



Digestive Wellness Journey: 4-Step Approach to Gut Health

(Part 1: Steps 1 & 2 of 4)

A comprehensive guide to understanding and improving your digestive system through targeted nutrition and practical cooking techniques.

Our 4-Step Approach to Gut Healing

Step 1: Replenish



Boost digestive fluids with acidic foods, bitter herbs, and enzymes to improve breakdown of nutrients

Step 3: Repair



Heal the gut lining with collagen, glutamine, and vitamin A to restore barrier function

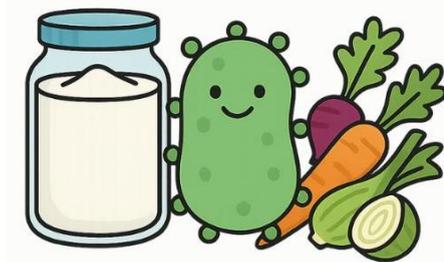
This progressive approach addresses the root causes of digestive discomfort while building a foundation for lasting gut health. Each step builds on the previous one, creating a comprehensive healing journey.

Step 2: Remove



Eliminate harmful bacteria and reduce inflammation with anti-microbial foods and low-FODMAP approach

Step 4: Reinoculate



Introduce beneficial bacteria and prebiotic fibers to rebuild a healthy microbiome

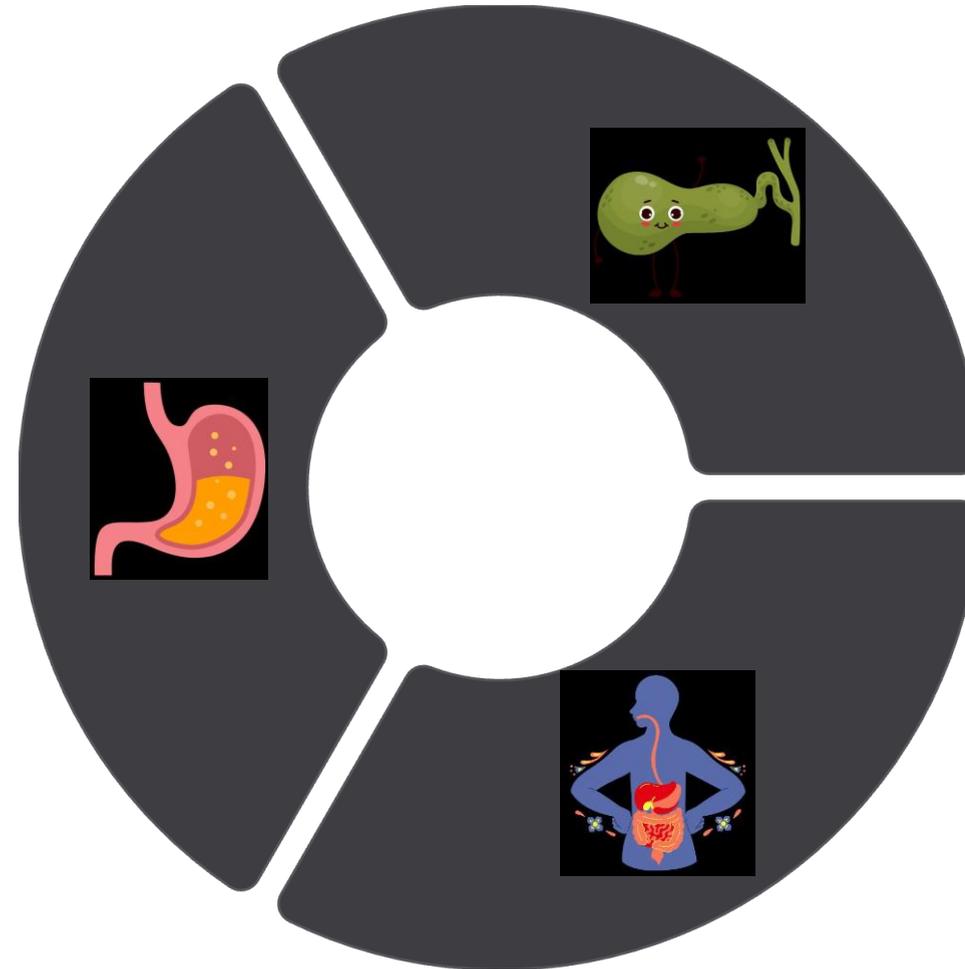
Understanding Your Digestive Power

Your digestive system works like a team of specialized workers. When any part is underperforming, you may experience discomfort.

