Microbiome Testing

Your complete guide to the trillions of microbes that live in your gut

YOUR GUT TELLS A STORY

Bloating, low energy, or just curious?

Our at-home stool tests show who is living in your gut, whether the community is balanced, and what it is producing - a practical starting point for looking after your inner ecosystem.

i-screen is Australia's largest private health screening platform. Our microbiome range gives you three at-home stool tests - one sample, collected at home, analysed in a NATA-accredited laboratory, with results in about two weeks. The difference is how deep a look you want: from an affordable first look to our most advanced, species-level assessment. No referral needed.

3 tests	From $239	~2 weeks
one at-home stool sample	for the Microbiome Check	to get your results

How microbiome testing works

Trillions of bacteria, yeasts and other microbes live in your gut - your **gut microbiome**. They help digest your food, make vitamins, train your immune system and protect your gut lining. A simple at-home stool sample is the most direct window into this community.

Choose the option that suits you:

- **Microbiome Check** - culture + MALDI-TOF. An affordable first look at the balance of bacteria and yeasts.
- **Complete Microbiome Mapping (GI-MAP)** - DNA-based PCR. The comprehensive DNA panel, with digestion, inflammation and gut-barrier markers.
- **Advanced Microbiome GutIQ** - shotgun metagenomic sequencing across 28,000+ species. Our deepest, species-level view.

Good to know

A microbiome test is an insight tool, not a diagnosis. It does not diagnose, treat, cure or prevent disease, and does not replace seeing a doctor. Results are best used alongside advice from a qualified health professional. If you have red-flag symptoms, see your GP first.

© 2026 Intelligent Screening Pty Ltd

Microbiome Check — 78 Markers

The essential check - a solid, affordable first look at the balance of helpful versus unwanted organisms in your gut, with some basic digestion insights.

TEST OPTION	PRICE
Microbiome Check *Culture + MALDI-TOF - we grow the microbes from your sample and identify them*	**$239**

Results in ~2 weeks. At-home stool collection · No referral needed · NATA-accredited laboratory.

WHAT'S TESTED

How it works Culture and MALDI-TOF mass spectrometry. The lab grows the living microbes from your sample, then identifies them by reading their unique molecular fingerprint. Because it works with living organisms, it is good at confirming what is actually alive and active in your gut.

Bacteria Beneficial bacteria, plus pathogenic and opportunistic bacteria

Yeasts Yeasts, including Candida

Parasites Common parasites

Digestion Digestive clues from the stool's appearance and microscopy - undigested food, fat and hidden blood

Best for Anyone new to gut testing who wants an affordable starting point.

Good to know

The Microbiome Check does not measure your microbes' metabolic output (short-chain fatty acids), DNA-level diversity, or inflammation and gut-barrier markers such as calprotectin and zonulin. For those, choose Complete Microbiome Mapping or the Advanced Microbiome GutIQ.

© 2026 Intelligent Screening Pty Ltd

Complete Microbiome Mapping (GI-MAP) — 134 Markers

The comprehensive DNA panel - a thorough, sensitive DNA-based picture that combines community balance with digestion, inflammation and gut-barrier markers.

TEST OPTION	PRICE
Complete Microbiome Mapping (GI-MAP) *DNA-based PCR - a gut DNA test that checks a defined list of organisms*	**$569**

Results in ~2 weeks. At-home stool collection · No referral needed · NATA-accredited laboratory.

WHAT'S TESTED

How it works DNA-based PCR. Instead of growing microbes, this detects them by their DNA. It is highly sensitive and specific, can pick up organisms that are difficult to grow (even at low levels), and screens a targeted list of microbes and markers from a single stool sample.

Organisms Pathogenic bacteria, Commensal (normal) bacteria, Opportunistic pathogens, Fungi & yeasts, Viruses, Parasites & worms

Balance Overall diversity-and-balance read (ratios)

H. pylori H. pylori with virulence factors and antibiotic-resistance genes

Function markers Calprotectin, Pancreatic elastase, Secretory IgA, Zonulin and more

Metabolites Short-chain fatty acids

Best for Anyone wanting a thorough DNA panel with inflammation, barrier and function markers.

Good to know

This panel looks for a defined, targeted list of organisms. If you want an open-ended read of everything in the sample, choose the Advanced Microbiome GutIQ.

© 2026 Intelligent Screening Pty Ltd

Advanced Microbiome GutIQ — 28,000+ Species

Our most advanced test - the deepest, most data-rich view of not just who is in your gut, but what they are doing.

TEST OPTION	PRICE
Advanced Microbiome GutIQ *Shotgun metagenomic sequencing - reads all the DNA in your sample*	**$599**

Results in ~2 weeks. At-home stool collection · No referral needed · NATA-accredited laboratory.

