

Gut-Spine Claims Evidence Checklist

Use this before acting on a headline, product page, stool-test result, supplement claim, or article that says gut health explains back pain.

Claim

What exactly is being promised?

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Evidence Level

Check the strongest evidence the claim actually uses.

Evidence type	Present?	What it can mean	What it cannot prove by itself
Mechanism idea		A pathway is biologically plausible	That it explains your pain
Animal or cell study		A pathway may be worth studying	That it works in humans
Observational human study		Two patterns appear together	That one caused the other
Genetic association or Mendelian randomization		A research target may be plausible	Which product or diet to use
Clinical trial in similar people		An intervention may help a defined group	That it fits every back-pain pattern
Guideline recommendation		A professional group reviewed clinical evidence	That it replaces individual care

Safety Filter

Do not route back pain to gut fixes first if any of these are present:

- new bowel or bladder dysfunction
- progressive weakness or numbness
- fever or infection signs
- major trauma
- cancer history
- unexplained weight loss
- severe, new, changing, or progressive pain

Gut-Pattern Filter

Gut routing is more relevant when back discomfort travels with:

- repeated abdominal pain

- constipation, diarrhea, urgency, or stool-form changes
- bloating or pressure
- food tolerance changes
- stress-sensitive gut symptoms
- symptoms that match an existing IBS or gut-brain pattern

Decision

- This is mainly a back-pain evaluation question:
- This is mainly a gut-symptom sorting question:
- This is mainly a pain-amplification or gut-brain question:
- This is mainly a marketing claim I should not act on yet: