



Workshop Session #1 Key Summary Bullets:
How to Identify & Heal Common Gut Problems in
Women Over 50

with Dr. Jillian Teta



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Workshop Session #1 Key Summary Bullet Points: How to Identify & Heal Common Gut Issues in Women Over 50

1:35 The gut is one of the key foundational aspects of health—it interacts with every other system in cell in the body.

1:58 Our digestive system plays a major role in defense—the stomach acid and low pH are barriers against pathogens, the lining of the GI tract acts like a filter letting some things in and keeping some things out. The vast majority of the immune system lives in the GI tract.

2:44 The gut also plays a major role in detoxification—it has two of the big five organs of detoxification: 1. the large intestine (we detox a lot by pooping—our bodies send spent hormones, metabolites of drugs etc. out of the body through pooping), 2. The liver also plays a role in detoxification.

3:16 The other organs of detoxification are the skin, lungs, and kidneys.

3:24 The gut plays a major role in hormonal balance—20% of your thyroid hormone is converted to the active form through activity of our microbiome. Estrogen is largely detoxified through the gut.

4:00 The gut plays a role in neurological function. The gut has its own brain, called the enteric nervous system or the “second brain,” it’s also in an intimate relationship with the central nervous system with the brain in our head and our spinal chord, called the gut-brain axis. Our gut makes and has receptors for over 90% of serotonin in the body. Serotonin is one of our “feel good” hormones.

4:51 The gut is like grand central station—a lot of issues we think are elsewhere in the body actually originate in the digestive system.

5:11 It’s important to approach the digestive system in a strategic and systematic way to uncover areas you might be weak in to get to the root of what’s causing symptoms and banish symptoms for good.

6:12 The microbiome or “gut flora” is the vast colony of beneficial bacteria that live in the large intestine. We have anywhere from one trillion to one hundred trillion bacterial cells in our large intestine. Collectively they weight about four pounds. They act like an organ and more. They help with digestion by helping with the breakdown of fibers and proteins. They help humanize nutrients—we eat a lot of plant foods and these foods need to be changed so that our cells can use them. Our beneficial bacterial also help “talk” to our immune system—they help keep it from going overboard toward autoimmune disease as well as keep it from being underwhelmed toward immunodeficiency.



7:34 A good robust microbiome has been associated with fewer environmental allergies and less cases of asthma and eczema.

7:50 Our gut flora also help keep immune system from over responding to the foods you're eating. They help manufacture vitamins like the B vitamins and vitamin K.

8:25 Research on beneficial bacteria shows it's not just pivotal in digestive health and disruptions like irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), celiac disease, inflammatory bowel disease, which are all bacterial imbalances. It also plays roles in your waist line, your body composition, your mental and emotional state (there's lots of studies on anxiety and depression and probiotics), neurodegenerative conditions, and obesity. These bacteria are not just localized to the effects in the large intestine.

9:14 Your microbiome even plays a role in your blood pressure and blood cholesterol.

10:43 If you have pathogenic or "bad" bacteria, yeast, mold, or fungus or the bacteria are where they don't belong (like the small intestine or the stomach) this can also contribute to digestive and other symptomatology.

11:33 In women over 50 there are a lot of stress-induced digestive changes.

11:43 As we get older, several things happen to our stress response especially. Post menopause women become more reactive to stress. Physiologically, after menopause, we're unable to deal with the types of stress in the same way that we could prior. This has an impact of the gastrointestinal tract via the gut-brain connection. It's common to see more motility disorders like constipation, diarrhea, and IBS, more small intestinal bacterial overgrowth.

12:38 For women with a history of antibiotic use or burning the candle at both ends for too long, it's common to see dysbiosis, which means dysfunctional or imbalanced microbiome. This can mean too few good bacteria, too many borderline friendly bacteria, infection, translocation of bacteria so they go where they don't belong.

13:25 As we get older our digestive fire wanes. This means our ability to breakdown proteins, fats and carbs slows down because stomach acids and pancreatic enzymes decrease.

