



# dogs **naturally**

May - June 2016

Special Digestion Issue

**LEAKY GUT SYNDROME**

IRRITABLE BOWEL  
**DISEASE**

RECOGNIZING  
**ENZYME DEFICIENCY**

**MERCURY**  
AND HEAVY METAL POISONING

INFLAMMATION  
**AND FOOD**

**ALLERGY OR  
DIET?**

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*Leaky Gut  
Syndrome*

# The secret to your dog's ill health or allergies could literally be leaking out through her gut.



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**T**he new buzz phrase in diagnosis is leaky gut syndrome. Sound scary? It is! I'll tell you why and what you can do about it to regain your dog's health and happiness.

Spreading the word about leaky gut through my own experience is very important to me. I often seem to find myself speaking from what I like to call "a place in the trenches" or "empirical proof" – but then I'm quickly reminded by my long term animal health team that it more often came from a place of "you just had to figure it out."

## EARLY EXPERIENCE WITH LEAKY GUT

I've been recommending raw dog food since 1994 and have seen unimaginable health improvements in dogs switched from kibble to a real whole food, species-specific diet. As my practice evolved and years went by, I began to see more and more patients who'd already transitioned to raw food. In the last few years I've also started to see more and more dogs suffering from allergies, auto-immune diseases and, of course, cancer.

There were many times when I sat at my veterinary clinic long after my clients had gone home, scratching my head about why we were seeing an influx of these diseases

when many dogs were on a beautiful raw food diet. Why did some dogs do so well for so long, then all of a sudden start to react with an inflammatory response? Why were some of them okay on a novel protein diet but then had sudden reactions to all proteins, including the ones that had tested negative on allergy tests six months prior? Then there were the ones who were allergic to trees, grass, mites and other environmental factors.

One day I was geeking out on the physiology of a cat patient that had interstitial cystitis (when the lining of the bladder starts to leak). I realized that if the mucosal lining of the bladder can leak, then so can the mucosal lining of the gut. This could explain why all these dogs were over-reacting to so many foods and environmental allergens.

We had amazing results treating interstitial cystitis in cats, so I started working on dogs with skin conditions using a similar protocol to the one I came up with for the cats. And it worked!

## WHAT IS LEAKY GUT?

Leaky gut syndrome is an increasingly widespread condition in both animals and humans, yet it's still not well known in the medical community. Leaky gut in dogs is exactly what it sounds like.

The delicate intestinal mucosa that lines the gut and allows tiny digested nutrients to pass through to the blood stream can be likened to cheesecloth or a tea strainer. This is how nutrition is assimilated into the body – but this lining also acts as an incredibly important barrier to keep out toxins, pathogens and undigested food particles.

The mucosa becomes traumatized and inflamed, causing the junctions (the spaces in the cheesecloth) to become stretched or damaged to the point where they're no longer able to filter out larger food particles, bacteria and toxins. These substances can now pass through the intestinal wall and make their way into the blood stream and lymphatics.

This sets off a series of events in the body, which begins with the liver working overtime to screen out the particles; it has no chance of keeping up with the onslaught, and the pathogens begin to accumulate.

The immune system is then triggered to fight the intruders, but it too becomes overwhelmed, leading to particles being absorbed into body tissues. This causes inflammation; but even worse, the immune system can attack these intruders, which can lead to autoimmune disease. The body starts to perceive food as its enemy – the reason we see so many dogs who are

allergic or reactive to almost every protein and many vegetables and grains. This leaves little to choose from when it comes to feeding, in addition to the challenges of allergies to grass, pollen and more; but more importantly, and sadly, the result is an animal who's in a chronic and constant state of inflammation and distress.

## CAUSES OF LEAKY GUT

There can be several primary causes of leaky gut.

The first is poor diet – specifically highly processed, grain based foods containing wheat, rice, spelt and soy, food additives and preservatives; the lectin found in unsprouted grains; sugar; genetically modified foods (GMOs); pasteurized dairy; and meat from stressed factory-farmed animals.

Drugs and other toxins are another major factor. This category includes the unnecessary use of steroids, non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs), deworming drugs, flea and tick treatments (many contain pesticides) and antibiotics (leading to an imbalance of healthy gut flora, also known as dysbiosis).

Over-vaccination can also precipitate leaky gut. When the body is forced to respond to a vaccine to which it has already established antibodies, this wreaks havoc on the immune system and can cause a number of chronic diseases.

Chronic stress or boredom can also influence gut health. Not getting enough exercise or mental stimulation, or being left home alone for long periods, can be a major cause of stress for a pack animal. Stress negatively affects the immune and digestive systems.

## WHY IS LEAKY GUT SO SCARY?

It's because it's hidden! You can see trauma in a joint by watching your dog limp, or on the skin as a lesion or wound. We treat the trauma ... it's pretty simple.

But gut trauma is *hidden* trauma and we can't fix what we can't see! Because it's left untreated and unhealed, it becomes more chronic and more dangerous to your dog's overall health. You start to see symptoms that in conventional medicine are diagnosed as a disease or infection. Treatment begins for that disease and the hamster wheel starts spinning.

You may see the symptoms disappear but then they return. A recurring ear infection may clear up, but then the dog suffers disorders like hot spots, full blown allergies or hypothyroidism. In many cases this is

because the initial trauma causing the disease – leaky gut syndrome – is not healed ... because you can't see it.

