



GUT-DIRECTED HYPNOTHERAPY FAQs

HOW ARE THE BRAIN AND GASTROINTESTINAL SYMPTOMS CONNECTED?

There is a two-way superhighway between your brain and your gut called the Brain-Gut Axis. Science has shown us that a "second brain" lives in our gut that both sends signals to and takes cues from our brain in a continual "dance." Some gastrointestinal disorders and their accompanying symptoms can cause — and/or be caused by — interruptions, agitations, and changes along the mind-gut axis. For example, particularly sudden and stressful experiences can shut down or even reverse the digestive process as our body and brain move into the "fight or flight" response. Digestive pain and discomfort themselves can trigger this stress response, generating anxiety that keeps us from engaging in activities, work, and play, adversely affecting our quality of life. Several factors — food choice, activity, disease, environment, even your thoughts and behaviors — can make a big difference in your overall health and well-being.

HOW DOES GUT-DIRECTED HYPNOTHERAPY FIT IN?

First, hypnotherapy is not like the hypnosis seen in the movies or in entertainment. There is no "mind control." Hypnotherapy is a collaborative process between therapist and patient. Patients are fully aware of the experience. The therapist works with the patient on progressive relaxation, guided healthy and protective imagery, and the creation of automatic behavioral responses. It is much like a guided meditation with imagery, breath work and language geared toward changing the body's response to stimuli like stress, anxiety, fear, depression, and anything else that threatens to upset the balance of the GI tract. In short, the sessions are a "boot camp" for focused relaxation that better equip and train patients to respond to day-to-day stressors more effectively.

CAN GUT-DIRECTED HYPNOTHERAPY REALLY HELP?

Olafur S. Palsson, PsyD, is one of the leading researchers on gut-directed hypnotherapy. His research and review of the existing literature has led to the following conclusions:

1. At least half of GI patients who have been unresponsive to standard medical therapy find relief through gut-directed hypnotherapy.
2. A treatment course of 7-12 sessions of hypnotherapy is sufficient to produce marked symptom improvement.
3. All of the central symptoms of IBS and other functional GI conditions — abdominal pain, constipation, diarrhea, and bloating — can be expected to improve substantially in those who respond to treatment.
4. Gut-directed hypnotherapy commonly provides broader benefits than bowel disorder symptom relief. These "positive side effects" include enhanced quality of life and reduction in other non-GI symptoms.
5. People that respond to treatment often having lasting improvements for many years after the sessions have been completed.

HOW CAN I MAKE AN APPOINTMENT FOR GUT-DIRECTED HYPNOTHERAPY?

Comprehensive Gastrointestinal Health's Behavioral Therapist, James E. Foster, Jr., MA-LMFT leads our gut-directed hypnotherapy program at Behavioral Health Specialists of CGH. He is a member of the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis and offers gut-directed hypnotherapy both on-site and through video telemedicine sessions. He is happy to answer any questions you have about this very effective treatment protocol. Please call 224.407.4400 or visit www.compgihealth.com to schedule an appointment or learn more.

WILL MY HEALTH INSURANCE PAY FOR GUT-DIRECTED HYPNOTHERAPY?

A single session of gut-directed hypnotherapy is \$150. A package of 8 sessions of gut-directed Hypnotherapy is \$995, a cost savings of \$205!

Services provided by our licensed therapist will be considered OUT OF NETWORK BY YOUR INSURANCE. Our staff will be available to answer questions regarding how to submit claims for reimbursement to your insurance provider. In addition, flexible spending accounts and health savings accounts may also be used to cover the costs of services.