



Health Cover for the  
CommBank Family

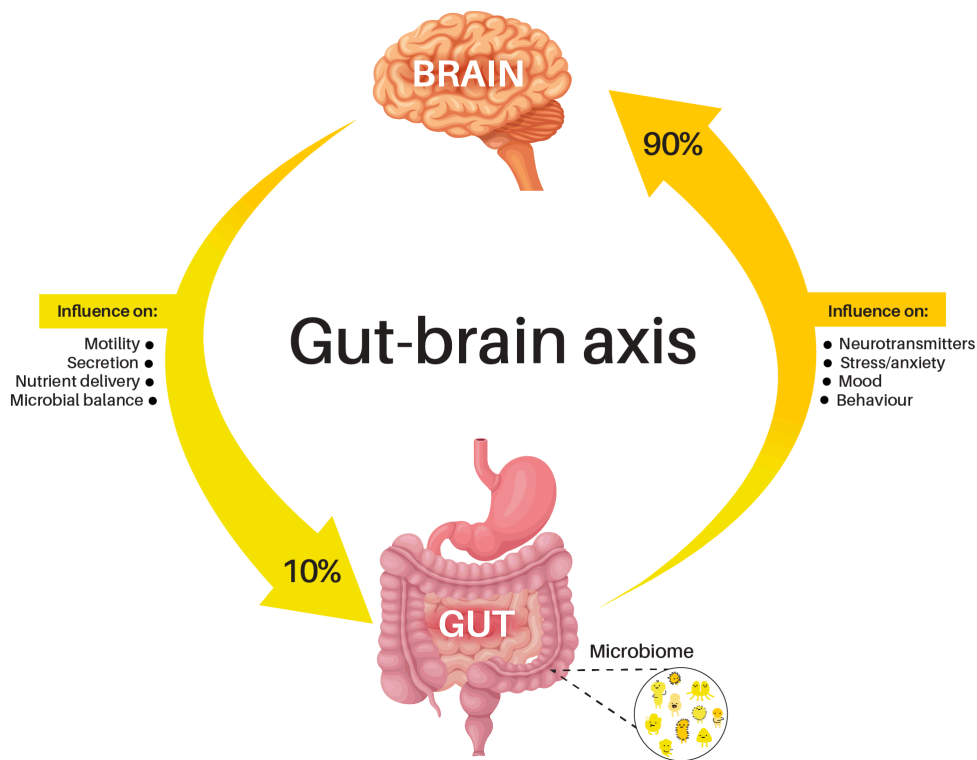


Dear challengers,

Welcome to the first week of the *Supercharge your gut* challenge! Your gut health has a huge effect on your overall health, so we're super excited to guide you on this journey over the coming four weeks. This week, we dive into the all-important connection between the gut and the brain.

### **The gut-brain axis**

We've all likely heard the gut referred to as the second brain. Emerging research in recent years shows us that the brain and gut are connected by bidirectional communication pathways, so they literally "talk" to each other. Check out the diagram below.



As you can see, our brain has an influence on our gut and vice versa. Living inside our gut are trillions of microorganisms, made up of bacteria, viruses and fungi. Collectively known as our gut microbiome, they produce many of the same neurotransmitters as the brain. In fact, the gut produces 95% of the body's serotonin, a key neurotransmitter responsible for regulating mood. Read more about the gut-brain connection.

When our gut microbiome is out of whack, both our mental and physical health can become at risk. Of course, the best way to improve our gut health is through the food we eat. So, throughout the challenge, we'll be introducing a key plant-based food group each week for you to add to your diet.

We've created a handy guide to help you keep track of how many plant-based foods you're consuming each week.

**Download your  
4-week guide here**



## Your first challenge...

✓ Wholegrains

This week, we encourage you to add more wholegrains to your diet. Wholegrains contain all three parts of the grain (germ, endosperm

and bran). This makes them higher in fibre, protein, B vitamins and minerals.

Here are some tips to get you started:

- Try adding pearl barley, quinoa or buckwheat to salads
- Swap white rice for brown, purple or wild rice
- Have wholegrain toast or oats for breakfast.

We've also included some recipes to inspire you:

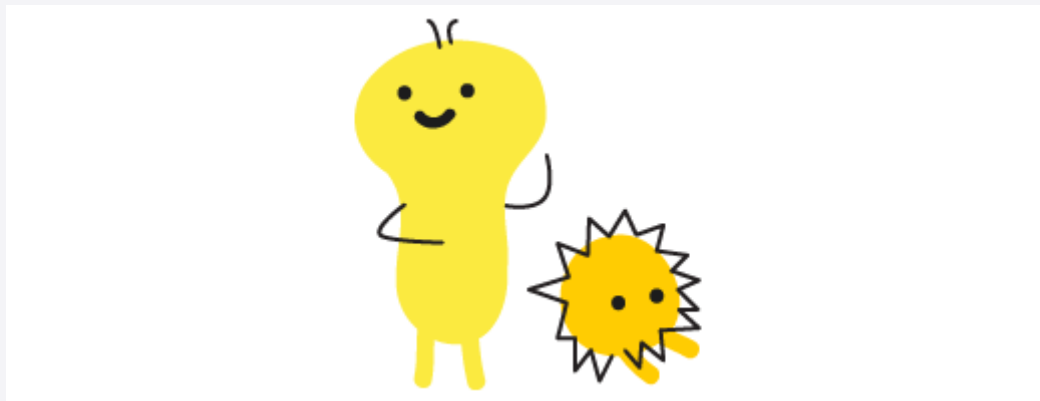
- [Crispy tofu and kale grain salad with lemon dressing](#)
- [Brown rice congee](#)
- [Vitality crunch granola](#)

## This week's mini challenge...

✓ Walking

Exercise is a key element in improving and maintaining good gut health. Simply walking stimulates your digestive system and aids the passage of food. This is especially helpful if you're feeling a bit bloated after a meal. **This week, aim to walk for at least 20-30 minutes on most days.**

Each week, we'll also be introducing you to some good gut characters. This week, meet *Lactobacillus acidophilus* and *Bifidobacteria*. Both are a type of friendly bacteria found in your intestines that help protect against illness.



**Coming up...**

Next week, we discuss common gut-related issues like IBS and offer tips to help manage them.

Speak soon Superchargers,

Team CBHS Health

**Sources:**

<https://www.cbhs.com.au/mind-and-body/blog/stress-can-make-you-sick-and-food-can-make-you-feel-good>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6469458/>

<https://www.cbhs.com.au/mind-and-body/blog/the-brain-gut-connection-is-stress-impacting-your-gut>

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/gut-health>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1sISguPDlhY>

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