

Spring/Summer 2024

It's time the UK
got to grips with guts!



@frankiegrace_



@the_coeliac_princess



@_ravioli_x



@katefin1



@sophieeejade

Brave, bold
and honest



@dietitian_fareehajay



@rossmars



@keiththom2014

The three values that drive our charity and come from our proud Guts UK community. #GUTSelfie every year personifies those values.

#GUTSelfie takes place on the last Sunday in June. Our Instagram community, equipped with Guts UK charity temporary tattoos and a board, share their experiences of living with a digestive condition. Their creativity, honesty and openness is awe-inspiring. Thank you for joining us in raising awareness of digestive conditions so no one feels alone.


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TOP TIP

Avoiding 'fad' diets

There is so much misinformation out there when it comes to health and lifestyle, whether it's to do with your digestive condition or general weight loss.

 Here are a few red flags to look out for, to help you spot bad dietary advice:

- Diets that offer a 'magic' medicine, ingredient or product.
- Promise of rapid weight loss (more than **2lbs/0.9 (1) kg** per week).
- Encourage you to avoid or remove a whole food group (e.g. dairy, carbohydrates) from your diet, with no medical reason to do so.
- Suggest being overweight is related to a food allergy or 'yeast infection'.
- Recommend 'detoxing'.
- Offer no supporting evidence, other than personal stories or celebrity success stories.






“ I've been on a diagnosis journey for just over 10 years now and if it wasn't for your charity and the information you provide, I wouldn't have known to push for further tests for specific issues. It's early days but I'm on new medication and it's making a massive difference so far, and it's thanks to you! ”



Don't be a stranger!

We love hearing from you, it's the best part of our job.

 @GutsCharityUK  0207 486 0341  info@gutscharity.org.uk

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**GUTS
UK!**

The power of three

Our digestive systems have been underfunded, undervalued and misunderstood for decades. At Guts UK, we have three charitable objectives:

1 Information



Kev, with his youngest child, Elsie

Our digestive systems are complex. 25ft is a lot of guts to understand, but we believe knowledge is power. With the right information, people can make informed decisions and take control of their health.

“ Like many people, we didn't know much about pancreatitis, and this is where Guts UK were a massive help during Kev's time in hospital. It's vital that Guts UK raises enough money to continue helping families like ours, at a time we needed it most. ”

Nadine, whose husband Kev passed away from pancreatitis.

2 Research

Gastroenterology (medicine relating to our digestive systems) receives just 2% of the UK's medical research funding. We exist to change that.

“ We know research takes time. There are rarely any quick fixes, especially for complex conditions of the digestive system. But we all have guts, and we must go faster, fund more research and ensure our guts get the attention they deserve. Perhaps by the time our little girls are ready to have families of their own, achalasia can be cured. ”

Agnieszka, Cassius, Vanessa & Steve
Parents of Alia and Grace

Grace



Alia

3 Awareness

Our research shows that 58% of people feel embarrassed to talk about their digestive condition or symptoms. We want to empower people to seek help sooner, free of any embarrassment or stigma.

“ Me and my wife are much less intimate as I sometimes go to bed feeling bloated, crampy or just tired. I don't think it's affected how we feel about each other, but I do think my wife misses the intimacy. I'm not 100% comfortable with chatting to my other half about my bowel cramps, or with anyone else for that matter. ”

Anonymous patient with Bile Acid Malabsorption (Bile Acid Diarrhoea).



Our digestive systems are complex, and we have a lot to learn about them. Getting to grips with guts won't be easy. We have a long way to go, but with supporters like you by our side we cannot and will not fail.

Please donate what you can today, thank you.

The gut-brain connection is VERY real!

When it comes to your health, it is so important to realise just how much your mental health can impact your gut, and vice versa. Living with a digestive condition or symptoms can impact your mood, so showing yourself compassion, and being aware of how the gut and brain communicate is crucial.

?

Did you know..

Your gut microbiome (the microbes living in your gut) plays a vital role in supporting your mood. Up to 95% of serotonin (one of the 'happy chemicals') is produced in your gut!

