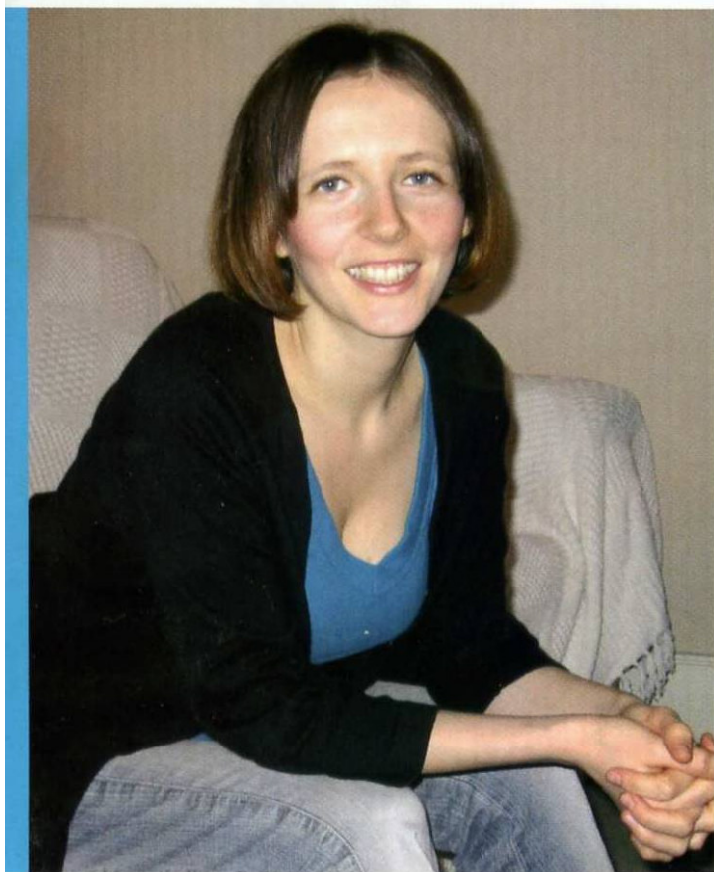


# “I suffered for five years before I found out the truth”

Dawn Mellowship suffered from debilitating stomach complaints for years before she was finally diagnosed as suffering from leaky gut syndrome. Here's her story



**F**or about five years I have been beset with stomach cramps, diarrhoea, indigestion, general abdominal discomfort upon eating certain foods, headaches, chronic joint pain and a vast array of other symptoms that prior to that time I had never encountered, at least not for any prolonged period of time.

My health prior to this had been OK as far as I was concerned. I generally ate and drank what I wanted. I was a fitness fanatic training five days a week, sometimes more, and lived what I considered to be a relatively healthy lifestyle. Looking back, it was far from that. I ate far too many sugary foods, drunk far too much alcohol, smoked, took drugs recreationally, spent some time on protein-only diets and a period of time taking 'safe' herbal diet pills, all the while training like an army cadet.

The doctor suggested I had irritable bowel syndrome and sent me off with a leaflet. But, as the years went by, my condition deteriorated. On top of this I developed sciatica in my back and

right leg from excessive training, so I had to stop exercising completely. I developed intolerances to more and more foods

Finally, a Harley Street nutritionist suggested I took a PEG test, which correctly diagnosed leaky gut syndrome. This confirmed that large spaces had developed between the cells of my gut wall, allowing undigested food particles, bacteria and toxins to leak into my bloodstream. After a prolonged period this ultimately leads to the immune system producing toxic oxidants, which cause inflammation and irritation throughout the whole body. You also develop many allergic reactions to foods, chemicals, environmental toxins and anything else your body considers to be toxic.

## Coping strategies

Leaky gut has been associated with a range of conditions, including autoimmune disease, celiac disease, crohn's disease, acne, allergies, inflammatory joint disease and arthritis, pancreatic insufficiency, ulcerative colitis, chronic fatigue syndrome, eczema, psoriasis, food allergies, liver dysfunction, irritable bowel syndrome and fibromyalgia.

Having a leaky gut dramatically changed my life. I have continuous stomach pains, muscle aches all over my body, chronic fatigue, weak muscles, allergic reactions to certain foods, chemicals and environmental toxins. I get tired extremely easily and rarely leave the house. The condition requires you re-think your entire lifestyle, otherwise you risk chronic, debilitating illness for your entire life.

My research had shown me that the main way to deal with the condition is through nutrition and that it is aggravated by stress and anxiety along with other environmental factors. I now follow the Gerson Therapy, developed over 60 years ago by Dr Max Gerson and proven to work on 52 different illnesses. It's based on drinking vast quantities of fresh organic fruit and vegetable juices and eating a vegan diet with no processed food, no salt and little sugar. You must also avoid prescription and non-prescription drugs, which can aggravate or even cause a digestive disorder. There are other plans you can follow, but you really need to discuss it with your doctor first, and then go to see a qualified nutritionist who can tailor a healthy, organic, largely vegetable and fruit-based diet for you.

## HAVING A LEAKY GUT DRAMATICALLY CHANGED MY LIFE. I HAVE CONTINUOUS STOMACH PAINS, MUSCLE ACHES, CHRONIC FATIGUE AND ALLERGIC REACTIONS TO CERTAIN FOODS, CHEMICALS AND TOXINS

Along with changing my eating habits, I have also changed my whole lifestyle. I am a reiki healer and teacher and use reiki every day to heal myself, which makes a huge difference. I also avoid the environmental toxins, foods and chemicals that aggravate my condition.

■ **There is no organisation developed specifically for leaky gut syndrome, but you can find information from various books along with resources on the internet, such as [drgloriagilbere.com](http://drgloriagilbere.com). Dr Gilbere is a natural health practitioner who overcame the condition herself. Additionally, the Multiple Sclerosis Research Centre ([www.mrsc.co.uk](http://www.mrsc.co.uk)) and UK Fibromyalgia ([www.ukfibromyalgia.com](http://www.ukfibromyalgia.com)) hold information about leaky gut.**

Dawn Mellowship is a Reiki Master Teacher. Visit [thehealingco.com](http://thehealingco.com) for more info. Words by Emma Van Hinsbergh