

## GAPS diet

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This is a simple and profound lifestyle that I have had the ability to experience for several months. It was created by a neurologist who wanted to find a non-pharmacological way to help her autistic son with his behavioral issues. GAPS stands for Gut and Psychology Syndrome. She has done a lot of research which she sites as reference material. Unfortunately, it is not a palatable endeavor for vegans/vegetarians (but I will have some diet tips for this population in future posts). I will let you read about the details on the site, but would like to share some salient points below.

My favorite meal is the chicken soup.

Chicken soup summary:

- add chopped celery, carrots, diced onions and garlic all in a pot with chicken (skin-on and bones-in) and fill with water
- turn on the stove to high until water starts boiling
- then slow down heat and simmer for 90 minutes (can put a timer)
- before eating, please take the skin off and can remove bones
- enjoy!

There are some themes and principles of the GAPS diet that I still use today. It recommends using pro-biotics before meals, names sauerkraut. I also have some plain yogurt with the chicken soup for more pro-biotics. If you have cravings for

carbohydrates, you can have sourdough bread as it has trace pro-biotics since it was fermented. The protocol limits processed foods and sugars, along with artificial/natural colorings or flavors. GAPS diet is that it helps you seal your gut and fill your stomach. I find that most people snack and have unhealthy diets due to not having filling meals. GAPS, with its protein richness and pro-biotics, helps with gut health and repopulation with good bacteria in the gut. Since this diet is more protein heavy and more natural foods, there is less inflammation in the body. Inflammation is important culprit in many of our diseases, including a role in depression and other mental illness, metabolic disorders (including diabetes), and other autoimmune issues. If we can keep the inflammation down, our body has a better fighting chance against illness and more prone to running on all cylinders.

Gut health is very important for mental health and cravings. There are studies showing that some bacteria (which are fed by processed foods and sugars) can manipulate the brain (mainly in the hypothalamus, which is part of the brain that controls satiety) by the vagus nerve to eat more unhealthy foods, and be caught in a vicious cycle. This is also linked with addictions to substances as well. During my work in the addictions field, one of the first things newly sober people struggle with is the fact that their appetite comes back and they crave many unhealthy foods. It seems like the body wants to substitute one vice for another. This is when diet is very crucial, especially in recovery when many have ignored their bodies for quite some time in their pursuit of substances.

Just because this is a new diet does not mean you have to suffer!

See the Updated Wellness Recommendations page for links!

If you are not vegan/vegetarian, are open to experiments, and want to try a more holistic approach to improving your physical and mental health, please give this a try. Please share any helpful tips, or anything else that has helped you on your journey.

SO, the next time you want a gap between something bothering you...try the GAPS diet!

Links:

1. <https://www.gapsdiet.com/>
2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zWu2i7tkbrA>
3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PCsw2bXX004>
4. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JdVihV\\_E\\_HM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JdVihV_E_HM)
5. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cWH7v5UtYDs>