

# Gut-Skin Axis Evidence Ladder

Use this one-page guide when a skin-health headline starts sounding like a gut-microbiome certainty.

## 1. Strongest Use: Mechanism Interpretation

- The gut-skin axis is a real framework linking gut microbes, barrier function, immune signaling, and skin inflammation.
- This is useful for understanding *why* inflammatory skin conditions may have a whole-body context.

## 2. Middle Layer: Condition Associations

- Acne, atopic dermatitis, psoriasis, and rosacea all appear in gut-skin reviews.
- Association does not prove that gut dysbiosis is the main driver in any single patient.

## 3. Cautious Clinical Lane: Probiotics

- The most defensible probiotic discussion is around atopic dermatitis.
- Even there, the evidence varies by strain, study design, age group, and outcome.
- A probiotic result in one condition or population does not transfer automatically to another.

## 4. Standard-Care Reality Check

- Acne still relies on established dermatology treatments.
- Eczema still needs standard skin care and anti-inflammatory treatment.
- Psoriasis remains a multisystem inflammatory disease needing clinician-guided care.
- The gut-skin axis is an adjunctive interpretation tool, not a replacement plan.

## 5. Better Reader Questions

Ask:

1. Is this claim based on a mechanism review, an association, or a trial?
2. Which condition is being discussed?
3. Was a specific strain studied?
4. What treatment still matters even if the gut-skin axis is relevant?