Get to grips with the gut-brain axis



There is two-way communication between your gut and brain (known as the gut-brain axis) as these two crucial organs are literally *connected*. Both physically, through the vagus nerve and chemically, through neurotransmitters. When you get those butterflies in the pit of your stomach, that's the gut-brain connection. When you feel hungry, that's the same connection. When you feel anxious, that's the gut-brain connection too! The gut-brain axis also explains how stress and anxiety can both contribute to causing digestive symptoms. In fact, scientists believe that Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) is an over-communication between the gut and the brain. The foods you eat can impact your mental health, too. This is why it's vital to look after both your gut and your brain as much as you can.



How does your digestive health impact your mental health?

Digestive symptoms and conditions can have a real impact upon your daily life and therefore your mental health. Often, you might feel people underestimate the impact these have on you, too.

When your gut isn't happy, your brain might not be either. Managing pain, being unable to predict symptoms each day and anxiety surrounding access to near-by toilet facilities are just a few of the things you may worry about.

How can you support your mental health?

1 Ask for help

At Guts UK charity, we are passionate about helping you know your normal and knowing when to seek help. It almost goes without saying that it's so important to speak to a medical professional and let them know you're struggling. If you find yourself feeling suicidal and/or feel a danger to yourself or others, seek medical help immediately. There is medical help and advice available to you as well as friends, and those around you who care. The team at Guts UK are also on hand to listen. It will surprise you just how many people are going through similar challenges. They care and understand. Other support available can be found at the bottom of this page.

We asked our community for suggestions when it comes to managing and supporting your mental health. These are personal suggestions and may not work for everyone, but we hope at least one sparks some hope within.



2 Write down how you feel

Sometimes, writing it down can help you understand how you feel a little better. Give yourself permission to put pen to paper with whatever you're feeling. Transferring your thoughts from your brain physically onto paper can feel very therapeutic to some and can also help you to arrange your thoughts and see what you may be able to control. You may wish to start writing about your day. Some people find that getting creative and writing poems, songs, using journals and drawing can all help.

3 Take one day at a time

There is no rush or pressure to feel a certain way by a set time. However, planning with small, achievable tasks can give you things to look forward to. Having things to aim towards can often help motivate you, no matter how small.

“ I have gastroparesis (a condition causing stomach paralysis) and as I am fed via a feeding tube, I often have to adjust my thinking to help me get by. For example, I set broad intentions instead of specific goals. Recently, I went to Australia to spend time with loved ones. Even on my bad days, I found happiness chatting with friends. If I felt ready for other activities, I planned them, but didn't measure my success of the day on whether I did them or not. Setting intentions, not goals really helps me! ” - Sarah

Support: Accessing services

Many areas have self-referral services to IAPT (Improving Access to Psychology Services). Others may require a GP to refer you to the service. Local services can be found on the NHS website or by contacting your local GP.

Samaritans

If you need to talk to somebody now, call **116 123** or visit www.samaritans.org.

Whatever you may be feeling right now, please remember that you are not alone.



Sarah

James' Story

Diverticulitis



Diverticulosis (pockets that develop in the bowel) is a very common condition, and often nothing to worry about. These pockets can become infected (diverticulitis), which can cause complications.

This is James' experience.

“ I'm James, a driving assessor and dedicated scout leader for 30 years. I'm married with two grown-up daughters.

My symptoms started on a normal Monday morning in May. Walking into work, I got caught in the rain, and became really shivery. I thought it was because I was wet. The occupational therapist at work took one look at me and told me to go home and call the doctor. Instead, I went straight to bed.

When I finally called the doctors on Wednesday, they examined me and sent me straight to A&E with suspected appendicitis. I waited for hours. When they finally called my name, I stood up and blacked out, hitting the floor. I was wedged in a wheelchair and rushed for a CT scan.



A surgeon appeared and told me that I had a ruptured (torn) bowel caused by diverticulitis. He told me he would operate now, and I would need a stoma (an opening on the abdomen to divert the flow of poo into a bag). It was a huge shock. “Is it permanent?”, I asked. “Hopefully not, but you will have it for at least 12 months”, he replied.

I knew the recovery after surgery would take time, but I underestimated the fatigue. By the early evening, my eyes close and I'm gone for the rest of the night. My mental health suffered for some time as my dad had died six weeks before the emergency surgery.

It's almost two years on now, and I've chosen not to have a reversal. **I have become better at managing my stoma and wanted to avoid additional surgery.** Living with three women used to mean the bathroom was never free when I needed it, but now I need it a lot less, so I suppose that's a positive!

Few people know anything about diverticular disease, so charities like Guts UK are more important than ever, especially when the NHS is pushed on time to explain things to you.

