



Reclaiming Childhood

How One Mom Reversed Her Daughter's
Juvenile Arthritis—and How You Can Too



A HOPEFUL
ROADMAP
FOR FAMILIES
NEEDING
ANSWERS

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Preface

As a parent, receiving a diagnosis of juvenile idiopathic arthritis (JIA) for your child can feel overwhelming and even hopeless. It's hard not to feel lost as you navigate the healthcare system, treatments, and the immense amount of information available. When my own child was diagnosed, I found myself in the same place- scared, confused, and unsure of how to help. But through research, persistence, and connecting with others who shared my passion for holistic healing, I discovered there is another way. This book is a culmination of that journey, and it's written for you-the parent who refuses to accept that their child must live with this diagnosis forever.

The objective of this book is to empower you with the knowledge and tools needed to take control of your child's health, reverse juvenile arthritis, and restore well-being to your family. My mission is simple: to share the approach that helped me successfully navigate this path and see my child

completely heal from arthritis. Through detoxification, immune system modulation, and a deep understanding of how our body's natural systems work, I believe healing is not only possible but inevitable.

I know firsthand how isolating this journey can feel. That's why I've also included testimonials from families who have walked this path with me:

“I'm so, so happy I found Starr! Her group and all her knowledge helped us tremendously and got us out of a black hole! I truly saw that arthritis is curable, and it's not something to despair about. It is in your power to heal your child!”

“So happy to have such a supportive community and individualized plan from Starr to help our daughter navigate her arthritis. We are all healthier because of it! Couldn't have navigated this without the Blueprint.”

“Our JIA daughter has found tremendous healing since joining the JIA Blueprint. From one-on-one coaching, access to experts in the field, and an incredibly supportive community, we found everything we needed to avoid immunosuppressant drugs and get her back to being a kid again. We are so grateful to have found Starr and the JIA Blueprint!”

Throughout this book, you will find the key strategies and methods that helped these families, and mine, reclaim health and hope. You are not alone, and it is possible to move beyond JIA.

I want to take a moment to express my deep gratitude and acknowledgment to the medical professionals whose work has inspired and shaped much of the methodology you will find in this book. Dr. Natasha Campbell-McBride, a pioneer in gut health and healing, has been instrumental in showing

the power of food and the microbiome in restoring the body. Dr. David Bilstrom's integrative approach to autoimmune disease continues to inform my work in understanding how to modulate the immune system. Becky Plotner's contributions to the world of holistic health have touched countless lives. Becky's deep understanding of healing through nutrition and the gut has helped so many, and her legacy lives on in the people she has impacted, including myself. Although Becky has since passed, her work continues to light the way for those seeking true healing. I am deeply thankful for her dedication to this field.

I also want to express heartfelt gratitude to Monica Corrado, who has been a mentor, teacher, and dear friend. Monica's wisdom and guidance in traditional food preparation have profoundly influenced my work and the way I help families heal. Her dedication to nourishing families and teaching the healing power of food has been an immense blessing in my life and the lives of many others.

Finally, I dedicate this book to Serafina, my beloved daughter, who had JIA and inspired me to help so many moms. It was through her journey and resilience that I found my life's purpose. Serafina led me down this path, and her courage continues to light the way for all the families I've had the privilege to support.

This book is a guide, a resource, and most of all, a testament to the fact that healing is not only possible- it is within your reach. I invite you to read on with an open heart and a hopeful spirit. Together, we can reverse your child's juvenile arthritis and create a healthier, happier future for your family.

With love and hope,

Starr Penn, CGC, FNCP

Chapter 1: Understanding Juvenile Arthritis

When I First Heard the Words "Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis," it felt like time stopped. I know I'm not alone in feeling the sheer weight of those words- arthritis, idiopathic, juvenile... it's like a language we were never meant to understand, let alone deal with as parents. The thought of my child dealing with something like arthritis, something I always associated with older adults, was heart-wrenching. But here we are. And if you're reading this, chances are you've felt that same confusion, that same worry, and that same overwhelming need to find answers.

Here's the thing: I want to tell you that this diagnosis doesn't have to define your child's future. I'm living proof that JIA doesn't have to be a life sentence of medication, doctor's visits, and limitations. Yes, the road to healing is hard, but it's absolutely possible. This book, and everything I've learned on this journey, is about understanding that JIA isn't the end of the road- it's just a signal that something in

the body is off, and our job is to find out what that is.

What Exactly Is Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis?

Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis (JIA) is often defined as an autoimmune condition where the immune system attacks the joints, causing pain, inflammation, and stiffness in children under the age of 16. But let's break that down a little more because these medical terms can make things sound scarier than they are. Essentially, what's happening is that your child's body is experiencing inflammation and that inflammation is showing up in their joints.

There are different types of JIA, which can add another layer of confusion for parents:

Oligoarticular JIA: Affects four or fewer joints, often the larger ones like the knees and ankles.

Polyarticular JIA: Involves five or more joints and can affect both large and small joints, like the hands or wrists.

Systemic JIA: Can affect the entire body, sometimes presenting with symptoms like fevers,

rashes, and inflammation in organs-not just the joints.

Enthesitis-related JIA: Affects the places where tendons attach to bones, often in the hips, knees, and feet.