WHAT'S TESTED

How it works Shotgun metagenomic sequencing reads *all* the genetic material in your sample at once - bacteria, viruses, fungi and other microorganisms together - screening against a reference of more than 28,000 microbial species. It is the difference between asking "are these 30 organisms present?" and "what is actually in here?"

Species Species-level identification across the whole community - including organisms most panels never look for

Diversity Shannon and Simpson indices, plus phylum distribution

Biochemistry Calprotectin, Pancreatic elastase, Secretory IgA, Zonulin, Beta-glucuronidase, Steatocrit, Faecal pH, Tissue transglutaminase IgA

Short-chain fatty acids Butyrate, Acetate, Propionate, Valerate

Functional insight Inferred capacity to produce LPS, Histamine, TMA and Branched-chain amino acids

Species Explorer An interactive, searchable, colour-coded tool to navigate, filter and explore your results

Methods Metagenomic next-generation sequencing (mNGS), with qPCR, PCR, immunoassay (CLIA, ELISA, FEIA) and GC-MS for the biochemical markers

Best for People who want the fullest picture available.

© 2026 Intelligent Screening Pty Ltd

Compare the three tests — At a glance

All three are at-home stool tests. They differ mainly in the **laboratory method** used to identify what is in your sample - and the method shapes what the test can tell you.

	MICROBIOME CHECK	COMPLETE MICROBIOME MAPPING (GI-MAP)	ADVANCED MICROBIOME GUTIQ
Method	Culture + MALDI-TOF	DNA-based PCR	Metagenomic shotgun sequencing
Markers	~78	~134	~187
Organisms it can find	What grows in culture	A defined, targeted list	Open-ended - 28,000+ reference species
Community balance & diversity	Basic	Broad (ratios)	Deepest (Shannon + Simpson, phylum distribution)
Beneficial & unwanted bacteria	✓	✓ wider	✓ widest
Yeasts & parasites	✓	✓ + worms	✓ + worms
Viruses	-	✓	✓
H. pylori virulence & resistance	-	✓	✓
Digestion, inflammation & barrier markers	Basic (microscopy)	✓	✓
Short-chain fatty acids	-	✓	✓
Microbial functional / metabolic insight	-	-	✓
Interactive Species Explorer	-	-	✓
Price (AUD)	**$239**	**$569**	**$599**

Results in ~2 weeks for all three tests. Prices are per test in AUD.

Which one is right for you?

- New to gut testing, or want an affordable starting point → **Microbiome Check**
- Want a thorough, sensitive DNA panel with inflammation, barrier and function markers → **Complete Microbiome Mapping (GI-MAP)**
- Want the deepest, most complete picture, including what your microbes are producing → **Advanced Microbiome GutIQ**

Whichever you choose, your results are published to your secure online dashboard - and you can add a **dietitian review** of your results (Nutrition Assessment) if you would like expert help turning them into a plan. Prefer the fullest workup in one go? The **Platinum Gut Health Check** bundles the Advanced Microbiome GutIQ with food intolerance, leaky gut and SIBO testing.

© 2026 Intelligent Screening Pty Ltd

What your gut microbiome does for you

Think of it as an ecosystem, like a forest or a reef. A healthy ecosystem is defined by **diversity** (lots of different species), the **balance** between them, and a few **keystone species** that hold the system together. Your gut is home to an estimated 10 trillion-plus microorganisms carrying millions of genes - many times more genetic material than your own body.

- **Digest what you can't.** They ferment the fibres your body can't break down, releasing nutrients and short-chain fatty acids.
- **Make vitamins.** They synthesise vitamin K and several B vitamins.
- **Train and regulate your immune system.** A large share of your immune cells sit just beneath the gut lining.
- **Protect the gut lining.** Beneficial microbes help maintain the barrier that keeps unwanted substances out of your bloodstream.
- **Talk to the rest of your body** - including your brain - through nerves, hormones and the compounds they produce.

The key idea: it's not just *who* is there, but *what they're doing*.

Meet the key players: your keystone species

- **Bifidobacteria and Lactobacilli** - classic "good bugs". They help crowd out less welcome organisms, keep the gut slightly acidic, support digestion and help make vitamins.
- ***Akkermansia muciniphila*** - a specialist that helps maintain the protective mucus layer lining your gut.
- ***Faecalibacterium prausnitzii*** **and** ***Roseburia*** - two of your most important butyrate producers.

When two or more keystone species are running low, the community can look "hollowed out" even if overall numbers seem fine.

Short-chain fatty acids: what your microbes make

Your microbes turn dietary fibre into short-chain fatty acids (SCFAs). Three matter most:

- **Butyrate** - the main fuel for the cells lining your colon. It helps calm inflammation and supports a strong gut barrier.
- **Acetate** - the most abundant SCFA, used for energy around the body and involved in appetite and metabolism.
- **Propionate** - involved in how your body handles blood sugar and cholesterol, and in signalling fullness.

