

A 7-day protocol to reduce intestinal inflammation, diversify gut microbiota, and build habits that support the gut-brain axis. Evidence-based. No supplements required.

PHASE 1: ELIMINATION (DAYS 1–3)

- Remove ultra-processed foods (UPFs) entirely for 7 days**
UPFs disrupt microbial diversity — Monteiro et al., NOVA classification, 2019
- Eliminate added sugar and artificial sweeteners**
Sucralose and saccharin shown to alter gut microbiota composition (Nature, 2022)
- Stop alcohol for the full 7 days**
Alcohol increases intestinal permeability within 24 hours of consumption
- Reduce red meat to max 1 serving over the 7 days**
TMAO production linked to cardiovascular risk via Prevotella bacteria
- Avoid NSAIDs (ibuprofen, aspirin) unless medically necessary**
NSAIDs increase intestinal permeability and disrupt mucosal barrier

PHASE 2: REPLENISH (DAYS 1–7, CONCURRENT)

- Eat 30+ different plant species across the week**
American Gut Project: 30+ plant species/week = highest microbiome diversity
- Include at least 1 fermented food daily**
Yogurt, kefir, kimchi, sauerkraut, miso — Sonnenburg Lab, Cell 2021
- Add 1–2 tbsp ground flaxseed to meals**
Soluble fiber feeds Bifidobacterium and Lactobacillus species
- Eat prebiotic foods: garlic, onion, leek, asparagus, chicory root**
Fructooligosaccharides (FOS) are selective fuel for beneficial bacteria
- Include polyphenol-rich foods: berries, dark chocolate, green tea, olive oil**
Polyphenols metabolized by gut bacteria into anti-inflammatory compounds
- Drink 2–3L water daily; avoid chlorinated tap water when possible**
Chlorine reduces total bacterial count including beneficial species

PHASE 3: LIFESTYLE FACTORS (DAYS 1–7)

- Get 7–9 hours of sleep each night**
Sleep deprivation alters gut microbiome composition within 2 days (Gut Microbes, 2019)
- Walk 20+ minutes outdoors daily**
Low-intensity movement increases gut motility and reduces bloating
- Practice 5–10 min diaphragmatic breathing or meditation daily**
Vagus nerve activation supports gut motility via the gut-brain axis
- Avoid eating within 3 hours of bedtime**
Circadian misalignment disrupts mucosal repair during fasting window
- Eat slowly; aim for 20+ minutes per main meal**
Slower eating activates cephalic phase digestive response more fully

DAILY TRACKING LOG

Day	Fermented food	Plant species count	Sleep (h)	Bloating (1–5)	Mood (1–5)
Day 1					
Day 2					
Day 3					
Day 4					
Day 5					
Day 6					
Day 7					

KEY RESEARCH

Sonnenburg Lab, Cell (2021): High-fiber, high-fermented-food diet increases microbiome diversity in 10 weeks.
 Cryan et al., Nat Rev Neurosci (2019): Gut microbiota regulates stress response, mood, and cognitive function.
 American Gut Project (2018): 30+ plant species per week is the strongest dietary predictor of gut diversity.