

Module 4 Lesson 6

Transcript

Stick with me TNSers. As I speak in today's lesson on leaky gut, I say stick with me because it's really hard to explain something when we're still trying to figure out what that something is. As with many areas in gut health, leaky gut is a fairly new concept in the grand scheme of health and nutrition. Since the science here is so new, there are many things about the idea of leaky gut that everyone is still trying to figure out, which we'll get to a little bit later. In this lesson we'll discuss what we think leaky gut is, how leaky gut is treated, and the direction we're moving in as we learn more about it.

Let's start with a little case study. I had a client, Amelia, who came to me with serious stomach issues. Did she have IBS? Nope, she did not. Did she have celiac disease? Nope, she did not. Did she have lactose intolerance? Nope, she did not. What about crones? Nope. Gallbladder disease? Nope. Kidney stones, negative. Bowel obstruction? Not a chance. Honestly. She had every upper GI and lower GI series there was to offer. There was no blood test or physical evaluation she hadn't had. She was suffering. The doctors found nothing wrong with her though. Finally, at the end of the day they told poor Amelia that she had a leaky gut.

So I rubbed my hands together, pushed up my sleeves and got to work with her knowing it was going to be awhile before we got her back to her old self. So what's leaky gut? Leaky gut is one of those things that sound like what it is. We have over 4,000 square feet, this is crazy, of digestive lining in our bellies that are responsible for absorbing nutrients and passing it into our blood. 4,000 square feet of absorbing nutrients. That's crazy when you think about it. It's not a perfect system, but it works most of the time and it works better for some of us than others of course.

With leaky gut, there are gaps or holes where undigested material leaks causing inflammation and changes to our gut flora. With this leaking come stomach pain, upset and cramping. We know from the microbiome lesson how delicate and important our gut flora is. And while we know that leaky gut and imbalanced microbiome can lead to other things like IBS and Crohn's, we also suspect that leaky gut can play a role in problems in other parts of the body with other issues, such as autoimmune diseases, lupus, type one diabetes, multiple sclerosis, chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia, arthritis, allergies, asthma, acne, obesity and mental illness. Unfortunately, there are no clinical studies to date in humans showing cause and effect and research is still in the early stages.

We also know that some people are more prone to leaky gut than others and genetic predisposition environment, diet and stress. Not surprisingly all probably play a role in getting this

condition. This is where you come in people. With Amelia, I started her off on a probiotic and pushed fermented foods like kimchi, sauerkraut, kombucha, and even a little beer. She was happy about that one. My first goal was to work on rebuilding her gut flora. I think it's appropriate to have them supported by a high quality probiotic. If it's within your scope of practice to recommend one, give one a trial for 30 days, a specific one, not just anyone. And if that's not within your scope of practice, have them follow up with their GI doc or primary care physician for that supplement support. I was actually quite surprised her GI doc had an already started Amelia on one.

Next, I had her keep a food record and helped her to identify which foods worsened her symptoms. I mean this step seems like a no brainer, right, but triggers can be different for everyone, so look deeply in that journal. It may be that rice doesn't cause pain, but pasta does, for example, something that minor. The most common triggers are usually caffeine and alcohol, but saturated fats are also common. We pushed fiber in Amelia's diet with fruit, veggies, some whole grain crackers and whole greens and I eliminated all processed and refined sugars from her meal plan. One thing that's very common in leaky gut suffers is a diet high in sugar and low in fiber. So you'll be on the lookout for that in your efforts to repair and rebuild the gut flora and lining. I haven't heard from Amelia in a while. Honestly, when I last saw her, she was a really happy to be living pain-free and so dedicated to her work and her new plan. She was doing great. I love a good success story like this.

I want to review with you the key points from today's lesson. Leaky gut is when there are gaps or holes in the digestive lining, undigested material leaks causing inflammation and changes to our gut flora, and with this leaking comes pain, cramping and upset stomach. Leaky gut can play a role in other problems including autoimmune diseases, arthritis, allergies, mental illness, and even more. If a client has a leaky gut, recommend a probiotic rich diet with fermented foods and use a food journal to identify what specific foods for that client trigger pain and modify, of course, the diet accordingly. That is all for now on a leaky gut. I cannot wait to see you in the next lesson.