All these forms can feel overwhelming because each child's experience with JIA can be so different. And that's part of what makes JIA such a puzzle. While the medical community often focuses on the specific type of arthritis your child has, I believe the real focus should be on what's causing that inflammation in the first place. That's the key to unlocking healing.

The Real Story Behind the Immune System and JIA

Conventional medicine will tell you that JIA is an autoimmune disease, meaning the immune system has somehow gone haywire and is attacking healthy tissues by mistake. That's the story we're all told. But through my research and the guidance of experts like Dr. Natasha Campbell-McBride, Dr. David Bilstrom, and the late Becky Plotner, I've come to see it differently.

Dr. Natasha Campbell-McBride has done groundbreaking work in gut health and its connection to the immune system. What she discovered-and what I've experienced firsthand-is that the immune system isn't "mistakenly" attacking the body. It's doing its job by responding to something it perceives as a threat. That threat often comes from toxins, pathogens, or even undigested food particles that leak through a compromised gut lining, a condition known as leaky gut. So, the inflammation we see in the joints? That's a symptom of a deeper issue in the body.

Becky Plotner, a true champion of gut health and the power of nutrition, demonstrated how fermented foods and probiotics help rebuild the gut and support the immune system naturally. Although Becky is no longer with us, her legacy continues through the thousands of families who've found healing through her work. I am deeply grateful for her contribution to the field of health, and this book would not exist without the foundational work she laid out.

How Conventional Medicine Approaches JIA

When you receive a JIA diagnosis, the immediate response from most doctors is to manage the symptoms, typically through medication. Commonly prescribed are NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs), corticosteroids, and stronger treatments like biologics or DMARDs (disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs). While these medications can help in the short term by reducing inflammation, they don't address what's causing that inflammation in the first place.

I've spoken to so many parents who feel trapped in this cycle-giving their child medication after medication without seeing any true, lasting improvement. And let me be clear: I'm not saying medication doesn't have a place in this journey. There are moments when it's necessary, especially when pain levels are high and the body is under stress. But what I've learned is that these medications aren't a cure; they're a temporary fix. If we want to truly heal JIA, we have to dig deeper and understand what's going on in the body beyond just the joints.

The Power of Healing

What I'm offering in this book is a shift in perspective. Instead of seeing JIA as an incurable disease, let's look at it as a signal. It's your child's body telling you that something isn't right, that there's an imbalance that needs to be addressed. And when we give the body the right tools-when we focus on detoxifying, healing the gut, and supporting the immune system-it has an incredible capacity to heal.

Becky Plotner's work with fermented foods and probiotics is a perfect example of how powerful food can be in this healing journey. When we introduce beneficial bacteria into the gut, we're helping the body rebuild from the inside out. It's not an overnight process, but it's one that leads to true, lasting healing.

Note: While this book specifically addresses juvenile arthritis, our understanding of autoimmune diseases is that they share common roots. The principles and methods outlined here can be applied to any

autoimmune, neurological, behavioral, or hormonal issue with similar results.

Important: The information in this book is based on research and personal experience. I am not a medical doctor, and this book is not intended as medical advice. Please consult a healthcare professional before beginning any nutritional or healing protocol.

Chapter 2: Introduction to The JIA Blueprint

A New Perspective on Juvenile Arthritis

When my child was first diagnosed with juvenile idiopathic arthritis (JIA), I was devastated. The doctors told me that this autoimmune condition had no cure and that managing symptoms with medications, including immunosuppressants, would be the best we could hope for. But deep down, I knew this wasn't the full story. I refused to believe that my child would be bound to a lifetime of medications and pain.

Through relentless research and trial and error, I discovered a different path-one that wasn't focused on simply managing symptoms but rather addressing the root causes of the disease. This journey led me to connect with groundbreaking experts in holistic health, including Dr. Natasha Campbell-McBride. They helped me understand that autoimmune diseases like JIA are often a response to toxins in the body rather than the body attacking itself. With their

guidance and a deep dive into nutrition, detoxification, and immune modulation, I was able to help my child heal-and now, I want to share this powerful approach with you.

The purpose of this book is to give you the knowledge, tools, and confidence to take control of your child's health. Juvenile arthritis can be reversed, and your family can move beyond this diagnosis to experience true, lasting health.

The Philosophy Behind the JIA Blueprint

At its core, the JIA Blueprint is based on three critical principles: the S.H.E.R. Method, Detoxification, and Immune System Modulation. These principles are designed to help your child's body return to a state of balance and health by healing the gut, supporting the detox organs, and helping the immune system function as it was meant to.

Let's explore each principle in detail.

The S.H.E.R. Method

The first pillar of the JIA Blueprint is the S.H.E.R. method, which stands for **Seal, Heal, Rebuild, and Eliminate**. This method is based heavily on the research and clinical experience of Dr. Natasha Campbell-McBride, whose pioneering work on gut health has revealed the deep connection between the gut and the immune system.

In her book *Gut and Psychology Syndrome (GAPS)*, Dr. Campbell-McBride explains that when the gut lining is damaged-whether from poor diet, toxins, or infections-it becomes porous, allowing undigested food particles and toxins to leak into the bloodstream. This is known as "leaky gut." The body responds to these foreign particles with inflammation, which can manifest as autoimmune conditions like JIA. The S.H.E.R. method focuses on sealing the gut lining, healing damaged tissues, rebuilding the digestive system, and eliminating toxins.