The practical takeaway: fibre feeds this process. The more variety of plant fibres you eat, the more raw material your beneficial microbes have.

© 2026 Intelligent Screening Pty Ltd

When the balance tips: dysbiosis

Dysbiosis is an imbalance in the gut community associated with less-than-ideal health. It comes in different flavours:

- **Lost diversity** - fewer different species, making the community less resilient.
- **Missing keystones** - helpful specialists, like the butyrate producers, are depleted.
- **Overgrowth of opportunists** - organisms harmless in small numbers become over-represented.
- **A shift in output** - less of the good stuff (like butyrate), more of the inflammatory stuff.

Common triggers include antibiotics, some medications (such as long-term acid suppressants), a low-fibre, low-variety diet, chronic stress and poor sleep, chronic constipation, and gut infections. Dysbiosis has been *associated with* many conditions - but associated with is not the same as causes, and a test cannot diagnose them on its own.

Your gut barrier - and the truth about "leaky gut"

Your gut lining is a multi-layered defence system:

1. **The microbes themselves** - occupying space so unwanted organisms can't take hold.
2. **A mucus layer** - kept healthy in part by Akkermansia and butyrate.
3. **A single layer of cells** held together by "tight junctions" - renewed every few days.
4. **Immune cells** beneath, producing secretory IgA that patrols the gut surface.
5. **The bloodstream and lymph beyond**, with the liver as the next checkpoint.

"Leaky gut", properly understood, means one or more of these layers isn't working well. Zonulin, calprotectin, secretory IgA and mucus-supporting microbes each reflect a different layer. (i-screen also offers a dedicated **Intestinal Permeability (Leaky Gut) Test**.)

Understanding the key markers

- **Calprotectin** - a marker of inflammation in the gut lining.
- **Pancreatic elastase** - how well your pancreas produces digestive enzymes; low levels can point to under-digestion.
- **Secretory IgA** - your gut's front-line immune antibody; very low and very high levels both tell a story.
- **Zonulin** - relates to gut-barrier "tightness".
- **Beta-glucuronidase** - a bacterial enzyme involved in recycling some hormones and toxins.
- **Steatocrit** - fat in the stool, a clue to how well fats are digested and absorbed.
- **Faecal pH** - gut acidity, which shifts with fermentation and microbial balance.

Digestion, inflammation and immune markers are included in Complete Microbiome Mapping and the Advanced Microbiome GutIQ.

© 2026 Intelligent Screening Pty Ltd

The gut's surprising reach

- **The gut-brain axis.** Your gut and brain communicate via the vagus nerve, gut hormones, immune signals and microbial compounds. Inflammatory compounds from an imbalanced gut have been linked to fatigue, low mood and "brain fog".
- **The gut-skin axis.** Your gut community appears to be linked to skin health and inflammatory skin conditions.
- **The gut-hormone axis.** Your microbiome helps process and recycle some hormones, including oestrogen, partly via beta-glucuronidase.

This is a fast-moving area of science, and much of it is about associations rather than proven cause and effect. A microbiome test won't diagnose a mood, skin or hormone condition - it is one piece of a bigger puzzle.

Signs your gut might be worth a closer look

Common reasons people test include ongoing bloating, wind, irregular bowel habits or discomfort; low energy; skin concerns; mood changes; unexplained food sensitivities; or simply wanting a data-driven baseline.

See your GP first if you have any of these

A microbiome test is not the right first step for symptoms that need medical evaluation:

- Blood in your stool, or black, tarry stools
- Unexplained weight loss
- A persistent, unexplained change in your bowel habits
- Ongoing or severe diarrhoea, or signs of dehydration
- Fever alongside gut symptoms
- A family history of bowel cancer or inflammatory bowel disease, or you're over the age at which bowel screening is recommended

What microbiome testing is *not*

- **It's not a diagnosis.** It is an insight tool and doesn't diagnose, treat, cure or prevent disease.
- **It doesn't replace seeing a doctor** - especially for the red-flag symptoms above.
- **Some findings need follow-up.** Certain disease-causing organisms are "notifiable" - the laboratory is legally required to inform public health authorities, and you may be contacted for follow-up.
- **Results are best interpreted in context** - alongside your symptoms, history and goals, ideally with a knowledgeable practitioner.

© 2026 Intelligent Screening Pty Ltd

How to prepare for your test

- **Antibiotics** - it's usually best to wait a period after finishing a course so results reflect your everyday gut.
- **Probiotics and some supplements** - you may be advised to pause these before collecting.
- **Recent tummy bugs** - let things settle first, unless you're specifically testing to investigate it.
- **Timing** - collect on a fairly typical day, fill the tube to the line, avoid contamination and post promptly.

If in doubt about medications or timing, check with your practitioner or GP before pausing anything.