14:40 Obvious and not-so-obvious signs of a digestive disorder: Upper GI symptoms are bloating, belching, heart palpitations or heart racing after eating, reflux, heartburn sour stomach, feeling nauseous first thing in the morning, lower abdominal symptoms are bloating below the belly button (appearing pregnant), any type of motility disruptions (i.e. not pooping at least once per day or pooping more than three times per day); non-GI related-symptoms are autoimmune diseases (remember the majority of the immune system is in the GI tract), skin disorders (i.e. rashes, itchiness, acne, eczema, psoriasis) the skin is a reflection of the gut, headaches or migraines, bad breath, muscle and joint



pain (as a result of food sensitivities or increased gut permeability, which allows inflammatory molecules to escape the GI tract and go systemic/body wide.

17:57 If someone have been struggling with a set of symptoms and she's been to more than a few providers, and no one has been able to get to the root of it, and no one's addressed the digestive system, there's a pretty good chance the digestive system is involved. Then you want to explore these things: food sensitivities and eating for your symptoms, the health of your microbiome and your ability to break down foods (you can be eating a perfectly healthy diet, but if you can't break it down you're not deriving the benefits of the foods), and the health of your intestinal lining and "second brain."

19:04 If you're eating the best, healthiest diet and you're still struggling, if you don't have enough acid and enzymes to break down your foods, the food becomes fermentable, which causes gas. It also becomes more provocative to the immune system because the compounds aren't broken down, which means they won't be absorbed through the lining appropriately. If you already have an issue with your lining like with leaky gut where the lining is inflamed, your absorption is going to be impaired.

20:50 Some of the main causes of digestive disorders: You start by looking at your history—your history of: 1. antibiotic and NSAID use, 2. alcohol intake (heavy drinking is a major blow to the GI tract), 3. travel (it's easy to pick up parasites and bacteria from different parts of the world), 4. poor nutrition (refined grains and sugars), 5. stress (as women go through menopause the flexibility of our ability to handle stress suffers—we become more reactive to it).

23:15 The difference between and food allergy and sensitivity: A food allergy is usually diagnosed via a skin prick test. What you're looking for in an IgE reaction, which is a type of immunoglobulin. It's responsible for anaphylactic reactions like your throat closing. It's an IgE Type I sensitivity. It's one way the immune system can react to a food. Another type of reaction is a Type II hypersensitivity reaction or IgG reaction, which is done via a blood test. This is more of a food "sensitivity." A food sensitivity test usually looks at 90-150 things that the lab will measure antibodies for. You're usually looking for one of three things: 1. One or two foods to come up really strong, 2. Six or more to come up mild to moderate, 3. Or a combination of those two things. It's not that it's diagnostic, but the results can be used to create an elimination challenge diet with gut restoration. So if someone has 20 foods show up, it's not that they have 20 food sensitivities or allergies, what's more likely going on is that there's an issue at the interface of the immune system and the food that you're eating. And that interface is the small intestine. This can be used as a loose measure of leaky gut or increased intestinal permeability because what it's saying is that the immune system is reacting to everything that it should not be. For the foods that have a higher reactivity (.25 or higher) do a 4-6 week elimination of those foods. Because the question is: 1. Do I really have a sensitivity to these foods or are they showing up on these tests because of other factors in my digestive system. Do an elimination challenge with gut restoration to create a clean slate and get the digestive system in good condition from which to challenge these foods back in a very systematic and strategic way. Food sensitivity



testing can be used to help you figure out where to begin with food elimination. Sensitivities can come and go and change throughout the course of someone's life. Food sensitivities can keep you in a chronic state of not feeling well. While doing an elimination of the foods you're sensitive to, as part of a gut restoration plan you might add digestive enzymes, acid, probiotics, fermented foods. In addition you want to take steps to help with second brain function like destressing the gut. And once symptoms have improved by 75-85% you can then challenge the food back in. Then you get a very clear idea of which foods are creating a reaction in your body or not and pinpoint what's going on.

28:35 When reintroducing foods, you only add one food back in your diet at a time. For example, let's say wheat showed up on your test. For one day you would eat 2-3 servings of wheat in the purest form like plain cream of wheat or plain pasta. Then wait 72 hours (three days), if by the fourth or fifth day you haven't had a reaction that would be a "negative challenge" —you pass that challenge. You need to wait 72 hours because that's how long IgG reactions can take to manifest. (The immune system is creating complexes with the antigen of the wheat and this can take days to be made and get into the blood stream.) Versus the Type I IgE allergy, which is instantaneous.

30:13 It can be tricky trying to identify food sensitivities just by trying to recall what you've eaten because there can be a three-day delay.

31:44 In many people with autoimmune disease eating gluten can be an issue, even if you don't notice it. Research shows people with autoimmune conditions should NOT eat gluten.

34:31 Chronic stress worsens all digestive symptoms like irritable bowel disease, IBS, reflux etc. If you have a digestive problem stress will make it worse—it will increase frequency and severity of symptoms.

35:07 Because of the gut-brain relationship and because of the relationship between the second brain (that lives in our gut) and the brain in our heads, over time, with chronic stress in someone who DOESN'T have already have digestive disorders, it begins to affect our ability to make stomach acid and produce pancreatic enzymes, and it interferes with the second brain in terms of motility.

35:47 Waking up in the middle of the night with heart racing, having diarrhea, and heartburn can all be effects of chronic stress. The stress in your head will create stress in your gut.

36:32 Tools to combat chronic stress:

1. Daily walk for 15 minutes—go walk outside and "sense drench" (engage all senses what you see, hear, feel etc.) Research in Japan shows that "forest bathing" (walking in the woods) creates a buffer against the negative effects of the stress hormone, cortisol, on our brain. It helps decrease your stress response and modulate your second brain.



If you struggle with constipation, remember, movement equals movement! Going for a stroll helps move your bowels.

2. Get enough sleep! Figuring out cause of sleep disruption and sticking to a sleep/wake cycle is huge.
3. Become aware of your negative belief systems and thought patterns and where you place your focus. Bring your negative belief systems to light, challenge them and rewrite the narratives around them.

40:27 For people who've experienced adverse childhood events or trauma need to deal with them in an in-depth, self-directed way. Even if things have been done to us, it is still our responsibility to decide how we move forward.

41:43 A good herb for stress is encapsulated lavender oil. It's especially good for motility disorders like IBS, constipated, waking up feeling nauseous (a sign of nervous system dysfunction). It's also good for anxiety and depression.

43:57 Steps to get your microbiome balanced and your digestive system healthy:

1. To keep the microbiome balanced eat plenty of veggies and fruits that you can tolerate. Green tea and honey are rich in pre-biotics, which are fiber that feed the beneficial bacteria in the gut.
2. Use antibiotics judiciously—only take it if it's actual necessary. If you have a diagnosed bacterial infection, get a Culture and Sensitivity (CNS) Test, which helps determine which antibiotic is going to work the best for you instead of giving you a random one that may not work.
3. Get in the dirt (garden) and touch your pets.
4. Eat fermented foods. Yogurt and kefir (if you can tolerate dairy), sauerkraut, kimchi, apple cider vinegar, real pickles. These foods have probiotics in them.
5. Take a probiotic. Especially with a long history of antibiotic use.

47:20 How to choose the right probiotic:

1. Make sure they're just probiotics (no added enzymes or pre-biotics.)
2. You want to take probiotics that mimic the bacteria in the GI tract. The two most dominant species are Lactobacillus and Bifidobacterium, so find one that is rich in those strains.
3. Take at least 20 billion CFUs.



50:00 Final takeaways:

1. We have more control over how we feel than we think we do. We too easily give up our power, and the best way to return to our power is to go for the morning walk!
2. When you eat, chew your food really well.
3. Be brave enough to deal with your stuff. We all have stuff and you're not alone in your struggles.