In the JIA Blueprint, this means incorporating foods that support gut health, like homemade meat stock,

which provides the building blocks for gut repair. We avoid inflammatory foods and introduce nutrient-dense options that nourish the body.

Detoxification

Detoxifying the body-especially the liver, kidneys, and lymphatic system-is a cornerstone of healing. When we take an integrative look into autoimmune disease, there is an emphasis which is often overlooked in more conventional approaches-on a high toxic load in the body. These toxins are overwhelming the detox organs and can contribute to the onset of autoimmune conditions. He has shown that when these organs are supported through nutrition and lifestyle changes, the body's ability to handle toxins improves, leading to reduced inflammation and symptom relief.

In JIA, toxins from processed foods, environmental pollutants, and even medications can overload a child's detox organs, making it harder for the body to function properly. By incorporating regular detox strategies-such as eating organic, pesticide-free

foods, drinking structured water, and supporting liver function with gentle detox methods like herbs and castor oil pack—we help the body eliminate these harmful substances. In doing so, we lower the toxic burden and give the immune system the breathing room it needs to heal.

In this chapter, I'll also introduce you to Becky Plotner's research and her passion for fermentation and gut healing. Becky Plotner was a strong advocate for using fermented foods to introduce beneficial bacteria into the gut, and her work in this area is a key part of the detoxification process in the JIA Blueprint. Fermented vegetables like sauerkraut and kimchi, as well as cultured dairy products, provide a natural source of probiotics that help reseed the gut with healthy bacteria, which are essential for detox and immune balance.

Becky's passing was a great loss to the health community, but her legacy lives on in the many lives she touched. Her contributions continue to guide us in understanding the power of real food and the role of fermentation in healing.

Immune System Modulation

Autoimmune diseases like JIA are often misunderstood. Conventional medicine teaches that the immune system is mistakenly attacking the body's own tissues, leading to inflammation and damage. But the truth is that the immune system isn't "mistaken"- it's reacting to something foreign in the body. In fact, according to the latest research on the study of autoimmune diseases- it has been shown that by modulating the immune system, rather than suppressing it-we can help the body recognize and eliminate the true source of the problem: toxins, infections, and other foreign invaders.

Modulating the immune system requires giving the body what it needs to heal: proper nutrition, good gut health, and reduced stress. In the JIA Blueprint, we use nutrient-dense foods, including high-quality animal fats and proteins, to provide the building blocks the immune system needs to function properly. We also incorporate stress-reducing practices, like EFT (Emotional Freedom Technique), as well as other vagus nerve calibrating

techniques which have been shown to lower cortisol levels and improve overall immune health.

Why the Mainstream Approach Isn't Enough

The traditional approach to juvenile arthritis focuses on symptom management through medications, including immunosuppressants and biologics. These medications work by reducing inflammation and suppressing the immune system, but they don't address the root causes of the disease. Over time, they can lead to dependency, side effects, and even further damage to the immune system and gut.

The JIA Blueprint takes a different approach. Rather than suppressing the immune system, we focus on modulating it-helping the body heal by addressing underlying causes like gut health, toxicity, and nutrient deficiencies. When we support the body in this way, we allow the immune system to recalibrate and function as it should.

Success Stories from the JIA Blueprint

These principles have changed the lives of many families, including mine. Here are some stories from families who have walked this path:

“Our daughter has found tremendous healing since joining the JIA Blueprint. From one-on-one coaching to access to experts in the field, we found everything we needed to avoid immunosuppressant drugs and get her back to being a kid again.”

“This program gave our family the tools we needed to heal our daughter’s JIA and countless other health issues. Everybody is healthier now, and my daughter has been free of JIA for two years.”

Moving Forward with Confidence

You don’t have to settle for a life of symptom management and medications for your child. The JIA Blueprint offers a clear path to true healing by addressing the root causes of juvenile arthritis. As we move through the following chapters, you’ll learn more about each pillar of the Blueprint and how to apply these strategies to your child’s life.

In the next chapter, we'll dive into the S.H.E.R. method, the cornerstone of this healing process.

* The principles and methods outlined in *The JLA Blueprint* are informed by and draw heavily from the foundational work of the GAPS™ protocol developed by Dr. Natasha Campbell-McBride.

While the core concepts are rooted in this framework, the approach presented here is adapted specifically for children, particularly those experiencing juvenile arthritis and related conditions. Each child is unique, and implementation is individualized based on the child's response, needs, and circumstances.

As such, progression through dietary stages, protocols, and interventions may vary and may not follow the exact sequence outlined in the traditional GAPS program.

This material is intended for educational purposes only and is not a substitute for professional medical

advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Caregivers are encouraged to work alongside qualified healthcare providers when making decisions regarding their child's health.

Chapter 3: The S.H.E.R. Method

As we step into the heart of The JIA Blueprint, I want you to pause for a second. Take a breath. If you've been carrying fear, exhaustion, or that quiet panic of "What if this never gets better?" you're not alone. Every parent who comes into this work has had that moment. And I want you to hear this clearly right here at the beginning of this chapter: healing is possible. Not theoretical healing. Not 'someday' healing. Real, measurable, body-level healing that you can see in your child's energy, mood, movement, labs, and life.

The S.H.E.R. Method is the framework that guides everything we do. It stands for:

Seal. Heal. Eliminate. Rebuild.