Stomach Acid

The fire that breaks down proteins

- Difficulty digesting meat or fish
- Heartburn or burping after meals
- Iron or zinc supplements cause nausea



Bile

The oil that processes fats

- Difficulty with fatty foods
- Sticky stools that float
- Skin issues or breakouts

Digestive Enzymes

The scissors that break down food

- Bloating after meals
- Gas and discomfort
- Feeling heavy after mixed meals

If you check 3+ items in any category, you may have a deficiency in that digestive fluid. If you have a few in each, your overall digestion may need support.



Step 1: Replenish – Ignite Your Digestive Fire

Key Nutrition Focus:

- Sour foods stimulate stomach acid (lemon, vinegar, umeboshi)
- Bitter herbs encourage bile flow (dandelion, milk thistle)
- Enzymes support food breakdown (pineapple, daikon radish)
- Fermented foods provide gentle support (koji, miso)

Signature Recipe:

Salted-Koji & pork ginger

Pork marinated in salt koji, ginger, and zest, then baked until tender. Served with grated daikon for added enzymes.

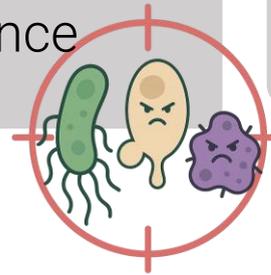
📍 Self-Check: Take a moment to chew each bite 20-30 times during your next meal. Notice how this changes your digestion and satisfaction level.

Step 2: Remove – Clear Out the Excess

1

Target Unwanted Guests

Certain bacteria like *H. pylori*, yeast like *Candida*, and harmful gut bacteria can disrupt digestive balance



2

Use Natural Antimicrobials

Turmeric, ginger, and herbs like rosemary and thyme have natural antibacterial properties



3

Reduce Fermentation

Temporarily lower FODMAPs (fermentable carbohydrates) to reduce gas and bloating



Signature Recipe:

Organic Rice and quinoa with Turmeric

Anti-inflammatory Turmeric rice instead of regular rice, featuring turmeric, ginger, and healing spices.

4

Control Sugar

Limit sugar and refined carbohydrates that feed unwanted organisms



Remember:

This is a temporary phase—we'll gradually reintroduce foods later as your gut heals. The goal is balance, not permanent restriction.



What is SIBO?

SIBO = Small Intestinal Bacterial Overgrowth

- Normally, most bacteria live in the **colon**, not the small intestine.
- In SIBO, bacteria **overgrow in the small intestine**, where they should be few.



Common Symptoms

- Bloating & excess gas
- Abdominal pain
- Diarrhoea or constipation
- Poor nutrient absorption (vitamin deficiencies, weight changes)



Causes

- Slow gut motility
- Digestive disorders or surgeries
- Overuse of antibiotics or poor diet



Management

- **Low-FODMAP diet** (reducing fermentable carbs)
- Supporting digestion with enzymes and gut-friendly foods
- Medical treatment (antibiotics or supplements) if needed

✨ **In short:** SIBO means **too many bacteria in the small intestine**, leading to bloating, discomfort, and nutrient problems — but diet and gut care can help.



Normal Bacteria Count in the Digestive Tract

$10^1 - 10^3$ CFU/mL

Stomach

Almost no bacteria due to strong acid

$10^2 - 10^5$ CFU/mL

Small Intestine

Relatively low bacteria to allow nutrient absorption

$10^{11} - 10^{12}$ CFU/mL

Large Intestine (Colon)

Highest bacterial load in the body

⚠️ What Happens in SIBO?

- In SIBO (Small Intestinal Bacterial Overgrowth), bacteria in the small intestine **increase abnormally**.
- Diagnostic threshold: $\geq 10^5$ CFU/mL in the small intestine.
- In other words, bacteria in the small intestine can grow to **levels closer to the colon**, causing bloating, pain, and malabsorption.

✨ **Summary:** Normally, the stomach and small intestine have very few bacteria. SIBO = when the small intestine's bacteria multiply too much, almost like the colon.



Helicobacter pylori (H. pylori)

A spiral-shaped bacterium that can live in the stomach lining, even in strong acid.

⚠️ Effects on the Body

1 Poor Digestion

can reduce stomach acid and weaken digestive power.

2 Gastritis & Ulcers

long-term infection causes inflammation and damage.

3 Stomach Cancer

the **main global cause of gastric cancer**.

- Classified by WHO as a carcinogen.

✅ Check & Treatment

- Can be tested by breath test, blood test, or endoscopy.
- If found, doctors usually remove it with a combination of **antibiotics and acid-suppressing medicine**.

🌟 **Summary:** If someone has weak digestion, they may have **H. pylori**. It's important to get checked by a doctor and remove it if present. H. pylori infection is considered the **main cause of stomach cancer**.

🍴 Digestive Wellness Journey – Recipe Collection (Step 1 & 2)

A carefully curated collection of Japanese-inspired recipes designed to support digestive wellness through traditional fermented ingredients, enzyme-rich foods, and anti-inflammatory spices. Each recipe incorporates time-tested Japanese culinary wisdom to promote gut health and overall wellbeing.

