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## BREAKING THE CYCLE: WHAT IF THE GUT IS WHY DIETS KEEP FAILING?

Most people have been through the dieting dilemma. A new diet plan with resolve is started, eliminating the foods considered counterproductive. The strategy is successful for a while. However, after a period of time, a strong craving develops—an intense, almost physiological drive to consume just those foods that are being avoided. Compliance is eventually abandoned, negative affect ensues, and the lapse is attributed to a deficiency in willpower. But what if the problem is not the character but the biology?

This is the fascinating question lying at the very center of neurologist Dr. Kulreet Chaudhary's study. In her webinar and her book *The Prime*, she questions everything we believe we know about dieting<sup>1</sup>. She wants us to abandon calorie counting and pure fortitude for a minute. The actual secret to sustainable improvement, she thinks, could lie in repairing a second brain, the one in the stomach.

### *The failure of the willpower myth*

Most diets work on a sort of top-down command. This process requires the effort of the brain to override the demand of the gut and body, but misses out on a network of

communication emanating from the body. Dr. Chaudhary noticed a curious trend through her clinical work with patients afflicted with complicated neurological diseases. Even the most tireless and intellectual person struggles to change their eating habits<sup>1</sup>.

This led the author to shocking results. For most of the people, it's not the behavioral issue related to their eating habits but a biological lock. As per neurological studies, a person addicted to eating junk food who is forced to follow a healthier diet has the same reaction as a person addicted to drugs who is restrained from using them<sup>2</sup>. The study of brain scans suggests that eating junk food creates the same reactions in the brain as are created during the use of narcotics<sup>3</sup>. The reward section of the brain of the person addicted to junk food enlightens upon junk food consumption as of a drug addict. So, the enemy is not eating behavior or laziness but the food industry, which has succeeded in sparking the hunger and lust for such foods. The reward system of the brain is hijacked by the food industry.

### *The Hidden Saboteurs in the System*

This addictive cycle is powered by two disruptors that most diet plans overlook. Above all, we live in a time where we are exposed to a lot of toxic food. The research by Dr. Chaudhary found that the average kids carry tons of industrial toxins in their bodies. Their livers are burdened to drain out and neutralize the toxins they consume<sup>4</sup>. This leads to a toxic traffic bottleneck inside the body that results in inflammation and leaky gut. Leaky gut is the condition when the layer of the intestine is damaged, thinner, and porous<sup>5</sup>. This condition is called “Foolish Gut” by Dr. Chaudhry.

The gut is not merely a conduit for digesting. It has about 100 million neurons (enteric nervous system), also termed our “second brain.” It interacts intimately with the brain in our head and also controls the gut microbiome, the



enormous population of bacteria residing in our intestines<sup>6</sup>.

A healthy, well-balanced gut, which is supported by beneficial bacteria, helps ensure proper digestion, clear signaling, and even healthy cravings<sup>7</sup>. This balance is disrupted when leaky gut develops. Harmful bacteria, which come with their own survival agenda, take over. They survive on food that contains sugar and processed foods, which caused the damage in the first place<sup>8</sup>.

### *When gut trouble reaches the head*

The damage is not limited to the gut. Inflammation and toxins produced by harmful bacteria can pass through a leaky gut and enter the bloodstream. These harmful bacteria can affect the protective barrier between the blood and the brain<sup>9</sup>. This leads to a state of neuroinflammation, sometimes referred to as “leaky brain”<sup>10</sup>.

Brain fog, poor focus, memory troubles, and low energy are some easily recognizable symptoms of this condition<sup>11</sup>. Along with this condition it is nearly impossible to stick to a healthy eating plan. It becomes a negative cycle. The unhealthy food habits damage the gut, which creates inflammation in the brain, and that ultimately affects the decisions we make about what to eat.

### *A New Approach: Heal First, Then Change*

This is the reason why Dr. Chaudhary’s research and findings declare common diet ideas completely irrelevant. Her PRIME program is focused on repairing and cleansing the body instead of starting with restriction<sup>1</sup>. The diet plans demand performance from a system that is already damaged. Dr. Chaudhry’s program advises using accessible, food-based, and herbal methods that aim to

achieve four goals.

The first goal is to remove the harmful buildup from the body. Second is to calm the enteric nervous system by healing the leaky gut. Third, the program aims to push out harmful microbes. Once the system is reset, people feel worse when they eat processed or junk food. People naturally start craving more nutritious foods. Rather than getting depressed by the diet plans whose main goal is driven by hunger, weight loss in the gut becomes a pleasant side benefit of the body returning to balance.

### *Moving forward with compassion*

Some people may look at a term like “leaky brain” with doubt. But modern Western research supports the findings and program of Dr. Chaudhary. The study of the connection between the gut and the brain is now considered one of the most fascinating areas in medicine, with implications that extend from mood to long-term brain health<sup>12</sup>.

This program is not about strange or unusual cures. Rather, the program uses ancient wisdom to address modern, physiology-based problems. The model designed by the findings of Dr. Chaudhry replaces blame with understanding<sup>1</sup>. It makes us realize the reality of the toxic environment we are living in and the toxic food we are consuming. It acknowledges that much of the food we eat is of an artificial nature and then gives a practical plan to restore our health from the inside out.

In today’s world where people seek quick-fix diets, this program offers something entirely different. It makes us realize that we need to stop fighting our bodies and start healing them. The path it suggests opens our eyes to the fact that lasting weight balance and stronger health do not begin with harsh dieting, but they start with a neater and healthier gut.



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