I want to remind you that you know your body best. **If you don't feel right, go to the doctors. If I'd gone earlier, I might not have ended up with a stoma.**”

NEW Project!

Guts UK has launched a Priority Setting Partnership (PSP) into diverticulosis, diverticular disease and diverticulitis. With your help, we're deciding the top 10 research priorities for this underfunded area of health. **Discover more on page 19, and have your say.**

Our luminary London Marathon 2024 runners!



Guts UK Charity are proud to introduce you to three of the spectacular group who took on the iconic 26.2 mile route, The London Marathon 2024.

1

Em

“Running the London Marathon has always been on my bucket list and after applying 10 times, I finally got a place for 2024! I knew I wanted to raise money for a charity and after losing two friends to stomach cancer, and with my father-in-law currently receiving treatment for oesophageal cancer, I discovered Guts UK. It feels really good to be able to give something back. Knowing there’ll be others running on the day for Guts UK, and knowing the charity has been so supportive to me too, will carry me through the distance!”



2

Catherine

“With my 60th birthday fast approaching, I wanted to take on a challenge (though I’m very much in the tortoise, not the hare category!) Jane and Sue, two of my sisters-in-laws, died of bowel cancer and oesophageal cancer respectively. They were dynamic, inspiring and loving people. The London Marathon 2024 would have been Sue’s 65th birthday, and I feel she too would have applauded what Guts UK achieves. My background is in medical research, and I know how important earlier detection and better treatments are. Guts UK is the go-to charity for guts-related research and information, and you deserve support.”



3

Paul

“I am running the London Marathon in April 2024 in memory of my best friend, Wayne, who died suddenly from pancreatitis in April 2023. Wayne was a wonderful man, a father of four lovely young boys and married to Melissa. He inspired many people through his love of tennis, and his sudden loss left an irreplaceable gap in many people’s lives. Wayne and I had planned to do the London Marathon together. Running the marathon this year seems the appropriate occasion to run in Wayne’s memory, raising as much as we can for Guts UK in their fight against all digestive disorders.”



NEW

Liver Cancer Research

Our digestive systems have been underfunded for decades. Digestive conditions have been misunderstood for too long, and this is true for digestive cancers too.

Guts UK Charity has awarded Dr Daniel Patten at the University of Birmingham £14,715.35. He is exploring whether it's possible to improve liver cancer treatment by reprogramming the cells of blood vessels within liver tumours.



Why did you choose liver cancer research?

Liver cancers are highly resistant to conventional cancer treatments, and are often diagnosed at a later stage when it's harder for us to treat. It's therefore important that we develop new treatments for liver cancer, or ways to enhance how effective existing treatments are.

What do we already know?

One of the most promising developments has been immunotherapies. These work by using the patient's own immune system (the body's defence against disease/infection), to recognise and kill cancers. Their success has been dramatic in other cancers, but in liver cancer, most patients have failed to respond.

What are we yet to discover?

We don't understand why some cancers don't respond well to immunotherapies. Evidence points to the network of cells in and around the cancer, which work to protect it. If we understood how these cells are programmed, we could identify approaches to break the protective network and boost the effectiveness of cancer treatment.

What does this project aim to discover?

This research funded by Guts UK charity is focusing on the cells lining blood vessels within liver tumours. We suspect these cells might contribute to cancer growth and spreading 'through the blood'. If this is the case, we aim to explore how we might be able to block this process. We hope that this might yield a potential new treatment for liver cancer.

You make it possible

Hannah



Only around 15 in 100 people will survive for five years or more after diagnosis of liver cancer. Hannah's dad, Tony, passed away in 2022.

“ We'd supported Guts UK before Dad passed away, but when he was planning his funeral, he asked us to continue fundraising in his memory. We've raised over **£2,000** in memory of Dad. I even ran the London Marathon and plan on running the Great North Run this year too! ”

New research could give people like Tony a fighting chance. Donate today to make it possible.

Feeding Tube Awareness Week falls in early February each year. We raise vital awareness to help abolish the misconceptions when it comes to feeding tubes and why people may need them.

Sadly, there can also be judgement. People with digestive diseases may need a feeding tube and we want to help debunk some of these misconceptions and reduce stigmas.