Protein-Rich Main Dishes

Shio-Koji Pork Ginger Stir-Fry (塩こうじの豚の生姜焼き)

Ingredients (2 servings)

- Pork loin slices ... 200g
- Shio-koji ... 2 tbsp
- Grated ginger ... 1 tbsp

Method

1. Marinate pork with shio-koji and grated ginger for at least 1 hour (ideally half a day).
2. Heat oil in a pan, cook on medium heat (shio-koji burns easily).
3. Brown both sides and cook through.

👉 Shio-koji enzymes tenderise the meat and aid digestion.

Grilled Salmon with Homemade Ponzu & Daikon Oroshi (焼き鮭と手作りポン酢+大根おろし)

Ingredients (2 servings)

- Salmon fillets ... 2 pieces
- Daikon radish ... 5 cm (grated with a grater)
- Homemade ponzu ... 2 tbsp

Method

1. Grate daikon finely using a grater.
2. Grill or pan-fry salmon: For a grill: start skin-side down, cook 5–10 min depending on heat. Flip halfway, cook until skin is crispy and golden.
3. Top with daikon oroshi and drizzle ponzu.

Note: Sprinkle fresh salmon with salt before cooking.

👉 Daikon enzymes (amylase, protease) help break down food and improve digestion.



🍊 Homemade Ponzu Sauce Ingredients

- 150 ml fresh orange juice (3–4 oranges)
- 120 ml soy sauce
- 50 ml mirin
- 50 ml rice vinegar
- 1 tsp dashi powder or 1 small piece dried kombu

Directions

Squeeze oranges for 150 ml juice.
Mix juice, soy sauce, mirin, and vinegar.
Add dashi powder or kombu.
Keep in fridge overnight before use.



Fresh Salads & Quick Pickles

Daikon & Rocket Salad with Katsuobushi

(大根とロケットのサラダ、鰹節のせ)

Ingredients (2 servings)

- Daikon (julienned) ... 100g
- Rocket (arugula) ... 30g
- Katsuobushi flakes ... to taste

Dressing

- Flaxseed oil ... 1 tbsp
- Ume paste ... 1 tsp
- Alternative: GF soy sauce 1 tbsp + lime/lemon juice 1 tbsp
- Sesame oil ... 1/2 tsp

Method

1. Place daikon and rocket on a plate.
2. Mix dressing and pour over.
3. Top with katsuobushi.

👉 Omega-3 from flaxseed oil reduces inflammation and supports gut balance.



Quick Pickled Cucumber with Shio-Kombu

(塩昆布ときゅうりの即席漬け)

Ingredients (2 servings)

- Cucumbers ... 2
- Shio-kombu ... 1 tbsp
- Sesame oil ... 1 tsp
- Dashi powder ... a pinch

Method

1. Smash cucumbers and cut into bite-sized pieces.
2. Mix with shio-kombu, sesame oil, and dashi powder.
3. Rest 5–10 min before serving.

👉 Fermented shio-kombu supports healthy gut microbiota.



Nourishing Grains & Beverages

Turmeric Rice with Japanese Rice & Tri-Colour Quinoa (ターメリックライス)

Ingredients (2 servings)

- Japanese rice ... 150g (3 parts)
- Tri-colour quinoa ... 50g (1 part)
- Turmeric powder ... 1/2 tsp
- Salt ... a pinch

Method

1. Wash rice, add quinoa (ratio 3:1).
2. Add turmeric and salt, cook in rice cooker.

👉 Turmeric (curcumin) has anti-inflammatory benefits. Quinoa is low-FODMAP and nutrient-rich.

Dandelion Chai Tea (タンポポチャイティー)

Ingredients

- Commercial dandelion chai mix (available in health food stores)
- Hot water or hot milk of choice (dairy, oat, or almond)

Method

Brew dandelion chai according to package instructions. Serve hot, either with water only or with hot milk.

Benefits

Dandelion root stimulates bile production in the liver, supporting fat digestion and detox pathways. Combined with warming spices (like cinnamon, ginger, cardamom), it enhances circulation, digestion, and gut motility.

👉 Key point: Encourages abundant bile flow, which is central to this digestive wellness programme.

Glossary of Japanese Ingredients



Koji (麹)



A type of fermentation starter made from rice inoculated with a special mould (*Aspergillus oryzae*). Koji breaks down proteins and starches, creating natural sweetness and umami. It is the base for making miso, soy sauce, sake, and shio-koji.

👉 Think of it like the "yeast" of Japanese cuisine—the hidden engine of flavour.



