly diet, and exposing yourself to good microbes to build your microbiome are cutting-edge techniques that can help you experience a health breakthrough."—Sara Gottfried, MD, bestselling author of *The Hormone Reset Diet* and *The Hormone Cure*

"There is a beautiful course correction afoot—scientific research is reminding us of our inner and outer ecology and our inextricable union with the natural world. In *Eat Dirt*, Dr. Axe deconstructs the myth behind our war against germs, sheds light on why and how we are sick, and honors the ancient wisdom of healing that starts with the gut."—Kelly Brogan, MD, ABIHM, author of *A Mind of Your Own*

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#### About the Author

Dr. Josh Axe is a doctor of natural medicine and a clinical nutritionist with a passion to help people get healthy by using food as medicine. He founded one of the largest functional medicine clinics in the United States and runs the popular health website [www.draxe.com](http://www.draxe.com), where you can find recipes, natural remedies, videos, nutrition advice, and fitness tips. Dr. Axe is a board-certified doctor of natural medicine (DNM), earned his doctorate in chiropractic at Palmer College (DC), and is a certified nutrition specialist (CNS) from the American College of Nutrition. He lives in Nashville, Tennessee, with his wife, Chelsea.

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