Leaky gut has been referred to as the "great mimicker," appearing in the form of many chronic diseases that plague our beloved animals. Examples include (but are not limited to):

- ◆ Diseases of the skin (allergies), thyroid, joints, heart disease, spinal cord, eyes or brain.
- ◆ Inflammatory bowel disease, interstitial and chronic cystitis, collapsing trachea, laryngeal paralysis, liver, gallbladder and pancreatic disorders.
- ◆ Behavior problems such as aggression and obsessive-compulsive disorders or self-mutilation.
- ◆ Autoimmune disease and nutritional deficiencies, which, left untreated, could lead to some forms of cancer because of the chronic inflammation.

Your dog's gut is responsible for more than 70 percent of her immune system and is directly responsible for the absorption of all that amazing food you're feeding her. With an unhealthy gut, no amount of raw food or nutrients will support her health and longevity, let alone heal something like an allergy.

## PREVENTING LEAKY GUT

Taking the steps below can help prevent leaky gut.

- ◆ Stop feeding processed foods and feed a raw, species appropriate diet.
- ◆ Stop routine vaccinations; instead ask your vet for blood titer tests to measure antibody levels. Get a copy of the results and ask a holistic vet to interpret them, as there are differing opinions on what the results actually mean.
- ◆ Stop using chemical flea and tick products that contain pesticides. Use natural products and protocols with proven success.
- ◆ Stop all drugs where possible.
- ◆ Determine your dog's source of stress. Make the time to go for longer walks or hire a dog walker or someone to check in on them during the day or even add a playmate.

## HEALING SUPPORT FOR LEAKY GUT

If your dog has had any of the following drugs or foods, the chances are she has some degree of gut trauma that could use support:

- ◆ Antibiotics
- ◆ Non steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (many pain and arthritis drugs)
- ◆ Steroids
- ◆ Antihistamines
- ◆ Vaccines
- ◆ Flea and tick treatments
- ◆ Years of dry commercial dog foods

I recommend a four-step approach to address healing leaky gut.

## REMOVE TRAUMA

- ◆ Reduce the side effects of vaccines with homeopathic anti-vaccinosis treatment, working with a qualified homeopath.
- ◆ Detoxify and support the liver to remove toxins, with herbs like milk thistle or dandelion root.

## REBALANCE

- ◆ With prebiotics and probiotics.
- ◆ With digestive enzymes.

## REPLENISH

- ◆ With herbs and nutraceuticals including aloe, slippery elm, deglycyrrhizinated licorice (DGL), L-glutamine, N-acetylglucosamine, marshmallow root.

## RESTORE

- ◆ With homeopathic remedies that support trauma and heal the body.

## SUPPORT GUT HEALING

This natural protocol that supports the healing of your dog's gut is so helpful and safe for her overall health that even without a diagnosis you can go ahead and follow it for six to eight weeks with any dog. It will serve to support a much healthier digestive system, resulting in a healthier body and happier dog. This is a food protocol and does not include supplements.

### **Kefir Or Raw Live Yogurt**

Look for products from Jersey cows, goats or use coconut kefir. Give 2 Tbsp daily for an average (30 to 50 lb) size dog

### **Fermented Vegetables**

Work up slowly to 1 to 3 tsp a day for every 20 pounds of body weight.

### **Bone Broth**

Ideally, make your broth from wild game like deer, moose and pheasant (they have the healthiest bones) or from ethically raised, free range animals. Bones contain:





**WITH AN UNHEALTHY GUT, NO AMOUNT OF RAW FOOD OR NUTRIENTS WILL SUPPORT HER HEALTH AND LONGEVITY, LET ALONE HEAL SOMETHING LIKE AN ALLERGY.**

proline, which tightens and builds cell structure; glycine, which supports the synthesis of collagen (which gives your dog a strong cell structure and supports skin and veins); gelatin, glucosamine and minerals, which are the building blocks of the digestive system. Give 1 Tbsp per day to small dogs, 2 Tbsp for medium, 3 Tbsp for large dogs and 4 Tbsp for giant breeds

**Phytoplankton**

A marine antioxidant superfood, which I recommend using in place of fish oil to provide essential fatty acids like DHA (docosahexaenoic acid, EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid), LA (linoleic acid) and LNA (alpha-linolenic acid). Phytoplankton is single celled and the most complete whole food nutrition I've ever used. It's very helpful with leaky gut because its molecule is smaller than a red blood cell and will supply amino acids, micronutrients and protein while your dog's gut is healing. It's very important to choose a reputable

source that's non GMO, grown on land and watered with Atlantic ocean water that's been filtered for heavy metals - and no fillers! If you find a good source, you'll only need 1/16 to 1/8 of a tsp per day.

**Coconut Oil Or Hemp Oil**

Use these oils to supply medium chain fatty acids. They're also easier to digest than fish oils without the risk of rancidity. Make sure your oil is non-GMO, grown without herbicides or pesticides, cold pressed, hexane free, unrefined and unbleached. Give 1 tsp per 10 pounds of body weight but start with 1/4 tsp and work up over a two to three week period.

I strongly recommend giving supplements only for a limited time and NOT long term, as well as in small amounts, used synergistically to strengthen the body for long term benefit. Be informed and empowered to take the health of your adored pet into your hands! 🌱

What You See Is What You Get



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