Feeding Tube Awareness Week

I have gastroparesis (stomach paralysis) and at times I require tube feeding. When I still had my feeding tube in through my nose, I nipped to the supermarket to get a drink. I am not underweight, but I had lost a lot of weight and at the time was malnourished. A man who was very close by said "I can't believe she's left the house with that tube hanging out of her nose, she's clearly not anorexic." **I informed him that it's my stomach that's broken, not my ears.**

People ask me how long I've had cancer, to which I explain that there are a huge number of medical conditions which require nutritional support, not just cancer. - Rachael



Rachael

What does a feeding tube do?

Tube feeding (also known as enteral nutrition) is a way for your body to get the nutrition it needs. This is usually delivered by a liquid form of food being carried through a tube into the body. The food is then directed straight into a part of your digestive system (like your stomach, or small bowel), rather than via your mouth.

Why are feeding tubes used?

For some people, feeding tubes are lifesaving but they can also be a way of ensuring you don't become malnourished. The reason/s you may require a feeding tube are personal and specific to everyone. There are many conditions or reasons that may require a feeding tube to be used including achalasia, gastroparesis, cancer, an eating disorder, blockage in the bowel, severe diarrhoea, severe sickness, and more.

Can you live a normal life with a feeding tube?

Feeding tubes can often give people a better quality of life or reduce very severe symptoms that can be difficult to deal with in daily life. The impact of a feeding tube differs from person to person, with the reason of needing a feeding tube being a big factor towards this. Feeding tubes may be needed temporarily or permanently. **Not every illness is visible, and you don't have to be a certain size, or look a certain way to need a feeding tube.**

You have the power to help us empower more people to seek help sooner, and change attitudes. Donate £3 per month to Guts UK Charity today. Thank you.



Swimming sensation

Linda swam the 2023 Swim Serpentine for Guts UK Charity, as she has diverticular disease. Linda has supported us for many years, and is always thinking of new challenges and ways to support people just like her. **Over the years, her efforts haven't gone unnoticed by those around her, who've helped her raise over £400 in total for Guts UK!**

Badminton beauties

The badminton team at the University of Gloucestershire organised a charity badminton tournament to raise money for Guts UK (our first ever badminton fundraiser, how fantastic!) **One of their team-mates has been affected by pancreatitis, so they took to the courts to raise a phenomenal £1,131.** They've even inspired other University teams to do the same!

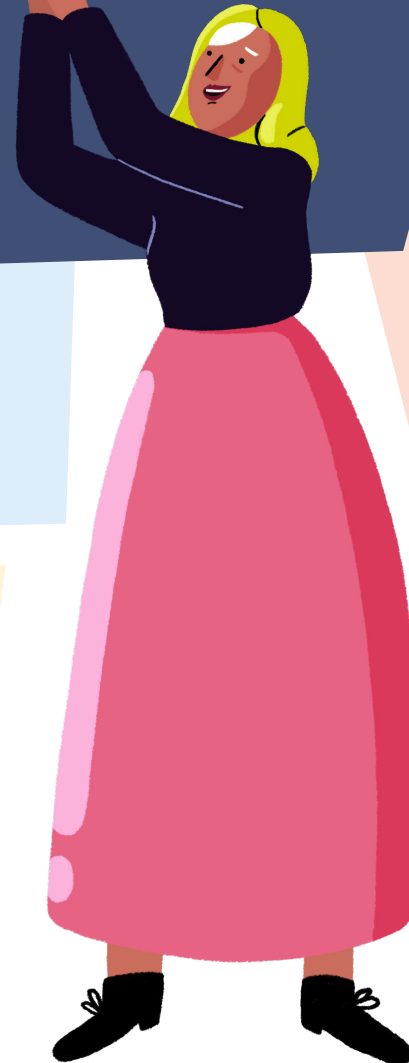


From running for the bus to running for our guts!

Hannah decided to do her first ever 10km run for Guts UK, despite not being much of a runner. Hannah told us how she had only ever run for the bus, but when her dad Jon passed away from pancreatitis, she knew she had to do something for other families. "My dad was a life-long believer in education, like Guts UK offers, so I'm proud to represent this charity." **She raised a remarkable £770.**

Thank you for helping the uk

get to grips with guts



Miles of smiles

Isla and Toby's dad, Dave, experienced a severe attack of pancreatitis, spending weeks in hospital throughout 2022 and 2023. In 2023, Isla and Toby decided they wanted to do something positive over the six-week Summer holiday. They decided to cover 100 miles each over the holidays, whether it meant walking, running, swimming or cycling. They were just as shocked as we were when they raised **£1,000...£800** over their original target!