These four principles work together to calm the immune system, reverse inflammation, repair damaged terrain, and bring the body back into balance. And the most important thing to understand is this:

S.H.E.R. is not a rigid checklist. It is a responsive framework.

Your child's body is not a machine. It is a living, adapting, communicating system. Some days it needs more nourishment. Some days it needs detox support. Some days it needs rest and safety more than anything else. Our job is not to force the body into a strict timeline. Our job is to learn its language, respond skillfully, and support it through each phase of healing.

Think of this method like a dance. You're moving with your child's body, not dragging it. And when you move with the body instead of pushing against it, healing happens faster and with far less stress.

Let's break down each step in real detail, and I'm going to show you exactly how we apply it inside the JIA Blueprint so you feel supported, not confused or overwhelmed.

1. Seal: The Foundation of Healing

If you remember nothing else from this chapter, remember this:

You cannot calm an inflamed immune system while the gut barrier is open.

The gut is the body's main border control. It decides what gets into the bloodstream and what stays out. When that lining is damaged by processed foods, environmental toxins, chronic stress, medications, infections, mold exposure, candida, or a combination of these, the gut becomes porous.

That means things that were never meant to enter the bloodstream leak through, including:

undigested food particles

bacterial toxins

yeast byproducts

mold toxins

inflammatory proteins

The immune system sees these as invaders and responds exactly how it was designed to: it attacks. But because the exposure is constant, the immune system stays stuck in a loop. Chronic activation equals chronic inflammation. And in kids with JIA, that inflammation often targets the joints.

What “sealing the gut” really means

Sealing is not a vague concept. In the Blueprint, it means we do three very specific things:

Remove the foods and exposures that keep the gut barrier inflamed.

Flood the body with gut-repairing nourishment.

Calm the immune system enough that the body can stop attacking itself.

How we do Seal in the JIA Blueprint

Here’s what this looks like in real life inside the program:

A. We simplify food, not complicate it.

Parents are always worried there will be a 200-item

food list and their child won't eat. That is not how we do this. We start with a very clear "yes list" and a very clear "not right now list."

We focus on foods that naturally repair the lining and reduce immune activation. We don't chase perfection. We chase consistency.

B. We build the gut barrier daily.

You'll hear us say this all the time in the Blueprint: "You don't seal the gut once. You seal it every day."

That means the core meals are built around:

deeply nourishing proteins

healing fats

mineral-rich broths and soups

cooked, gentle vegetables

foods that are easy to digest and absorb

Because digestion has to be supported before the immune system can calm down.

C. We support the nervous system.

This is the piece most people miss. A child can eat the “perfect” food, but if their nervous system is in fight-or-flight, the gut will not seal well.

So in the Blueprint, Seal also includes:

regulating sleep

reducing sensory overload

creating safety around food

lowering daily stress

gentle routines that help the body feel stable

Example: What Seal can look like in week one

Let’s say your child is flaring and you feel stuck. A typical first step inside the Blueprint might be:

breakfast becomes a soup or broth-based meal

lunch becomes a simple protein plus cooked veggie

snacks become body-supportive instead of gut-irritating

we remove the biggest triggers that are keeping inflammation high

we keep meals repetitive so the body can relax and repair

Not forever. Just long enough to rebuild the barrier.

2. Heal: Nourishing the Body Back to Health

Once we begin sealing the gut, we move into healing. And I want to be very clear about something here:

Healing is not only about what you take out. It is about what you put in.

This phase focuses on rebuilding tissue, calming inflammation, and giving the immune system the raw materials it needs to regulate properly.

What “healing” means in the body

Healing includes:

repairing intestinal cells

rebuilding connective tissue

strengthening detox pathways

restoring mineral stores

balancing immune signaling

supporting mitochondria (energy factories)

stabilizing blood sugar

feeding beneficial microbes

How we heal in the JIA Blueprint

This is where the Blueprint becomes a real guide, not just theory.

A. We focus on nutrient density.

Kids with inflamed bodies are often nutrient depleted even if they are eating “healthy.” The body burns through nutrients faster during chronic inflammation.

So, we prioritize:

foods that are rich in minerals and amino acids

natural sources of collagen and gelatin

fats that stabilize hormones and reduce inflammation

easily absorbed vitamins and cofactors

B. We heal digestion first, then expand food.

A lot of kids with JIA have weak digestion from years of inflammation and meds. If a child can't digest a food well, even a healthy food can become an irritant.

So we start gentle, then build.

Think: **repair first, variety later.**

C. We address the “terrain.”

This is huge. The terrain is the internal environment of the body. Mold toxicity, yeast overgrowth, chronic infections, mineral imbalances, and stress all create a terrain where inflammation thrives.

In Heal, we support the terrain through:

food

targeted supplementation when needed

lifestyle changes

lab-guided healing plans

coaching support so parents are not guessing

Example: A healing win we see all the time

A child comes in eating five foods total.

Week one, we don't fight that. We make those five foods healing.

Week two, digestion calms, pain starts dropping, appetite shifts.

Week three, their willingness expands, and suddenly they are trying foods they have refused for years.

Parents are always blown away. But the truth is simple:

**their body was inflamed and dysregulated.
when the terrain changes, behavior changes.**

3. Eliminate: Detoxifying the Body

Detox is not a scary word in the Blueprint. It is a necessary body function that has been overwhelmed.