Dashi Powder (だしパウダー)



A convenient powdered form of dashi, the fundamental Japanese soup stock. Traditional dashi is made by gently simmering kombu (kelp) and katsuobushi (bonito flakes), rich in natural glutamates. This powder captures that savoury "umami" and can be quickly added to soups, sauces, or even pickles.

👉 Think of it as the Japanese equivalent of bouillon powder, but lighter and full of umami.



Shio-Koji (塩こうじ)



A traditional Japanese seasoning made by fermenting rice koji with salt and water. It naturally tenderises meat and fish, whilst adding a mild, slightly sweet umami flavour. Used as a marinade, it also promotes better digestion thanks to its active enzymes.

👉 Think of it as a Japanese-style natural marinade with health benefits.



Umeboshi (梅干し)



A salted and fermented Japanese plum (closer to apricot than Western plums). It is intensely sour and salty, but also probiotic-rich, supporting digestion and gut health. Traditionally eaten with rice, but also used in dressings, sauces, and even teas.

👉 Think of it as a Japanese super-sour pickle that refreshes the palate and supports the gut.



Ponzu (ポン酢)



A refreshing Japanese sauce that combines soy sauce with citrus juice (such as yuzu, lemon, or lime) and dashi. It has a light, tangy, and slightly savoury taste that pairs well with fish, grilled meats, and salads. Ponzu balances richness in food and adds brightness to a meal.

👉 Think of it as a Japanese citrus vinaigrette.

🍊 Umeboshi — Beyond Digestion

1. Cell Protection & Apoptosis

Polyphenols in umeboshi may support apoptosis (natural cell death) in abnormal cells, helping the body's renewal system.

2. Antioxidant & Anti-Inflammatory

Reduces oxidative stress, supporting immunity, circulation, and recovery from fatigue.

3. Traditional "Natural Medicine"

Used in Japan for fatigue, nausea, hangovers; samurai carried them for food safety and stamina.

4. Modern Research

Linked to improved blood flow, liver support, and reduced risk of lifestyle diseases.



🍷 Rice Koji — Beyond Digestion

1. Cell Protection & Metabolism

Rich in enzymes and peptides that aid metabolism and may slow cellular aging.

2. Antioxidant & Anti-Inflammatory

Suppresses oxidative stress, eases inflammation, and supports vascular and immune health.

3. Traditional "Power of Fermentation"

Known as Japan's "national mold," essential for miso, soy sauce, mirin, and sake. Associated with beauty, vitality, and longevity.

4. Modern Research

Shown to improve gut microbiota (prebiotic effect), help regulate blood pressure & blood sugar, and support immune balance.



	High FODMAP foods	Low FODMAP alternatives
Vegetables	Artichoke, asparagus, cauliflower, garlic, green peas, mushrooms, onion, sugar snap peas, sweet potato, taro potato, Mushrooms(Enoki, Shiitake) Soy,chick pea, azuki bean.	Aubergine/eggplant, beans (green), bok choy, green capsicum (bell pepper), carrot, cucumber, lettuce, potato, zucchini, Tomato, pumpkin, eggplant, chinese cabbage, spinach, beansprout
Fruits	Apples, apple juice, cherries, dried fruit, mango, nectarines, peaches, pears, plums, watermelon	Cantaloupe, kiwi fruit (green), mandarin, orange, pineapple, strawberry, grapes, lemon
Dairy & alternatives	Cow's milk, custard, evaporated milk, ice cream, soy milk (made from whole soybeans), sweetened condensed milk, yoghurt	Almond milk, brie/camembert cheese, feta cheese, hard cheeses, lactose-free milk, soy milk (made from soy protein)
Protein sources	Most legumes/pulses, some marinated meats/poultry/seafood, some processed meats	Eggs, firm tofu, plain cooked meats/poultry/seafood, tempeh, nori seaweed
Breads & cereals	Wheat/rye/barley based breads, breakfast cereals, biscuits and snack products	Corn flakes, oats, quinoa flakes, quinoa/rice/corn pasta, rice cakes (plain), sourdough spelt bread, wheat/rye/barley free breads
Drink	Apple juice, Oolong Tea, herbal tea, apple cider, rum, energy drink orange juice, mango juice, camomile tea	Vodka, whisky, wine(no sugar), lemon juice, cranberry juice, beer gin, sake coffee, cocoa, green tea, senbei, pop corn, tea
Sugars, sweeteners & confectionery	High fructose corn syrup, honey , sugar free confectionery tomato sauce, cube stock,	Dark chocolate, maple syrup, rice malt syrup, table sugar Miso, salt, Mayo, olive oil, butter soy sauce, vinegar
Nuts & seeds snack etc	Cashews, pistachios, almond , sweets, ice cream, pudding, milk chocolate, candy	Macadamias, peanuts, pumpkin seeds/pepitas, walnuts