Making sense of your results

- **Is my community diverse?** Greater diversity generally signals a more resilient gut.
- **Are my keystone species present?** Healthy levels of the butyrate producers are a good sign.
- **What am I producing?** Adequate short-chain fatty acids, particularly butyrate, reflect a well-fed gut.
- **Is anything out of place?** Overgrowths, low beneficial levels, raised inflammation markers or pathogens are worth discussing with a practitioner or GP.

Retesting a few months later can show whether your changes are moving things in the right direction.

What you can do to support your microbiome

- **Eat a wide variety of plants** - vegetables, fruits, legumes, whole grains, nuts and seeds across the week.
- **Feed your butyrate-makers with fibre** - variety matters as much as quantity.
- **Include fermented foods** like yoghurt, kefir, sauerkraut and kimchi.
- **Enjoy polyphenol-rich foods** - colourful produce, extra-virgin olive oil, green tea, herbs and spices.
- **Look after sleep and stress**, and **move regularly**.
- **Use antibiotics wisely** and support recovery afterward.
- **Go gently** - steady, sustainable changes serve your gut better than drastic overhauls.

Testing children

Children's and infants' microbiomes are still developing, and what's "normal" changes with age. Results should always be interpreted using age-appropriate expectations, ideally with a practitioner experienced in this area.

© 2026 Intelligent Screening Pty Ltd

A QUICK GLOSSARY

Microbiome the whole community of microbes living in your gut (and their genes)

Dysbiosis an imbalance in that community associated with less-than-ideal health

Diversity how many different species are present; more is generally better

Keystone species beneficial microbes that do a disproportionate amount of good (e.g. Akkermansia, F. prausnitzii, Bifidobacteria)

Short-chain fatty acids helpful compounds your microbes make from fibre; butyrate is the standout

Prebiotic / Probiotic food (mainly fibre) that feeds beneficial microbes / live beneficial microbes in food or supplements

Calprotectin / Zonulin markers of gut inflammation / gut-barrier "tightness"

Leaky gut everyday term for a gut barrier that isn't working well at one or more of its layers

Culture + MALDI-TOF grows microbes and identifies them by their molecular fingerprint

PCR detects microbes by their DNA; sensitive and targeted

Shotgun sequencing reads all the DNA in a sample for the most complete, species-level picture

Frequently asked questions

Do I need to have symptoms to test?
No. Some people test because of ongoing digestive symptoms; others want to be proactive. If you have symptoms that concern you, see your GP as well.

Which test should I start with?
New to gut testing? The Microbiome Check is a great start. For a thorough DNA-based picture with function and inflammation markers, choose the GI-MAP. For the deepest view, choose the Advanced Microbiome GutIQ.

Will the test tell me exactly what to eat?
Not by itself. Combined with your goals and a practitioner's input it can guide personalised choices, but it isn't a prescriptive meal plan.

How often should I test?
Many people test once for a baseline, then again after several months if they've made changes.

Is the collection unpleasant?
It's a simple at-home stool collection with clear instructions. Most people find it quick and straightforward.

What if a pathogen or parasite is found?
Some findings need medical follow-up, and certain infections are notifiable to public health authorities by the lab. We'll point you toward next steps, and you should see your GP.

Can this replace advice from my doctor?
No. It's an insight tool that complements medical care - it doesn't replace it.

© 2026 Intelligent Screening Pty Ltd

Related tests

- **SIBO Breath Test (Glucose + Lactulose)** - for suspected small intestinal bacterial overgrowth.
- **Intestinal Permeability (Leaky Gut) Test** - a focused look at gut-barrier integrity.
- **Food Intolerance (IgG) Test** - an IgG screen across common foods for delayed-type reactions.
- **H. pylori Stool Test · Parasite PCR Test** - targeted screens for specific organisms.
- **Platinum Gut Health Check and Gut Health Test** - comprehensive panels combining several of the above.
- **Nutrition Assessment** - add a dietitian's review to turn your results into a plan.

How to order

1. **Order your test online** - pick the test that suits you and receive your collection kit in the post.
2. **Collect your sample at home** - a simple stool collection, following the step-by-step instructions in your kit.
3. **Send it to the lab** - in the prepaid packaging, for analysis in a NATA-accredited laboratory.
4. **Get your results** - typically within about two weeks, in your secure online dashboard. Review them on your own or with a practitioner.

Ready to start?

Order your microbiome test online today. No referral needed.

Microbiome Check $239 · Complete Microbiome Mapping $569 · Advanced Microbiome GutIQ $599

i-screen.com.au

Questions? Email info@i-screen.com.au

This guide is for general education and wellbeing. It is not medical advice and does not diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any condition. Always consult a qualified healthcare professional about symptoms or health concerns.

© 2026 Intelligent Screening Pty Ltd