Your child is exposed to toxins every day. That includes:

mold and mycotoxins

yeast byproducts

environmental chemicals

food additives

heavy metals

medication residues

inflammatory waste from chronic illness

If detox pathways are stuck, toxins recirculate, and inflammation stays high.

What detox does in JIA

Detox reduces the load on the immune system. The immune system is not meant to be a garbage collector. When detox pathways fail, the immune system takes over, and it becomes hyperactive.

That shows up as:

joint flares

rashes

mood swings

fatigue

brain fog

new sensitivities

pain spikes during healing

So if your child flares while addressing candida, mold, or infections, that does not mean you are doing it wrong.

It usually means that **the body is pushing toxins**

out faster than it can clear them. We slow down, support detox, and the flare calms.

How we do Eliminate in the JIA Blueprint

Detox is never forced. It is supported.

A. We open the drainage pathways first.

Before we do anything aggressive, we make sure the body can eliminate through:

bowel movements

urine

sweat

lymph

skin

breath

If those pathways are blocked, detox becomes a traffic jam.

B. We support liver and bile flow.

The liver clears toxins. Bile carries them out. If bile is thick or stagnant, toxins recirculate.

So, Eliminate includes:

bile-supportive foods

hydration strategies

minerals that help detox enzymes work

gentle liver and gallbladder support

coaching to adjust based on symptoms

C. We use pacing.

This is one of the biggest differences between the Blueprint and most protocols.

We do not push detox at a speed your child's body cannot handle.

We use the body's signals:

If pain spikes, we slow.

If sleep drops, we reassess.

If bowel movements shift, we adjust support.

Example: What Eliminate Could Look Like

Let's say your child flares after starting antifungals.

Inside the Blueprint, we might:

increase bowel support

add more mineral-rich hydration

support lymph flow through gentle movement

adjust detox timing

temporarily reduce the antifungal load

stabilize again, then move forward

The goal is never suffering.

The goal is steady progress.

4. Rebuild: Restoring Health and Strength

Rebuild is the part that feels like coming home. Once the gut is sealing, the body is nourished, and toxin load is lowering, the body becomes ready to restore strength, resilience, and function.

What rebuilding includes

Rebuild is about:

restoring muscle and joint stability

strengthening bones and connective tissue

re-expanding food variety safely

rebuilding immune tolerance

returning energy, mood, and confidence

getting your child back into life

How we do Rebuild in the JIA Blueprint

A. We reintroduce foods slowly and strategically.

Not because we are scared of food.

Because we respect the immune system's timeline.

We reintroduce based on:

digestion

inflammation markers

symptom response

lab trends

appetite and cravings

mood and sleep stability

B. We build strength from the inside out.

Kids with JIA often lose muscle tone because they avoid movement from pain.

As pain drops, we rebuild with:

gentle strengthening

mobility work

supportive movement routines

confidence and encouragement

We address movement like nourishment too.

C. We teach families how to stay well.

This is the long-term win.

Rebuild means your family understands:

your child's unique triggers

early warning signs

what supports are non-negotiable

how to course-correct quickly

how to live a normal life without fear

Bringing It All Together

The S.H.E.R. Method is not one phase after another like a staircase.

It is more like a circle that keeps tightening and strengthening over time.

On any given week, we might be:

sealing and healing through food

supporting detox at a safe pace

rebuilding strength and expanding variety
all at once, in the right balance for your child.

That is why this works.

Because it follows biology, not a trend.

Because it listens to the body, not a rigid rulebook.

And because you are not doing it alone.

In the next chapter, we are going to go deeper into Eliminate and detoxification. I will walk you through exactly how to support your child's detox organs, what signs to look for, and how to create an environment that makes healing feel safer and easier for their body.

You're doing something powerful here.
And your child's body wants to heal.

Let's keep going.

Chapter 4: Detoxification & Rebuilding

Detoxification is more than just clearing toxins from the body; it's about giving your child the space to heal. Think of the body as having a constant to-do list-when it's overloaded with toxins, it can't focus on healing the gut, reducing inflammation, or calming the immune system. This is why detox is essential in *The JIA Blueprint*. It's the first step toward getting the body back to a place where it can heal, and it's not something we take lightly. Detox sets the foundation for everything else we're going to do.

When your child's body is trying to clear toxins, their immune system gets to work. **Dr. Natasha Campbell-McBride** teaches us that flares are often the body's way of saying it's fighting something off. It's a cry for help, signaling that we need to support what the body is trying to do-get rid of the toxins. This is why, when we see a flare, our first response is always **detox, detox, detox**. We're not just calming symptoms; we're actively helping the immune system

do its job. By eliminating toxins, we lower inflammation, calm the immune response, and allow the body to focus on healing the gut and the joints.

The Importance of Detox: Supporting the Immune System

One of the main reasons that detoxification is so important is that it directly supports the immune system. When the body is overloaded with toxins, the immune system goes into overdrive, constantly trying to protect the body from the harmful effects of these toxins. This constant state of activation leads to inflammation, and for kids with juvenile arthritis, this manifests as joint pain, swelling, and other symptoms.

Detoxing helps the immune system calm down and return to a more balanced state. By eliminating toxins, we're giving the immune system a break from its constant battle. As **Monica Corrado**, a traditional foods expert, reminds us, "The liver is the body's main detoxifier, and supporting the liver's function is essential for calming the immune system

and allowing the body to heal.” Detoxing is not just about removing external toxins but also about supporting the organs that do the heavy lifting, like the liver, kidneys, and colon.