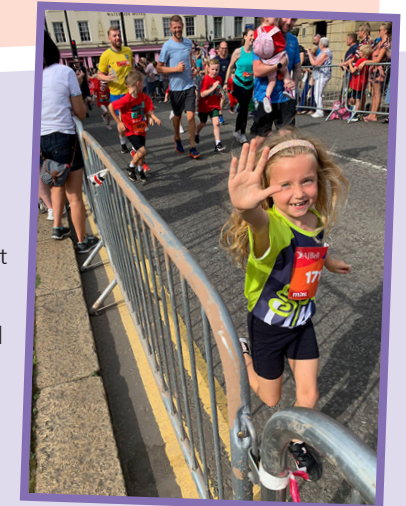
Lorna leaves her legacy

When Lorna's dad, Kenneth passed away from stomach cancer, Lorna knew she needed to do something in his name for others. Lorna told us how kind and generous Kenneth was, so she organised a special fundraising event in his memory. Her 'Charity Pamper Event' raised **over £800** in honour of Kenneth.



Big things come in small packages

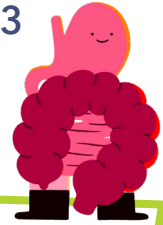
At just seven years old last year, Ariana took on the mini Great North Run for Guts UK, proof that the biggest of hearts (and guts) can sometimes come in the smallest of packages. Ariana and her family chose to fundraise for Guts UK after her aunty was diagnosed with stomach cancer. **Her 1.5km run raised over £3,000.** Ariana, you're exceptional. Thank you.



2023:
our most
impactful
year yet



It's a joy to share our 2023 achievements. None of which would be possible without your kindness.



We helped **2,446** people with their digestive symptoms or conditions in 2023.

We've answered more phone calls, emails and letters than ever before, helping people during their greatest times of need. Digestive symptoms and conditions can feel really isolating. You can feel like you're the only person in the world struggling. Until you find Guts UK.

Colin the Inflatable Colon met over **10,000** people!

Colin the Inflatable Colon had his busiest year to date, meeting people across the country. He also had a refresh, and now showcases more digestive conditions than ever before (poor Colin!)

By the end of 2023, we had invested over **£16,500,000** into medical research to date.

In 2023, we continued to fund research that we feel will have the greatest impact for those with digestive conditions now and in the future. It's all about earlier diagnoses, kinder treatments and ultimately, a cure.



Colin

Nearly **2,000,000** people visited our website, and we were seen **4,000,000** times on social media.

We are reaching those who need us most.

We appeared in over 60 news pieces, being seen over **100,000,000** times in the press.

Our name has also been seen more times than ever before.

We sent over **150,000** patient information leaflets to hospitals.

Never underestimate the power of an information leaflet. Whether you're having a procedure, receiving a life-changing diagnosis or undergoing investigations, knowledge is everything. We're proud to provide evidence-based information, backed by science and built around a sense of comfort and community.



Our powerful partnership with Imodium® raised over **£30,000**.

We were seen nation-wide in service stations, shops such as Boots, and magazines.



We helped over **50** people and their families tell their experiences of digestive conditions.

And in turn, helped people feel heard, understood and less alone. Giving people like you the platform to help others is the most rewarding part of our work.

We can feel the UK getting more and more to grips with their guts every day. But we still have a long way to go. With people like you by our side, we know we can make it.

By donating **£3** per month, you too can change and save lives. Thank you.



Mia's' Story

Living with coeliac disease during Ramadan



Ramadan is a religious festival observed by Muslims around the world. It is a month of fasting, prayer, reflection and community.

Mia is a Muslim with coeliac disease, she is 32 years old and lives in Birmingham. She put her symptoms such as stomach ache and diarrhoea off for months, until finally speaking to her doctor and receiving her diagnosis in 2021.

How did receiving a diagnosis make you feel?

“ I felt devastated. I kept thinking ‘but I’m healthy, I go to the gym five times a week, I’m about to get married!’ I couldn’t understand why it was happening to me. I felt like my whole life had been taken from me, especially being such a ‘foodie’. I wondered if God was punishing me and felt isolated. In the South Asian community, talking about your bowel habits is a taboo subject and this made me feel lonelier. ”

How does having coeliac disease affect your Ramadan?