Detox Pathways: How the Body Clears Toxins

Your child’s body has several detox pathways that work together to remove waste and toxins. These are the lungs, kidneys, lymphatic system, colon, and skin. Each plays a critical role in clearing toxins, and by supporting them, we’re helping the body function more effectively.

Lungs:

Every breath your child takes expels carbon dioxide and other waste products. Encouraging **deep, intentional breathing** supports the detox process by increasing oxygen intake and helping the lungs clear toxins more efficiently. Whether through play, breathwork or simply getting outside, keeping the lungs active is key. Deep breathing also calms the nervous system, which is vital for reducing stress and inflammation.

Urinary Tract:

The kidneys filter toxins from the blood, removing them through urine. Hydration is critical for this detox pathway. Drinking **room-temperature water**, lemon water, or **herbal teas** ensures that the kidneys can flush out toxins efficiently. The more hydrated your child is, the better their kidneys will function, helping maintain a balanced pH in the body and supporting overall detoxification.

Lymphatic System:

Unlike the circulatory system, which has the heart to pump blood, the lymphatic system relies on movement to circulate lymph fluid and clear waste. **Rebounding**, gentle stretching, and even light play all help move the lymph and clear toxins. This system is crucial for immune function, and keeping it moving is essential for healing. **Monica Corrado** often talks about the importance of daily movement to keep the lymphatic system flowing and detoxing properly.

Colon:

The colon eliminates solid waste, and healthy bowel movements are crucial for this detox pathway.

Supporting the colon through a **whole foods diet** and **hydrating enemas** (with baking soda and high-mineral salt) ensures regular elimination. A sluggish colon can allow toxins to be reabsorbed into the body, so it's important to support its function.

Skin:

As the body's largest detox organ, the skin releases toxins through sweat. Encouraging your child to sweat through play or exercise is a great way to support detoxification. **Epsom salt baths, baking soda baths, and ACV baths** also help the skin release toxins while soothing and calming the body.

Detox Methods: Epsom Salt, Baking Soda, and Apple Cider Vinegar Baths

Now let's talk about some specific detox tools that we use in **The JIA Blueprint** to support the body's natural detox pathways.

Epsom Salt Baths:

Epsom salts are rich in **magnesium**, which helps relax muscles, reduce tension, and support

detoxification. Magnesium is one of those minerals that many kids with JIA are deficient in, and soaking in an Epsom salt bath is a great way to replenish those stores. Plus, it's deeply calming and can help reduce cortisol levels, which is important for gut healing.

How to do it: Add 1-2 cups of Epsom salts to a warm bath and let your child soak for 20-30 minutes. For added relaxation, you can include a few drops of lavender essential oil.

Baking Soda Baths:

Baking soda is alkaline, meaning it helps balance the body's pH levels. A baking soda bath is perfect for neutralizing toxins, soothing skin irritations, and helping the body detoxify. It's especially helpful for calming inflammation and drawing toxins out of the skin.

How to do it: Add 1/2 to 1 cup of baking soda to a warm bath. Let your child soak for 20 minutes, allowing the baking soda to cleanse the skin and balance their body's pH levels.

Apple Cider Vinegar Baths:

Apple cider vinegar (ACV) is packed with nutrients and enzymes that help detoxify and balance the skin's pH. It's gentle but effective at drawing out toxins while leaving the skin feeling soft and smooth. ACV is also great for relieving itchiness or skin irritation.

How to do it: Add 1-2 cups of organic apple cider vinegar to the bath. Let your child soak for about 20 minutes, giving their body a gentle but effective detox.

How We Support the Liver in The JIA Blueprint

When it comes to reversing inflammation in children with JIA, liver support isn't optional - it is essential. The liver is responsible for filtering toxins, processing metabolic waste, cleansing the blood, and producing the bile that carries toxins out of the body. When the liver is overwhelmed, you see it show up as joint pain, skin issues, mood swings, fatigue, and flare-ups during die-off or detox phases.

Inside The JIA Blueprint, we support liver function naturally and gently using real food. These tools work beautifully for kids because they are easy to digest, nutrient dense, and highly therapeutic without being harsh or aggressive.

Below are three of the core healing foods we use - along with exactly how to make them and why each ingredient makes such a big difference.

1. Beet Kvass

Beet kvass is one of the most powerful liver-supporting drinks we use - and also one of the simplest.

Why Beet Kvass Helps the Liver

Stimulates bile production so the liver can bind and eliminate toxins more effectively.

Supports methylation, which helps the body clear histamines, hormones, mold toxins, and heavy metals.

Loaded with minerals like potassium, magnesium, and iron, which the liver needs for detoxification.

Rich in probiotics that repopulate the gut, reduce inflammation, and improve digestion.

Alkalinizes the blood, which naturally reduces inflammation throughout the body.

How to Make Beet Kvass

Ingredients:

8oz organic beets (peeled and chopped into cubes)

1 tablespoon sea salt

Filtered water

Optional: a slice of ginger, lemon peel, or a clove of garlic

Instructions:

Place chopped beets into a wide-mouth quart jar, filling it halfway.

Add sea salt.

Pour filtered water over the beets, leaving 1 inch of space at the top.

Seal the jar tightly.

Leave on the counter to ferment for 3-5 days until the liquid becomes deep red and slightly tangy.

Strain, refrigerate, and enjoy 1-3 ounces at a time.

When the jar is almost empty, refill with water and ferment again-this second batch is often even smoother.

2. GAPS Shakes

GAPS shakes are one of the most healing, nutrient-dense tools we use. They nourish the liver, support the gut lining, restore minerals, and stabilize blood sugar-making them a perfect daily or weekly addition for children detoxing from mold, candida, heavy metals, infections, or inflammation.

Exact GAPS Shake Recipe

1 carrot

2-3 green apples *or* equal amount fresh pineapple

1 stick of celery

A small wedge of beet root

A small piece of cabbage

Optional: lemon or leafy greens for taste

1-2 **raw eggs** (from a trusted local source)

4-5 tablespoons **homemade crème fraîche**

All vegetables and fruits are juiced first, then blended with the raw eggs and crème fraîche.

Why Each Ingredient Helps Detoxification

Carrot

Rich in beta-carotene -> supports liver enzyme function

Helps bind bile -> removes toxins through the stool

Stabilizes blood sugar -> reduces inflammatory spikes

Green Apple or Pineapple

Gentle source of glucose for energy during detox

High in antioxidants -> reduces inflammation

Pineapple contains bromelain -> helps break down proteins and ease digestion

Stimulates bile production

Celery

Very hydrating

Supports lymphatic flow

High in mineral salts that feed the adrenals and nervous system

Beet Root (small piece)

Powerful liver mover

Stimulates bile

Supports phase 2 liver detox pathways

Improves circulation and oxygenation

Cabbage

Contains sulfur compounds that support liver detox

Helps repair the gut lining

High in vitamin C and glutamine -> supports tissue healing

Lemon or Greens (optional)

Lemon helps flush the liver and gallbladder

Greens provide chlorophyll which binds toxins

Both alkalinize the body

Raw Eggs

Extremely nutrient dense

Rich in choline -> a top nutrient for detox, liver repair, and bile flow

Contains sulfur -> needed for liver detox pathways

Supports hormone balance and brain health

Crème Fraîche

Source of healing fats that reduce inflammation

Supports bile production

Stabilizes blood sugar

Eases absorption of fat-soluble vitamins (A, D, E, K)

Very soothing to the nervous system

Sub butter, ghee, coconut oil if full dairy is not yet tolerated

3. Cabbage Tonic

Cabbage tonic is another fermented powerhouse that focuses more on cleansing the intestines, reducing inflammation, and restoring healthy gut bacteria.

Why Cabbage Tonic Helps Detox

High in sulfur compounds that support liver detox pathways

Cleanses the colon-reducing the recirculation of toxins

Soothes the digestive lining

Provides probiotics that reduce inflammation at the gut level

Especially helpful for constipation, bloating, or kids who have trouble digesting fats

How to Make Cabbage Tonic

Ingredients:

8oz sliced organic cabbage

1 tablespoon sea salt

Filtered water

Instructions:

Place chopped cabbage into a quart jar.

Add 1 tbsp sea salt.

Fill jar with filtered water, leaving 1 inch at the top.

Cap tightly.

Ferment on the counter for 2-4 days.

Strain and refrigerate.

Start with 1 teaspoon and slowly increase to 1-2 tablespoons.

Bringing It Together

These foods may seem simple, but they are some of the most powerful tools we use inside The JIA Blueprint. They work with the body-not against it-by gently supporting the liver, calming inflammation, opening detox pathways, and restoring microbial balance.

Parents are always amazed at how quickly joint stiffness decreases, flares settle, and digestion improves once the liver begins to move toxins efficiently.

Healing is not about doing the most or doing it fast-it's about giving the body what it needs to do what it already knows how to do.

Detox: The Body's Natural Healer

Detox is the first step in healing, and it's something we return to again and again in *The JIA Blueprint*. Every time we see a flare, our first step is to support the body with detox. The immune system is often trying to fight off toxins, and by giving it the help it needs, we can calm inflammation and move toward healing. Detox is not just a phase in the healing journey-it's an ongoing practice.

Moving Forward: The GAPS Protocol and Lasting Healing

Now that we've laid the foundation with detox, it's time to move into the next phase of healing: the **GAPS protocol**. In the next chapter, we'll dive deep into how the GAPS diet works and why it's such an essential tool in healing the gut, reversing inflammation, and restoring balance to the immune system. This is the core of *The JIA Blueprint*, and it's what will bring lasting healing to your child.

Chapter 5: Dense Nutrition & The GAPS Protocol

If you're new to GAPS or just hearing about it for the first time, I want you to take a deep breath. I know the idea of healing your child's joints through food can feel intimidating. Most moms hear the word "diet" and immediately think of stress, rules, and restriction-especially when you're already juggling pain, inflammation, picky eating, and emotional exhaustion.

But here's the truth I want you to hold onto:

GAPS is not a diet.

It is a therapeutic, deeply nourishing healing protocol designed to restore the gut-which is the command center of the immune system.

When the gut is inflamed or leaky, the immune system becomes overwhelmed and confused. For a child with juvenile arthritis, this confusion doesn't stay in the gut-it spreads. It shows up as joint pain, swelling, stiffness, fatigue, emotional swings, and food reactions. But when we heal the gut, we calm

the immune system. And when the immune system calms, the inflammation that's been driving their disease finally loses its fuel source.