“ For the first couple of years after my diagnosis, I didn’t fast. But now, because my small bowel was so damaged, I don’t keep fast (which you don’t have to do in Ramadan if you’re poorly). I put my focus into healing, staying grounded and humble. Ramadan is such a special time for Muslims around the world and fasting is just one part of it. I spoke to our local imam (the person leading worship in a mosque) and arranged to donate £5 daily (a Fidyah) to the less fortunate for Ramadan. Muslims who cannot fast for health reasons are encouraged do this. ”

What is your experience of attitudes towards your condition?

“ Other family members of mine have coeliac disease, but not many people speak about it in my community due to the stigma. ”



Why are you sharing your story today?

“ I had to rely a lot on Google for my symptoms and concerns. Knowing where to go for evidence-based, patient information which you can rely on is super important and I’m glad I found Guts UK. ”

I really want to encourage people not to shy away from talking about their symptoms and not to feel guilty if they celebrate Ramadan and can’t fast. Islam is so lenient and doesn’t ask you to punish yourself. If you are a Muslim, speak to your local imam or spiritual guide. You deserve to be heard and you deserve support. ”

Spotlight on our Poo-Torial



There's a taboo surrounding toilet habits, but your poo is an indication of your health. Checking your poo includes being aware of three things; the colour, the consistency and also how frequently you empty your bowels. This page is going to be focusing on how frequently you poo, but it's just as important to know what the colour and consistency of your poo means too.

You can find out more online: gutscharity.org.uk/poo-torial

(If you aren't online, details for different formats are at the bottom of this page.)

Frequency

Less than **once** a week

This can be associated with constipation. You should discuss this symptom with your doctor if you regularly don't open your bowels for a week or more.



Once or twice a week

This can be associated with constipation. If you have had a bout of diarrhoea, it can take your bowel a few days to get back into a normal routine. This can mean a short period of time of not emptying the bowel.

Three times a week to three times a day

This is considered normal. Bowel function can vary a lot between people, so the best option is to be aware of what your normal habit is.



Four to six times a day

This is often associated with diarrhoea symptoms when the poo is loose. It can also happen with severe constipation too, where the poo is hard and comes out in small, hard pieces.



More than seven times a day

This is usually associated with severe diarrhoea and should be investigated by your doctor.



Guts UK is proud to provide expert information on constipation and diarrhoea. Contact us today to request your free copy, or visit gutscharity.org.uk/poo-torial for more information on these symptoms. Don't hesitate to call, email or write to us so we can provide you with our Poo-Torial in a different format.

Mark's Story

Oesophageal cancer



“I'm Mark, I'm 61 years old and I live with my wife, Jules, in Yorkshire. We have two children, Alice and Tom. I'm a keen track motorcyclist and often go abroad with friends to bike. I used to do a lot of cycling too, and Jules and I often walk. We like to travel abroad too.”

When did your symptoms first begin and what were they?

“In October 2021, I was abroad on a motorbike trip, and I noticed quite a bad pain across my chest when I ate breakfast. I flew home as planned, but the day afterwards I felt weak and faint which is odd for me. When I went to the toilet, my poo was black. I thought, “That's not good” so I contacted my GP.”

When were you diagnosed?

“The colonoscopy (camera to look at the bowels) and endoscopy (camera to look at my oesophagus and so on) weren't pleasant, but I remember the gentleman saying, “There's a little bit of inflammation in your oesophagus, but nothing that's worrying me. I'll take some biopsies (samples of tissue)”. Five weeks later, the hospital called and said, “Can you come to see us tomorrow?” Jules and I knew something was off. My diagnosis of oesophageal cancer was a huge shock, we were in complete disbelief and kept asking, “Are you sure?”.”

Talk us through your treatment

“Although my cancer was found at a very early stage, they decided I needed chemotherapy and an operation to remove my oesophagus.”

How are you now?

“The hardest thing to get used to is figuring out what I can eat and drink with my new body. I'm two years on from my surgery, and though still recovering in many ways, I feel good in myself. The cancer hasn't stopped me from doing what I want to. If anything, it makes our family more determined to get on with life, as you never know what's around the corner. My story is one of hope. I had cancer, but I'm here to tell the tale.”

Mark was diagnosed with oesophageal cancer early. But unfortunately, 2 in 10 people are diagnosed at emergency settings, like A&E. By this stage, the cancer is often more advanced. Guts UK is funding research aiming to diagnose oesophageal cancer sooner, using just a bag of breath. If successful, this could be used in GP surgeries nationwide, saving lives by diagnosing oesophageal cancer sooner.

Donating £3 per month can save lives. Support Guts UK today.

Fundraising doesn't have to be physical!



We know that many of our community live with a digestive condition or symptoms that make it difficult to take on the more physical fundraising challenges such as running marathons and climbing mountains.

Meaningful make-up

Georgie and her mum Nikki make make-up meaningful every year, by supporting Guts UK with a make-up and beauty sale from their home. Both of Georgie's parents have experienced pancreatitis, and sadly her dad David passed away due to pancreatitis in 2019. Georgie works at a make-up department store and is always swamped with free beauty and make-up goodies. She chooses to put them to good use by organising a big beauty sale from her home, and a raffle. Nikki (and Dolly the dog) always help out too. When we discovered they raised **£9,000** this year, we were lost for words.



Georgie and Nikki



Reculver knitting

Reculver residents rejoice

The warm and wonderful community at the Reculver Qualified Residents Association didn't just take on one event for Guts UK, they spent two whole years fundraising. From 'Knit and Natter' groups to selling homemade sausage rolls, their efforts didn't go unnoticed. They raised **£3,860**. Wow. Those living with digestive conditions and symptoms are so grateful for your kindness.



Liv

Liv goes live from TikTok!

Liv has gastroparesis and is fed via a feeding tube that goes directly into her heart (Hickman line). **"My diagnosis process would've been a whole lot easier if there was more research and awareness into my condition. It's not okay that people spend years looking for answers. That's where Guts UK step in".** Liv took matters into her own hands, and did a Charity Livestream from TikTok from home, raising an incredible **£312!**

How you make it possible:

Pancreatitis



Molly

In December 2023, some of our phenomenal fundraisers got to see first-hand how their brilliant fundraising success is changing the future.

Molly and her friend Annabelle visited Liverpool to visit our pancreatitis researcher, Dr Arjun Kattakayam and his team. Earlier in the year, Annabelle and friends cycled 50 miles for Guts UK, raising over **£10,000**. Between 2022 and 2023, Molly spent a total of around four months in hospital with severe acute pancreatitis.

“It felt like someone had put a knife into my stomach. I was told my pancreas was dying and was sent to intensive care. My lungs were failing, and I was put in an induced coma. I’ve spent months and months recovering.”

- Molly



Why are Guts UK funding pancreatitis research?

In the UK, 30,000 people each year are affected by acute pancreatitis. Of those who become severely unwell with severe acute pancreatitis, requiring intensive care, sadly 1 in 4 will die. There is no effective treatment. There is no cure. We are dedicated to changing that.

What do we already know about pancreatitis? ?

Part of the function of the pancreas is to make powerful digestive enzymes that help to break down the food and drink that we consume. But in pancreatitis, these enzymes attack the pancreas itself, and can cause life-changing and life-threatening damage.

It has been noted that distant organ damage can occur, without any evidence of near-by damage to the pancreas.

What are you hoping to discover, Dr Kattakayam?

“We hope to assess whether protecting the mitochondria (cell powerhouses) outside of the pancreas cells (within other cells and organs), reduces the severity of the condition and prevents worsening damage to the pancreas. We will observe the changes happening within these cells. The better we can understand this process, the better we can determine whether medication that would protect the mitochondria would be effective, and potentially life-saving.”

- Dr Kattakayam



“The 50-mile bike ride that some of our loved ones and I took on for Guts UK gave us all a focus and something to work towards. We were so determined to raise £10,000 but couldn’t believe it when we did. We can’t go through this ever again, and wouldn’t want anyone to feel how we did.”

Annabelle and the kindness of communities like yours, we can’t thank you enough for taking us one giant leap closer to getting to grips with guts and saving lives. Thank you.

Primary Sclerosing Cholangitis (PSC)

and Matthew's Story

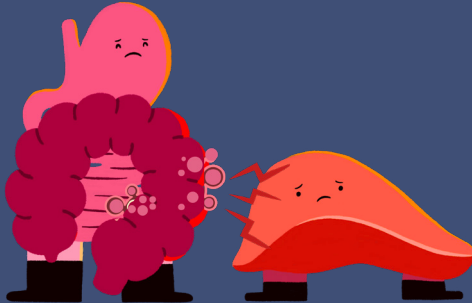


Primary Sclerosing Cholangitis (PSC) is a rare, immune related disease that affects the bile ducts and liver. It affects approximately 7 people for every 100,000 living in the UK. In PSC, bile cannot flow out of the liver properly.

Meet Matthew, who was diagnosed with PSC in 2013. He also was diagnosed with ulcerative colitis, a form of Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) in 2006. Approximately 7 out of 10 people living with PSC will develop IBD at some point, but Matthew's diagnoses demonstrate the opposite of this.

“Out of all my conditions, PSC impacts me the least. Besides fatigue, it's more the mental impact. If I start to experience itching, this is usually a sign my PSC is aggravated. You're always thinking, "Is it my liver?" and it's like a grey cloud always looming over. I almost expect the worst and think backwards from that, and this really helps me. I often think, "My body is trying to kill me", then I realise that my body is doing what it needs to do to protect me.”

Deciding the future of: diverticulosis, diverticular disease and diverticulitis research



Recently, Guts UK charity took on Priority Setting Partnerships (PSPs) into pancreatitis and Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS). PSPs help to decide the top ten research priorities for a health condition. This process brings patients, carers and healthcare professionals together with one equal voice. As a group, they will decide the top ten research priorities for diverticulosis, diverticular disease and diverticulitis.

An agreed direction for research has never before been reached for diverticulosis, diverticular disease and diverticulitis. It's time to change that.

Discover how you can have your say at:

gutscharity.org.uk/Diverticular-Top-10

or call us on 020 7486 0341

The charity for the digestive system

Request your free expert

PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET today



- Achalasia
- Acute Pancreatitis
- Adhesions
- Alcohol & The Digestive System
- Anal Fistulas
- Ascites
- Barrett's Oesophagus
- Belching Disorders **NEW**
- Bloating & Distension **UPDATED**
- Bile Acid Malabsorption
- Biliary Sphincter Disorders (Sphincter of Oddi Dysfunction)
- Bowel Cancer
- Chronic Intestinal Pseudo-Obstruction
- Chronic Pancreatitis
- Coeliac Disease **UPDATED**
- Constipation **UPDATED**
- Crohn's Disease **UPDATED**
- Diarrhoea
- Diverticular Disease
- Dumping Syndrome
- Eosinophilic Diseases
- Faecal Incontinence
- Fibre
- Functional Dyspepsia
- Faecal Microbiota Transplantation
- Food Intolerance Testing
- Gallstones
- Gastritis
- Gastroparesis
- Gilbert's Syndrome
- Gut Microbiome (Poo Testing)
- Healthy Eating & The Digestive System
- Heartburn & Reflux
- Helicobacter Pylori
- Indigestion
- Introduction to Gut Bacteria
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)
- Liver Cancer
- Microscopic Colitis
- Oesophageal Cancer
- Our Personal Plumbing System
- Painkillers causing Constipation & Digestive Symptoms
- Pancreatic Exocrine Insufficiency (Pancreatic Enzyme Replacement Therapy)
- Pelvic Radiation Disease
- Perianal Disease
- Polyps in the Bowel
- Primary Sclerosing Cholangitis
- Rumination Syndrome
- Stomach Cancer
- The Role of Gut Bacteria in Health & Disease
- Ulcerative Colitis
- The Mediterranean Diet & Gut Health
- Wind

Much more information on conditions, health and lifestyle tips can all be found at

gutscharity.org.uk

You can request your free of charge hardcopy in the post by emailing info@gutscharity.org.uk or calling 0207 486 0341.

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Donation Form **I'm getting to grips with guts!**

Please return this form to:
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Please call me on to take my details

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We would love to be able to send you the latest research updates, fundraising activities and the latest news on the impact your support is having on our work to end the suffering for the millions affected by digestive diseases. Let us know below how you prefer to be contacted.

Yes, I would like to be updated by email

Yes, I would like to be updated by phone

Yes, I would like to be updated by text message

No thanks, I do not want to be updated by post

To make any changes to your preferences, email **info@gutscharity.org.uk** or call us on **020 7486 0341**

Please don't forget to turn your £10.00 donation into £12.50 at no extra cost to you. Turn over to add Gift Aid if applicable to you.

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