Inside The JIA Blueprint, we use GAPS in a very personalized, gentle way. No child is pushed faster than their body is ready for. And no parent is ever left guessing whether something is working or not. You'll always know what's happening in the body, why it's happening, and what the next step is.

This chapter will walk you through the entire process in a way that feels empowering instead of overwhelming.

Before We Begin: Why Full GAPS Is Usually the Starting Point

There's a common misconception about GAPS - that every child starts on the Introduction Diet. That's actually not true at all.

Most kids start on Full GAPS.

We only begin on Intro in specific situations, such as:

- extreme digestive inflammation
- sudden regression
- intense pain flares
- sensory overwhelm
- severe constipation or diarrhea
- increasing food reactions
- a child refusing proteins or fats
- chronic bloating or low appetite
- long-standing gut damage

But picky eaters? Kids with joint pain? Kids who are inflamed but still eating?

Most start on Full GAPS because it:

Offers more variety

Stabilizes blood sugar

Reduces overwhelm

Provides emotional safety around food

Allows us to “nudge” the gut toward healing without shocking it

Then, if needed, we move into Intro at the right moment -strategically, not randomly.

How You Know When Your Child Might Need GAPS Intro

Sometimes the body tells us it needs the deeper, more intensive repair of the Introduction Diet.

You'll see this when your child has:

- persistent inflammation
- chronic digestive pain
- regression in appetite
- severe bloating or gas
- low appetite paired with flares
- refusal of proteins
- increasing food reactions
- chronic constipation or diarrhea
- ongoing joint swelling
- difficulty digesting fats

Inside The JIA Blueprint, we look at symptoms, eating patterns, behavior, sleep, and digestion to determine where your child should start and when they should transition.

The Six Stages of the GAPS Introduction Diet

(with real-world guidance you can actually use)

We're going to walk through each stage slowly, clearly, and compassionately - because I want you to feel like someone is holding your hand through the process.

Intro is powerful, but it must be done at the body's pace.

Stage 1: Meat Stock + Soft Veggies

Stage 1 is the most restorative part of GAPS. Think of it like giving the gut a warm blanket and a chance to exhale.

The foods here are gentle, nourishing, and incredibly healing. Everything is designed to soothe inflammation and seal the gut lining.

We focus on:

- meat stock
- soft, well-cooked vegetables (peeled and deseeded)

- ginger tea
- small amounts of fermented vegetable juice

Meat stock is the star here because it is rich in collagen, gelatin, amino acids, and minerals-nutrients that act like “spackle” for the tiny tears in the gut lining.

You’ll know your child is ready to move on when stools begin to settle, bloating decreases, appetite steadies, and inflammation starts to calm.

If things worsen significantly (beyond normal die-off), it’s simply a sign the gut needs more time here.

Stage 2: Adding Raw Egg Yolks + Stews

Stage 2 is where we increase nutrient density dramatically. Egg yolks offer choline, cholesterol, DHA, and fat-soluble vitamins - all crucial for healing, detox, hormone balance, and brain function.

At this stage, we add:

- raw egg yolks whisked into warm stock

- stews and casseroles
- ghee (if tolerated- more on dairy later)

This stage strengthens the gut lining and helps the liver detoxify more efficiently.

When to move forward:

Your child tolerates egg yolks, stools remain predictable, inflammation continues decreasing, and energy improves.

Stage 3: Avocado, Pancakes, and More Ferments

Think of this stage as the first moment when meals start feeling more like “normal food” again. Kids usually get excited here.

We introduce:

- mashed avocado
- GAPS pancakes (nut butter, eggs, squash - if tolerated)
- squash varieties
- sauerkraut and fermented vegetables
- additional cooked vegetables

Healthy fats from avocado help regulate inflammation. Ferments repopulate the gut with the good bacteria needed for long-term healing. And pancakes? They bring joy and texture back into the eating experience, which is so important emotionally.

Move forward when:

Ferments are tolerated, fats aren't causing bloating, stools stay steady, and your child is emotionally calm around food.

Stage 4: Introducing Cultured Dairy

(But only after 6 full weeks of removing ALL dairy)

This is a big moment for most families, and we take it seriously.

We ALWAYS remove dairy for a minimum of six weeks before reintroducing. The gut needs time to calm down without the inflammatory proteins in dairy.

When we reintroduce, we do it in a very specific order:

The Dairy Introduction Protocol:

ghee

butter

whey + crème fraîche

24-hour yogurt

kefir

We watch closely for 72 hours each time.

Signs we can move forward:

- no bloating
- no joint pain
- no rash
- no mucus
- no sleep issues

If any of those appear, we pause and step back. It's not a failure - it's information.

Stage 5: Cooked Apples + Expanded Veggies

This stage brings in gentle fibers to feed the microbiome and bind toxins.

We add:

- stewed, peeled, deseeded apples
- expanded cooked vegetable options
- small amounts of honey (if desired)

Cooked apples are rich in pectin, which helps beneficial bacteria grow and prepares the gut for raw foods later.

Move forward when:

Digestion is calm, stools are well-formed, and fruits don't trigger gas or bloating.

Stage 6: Raw Foods Return

Raw foods are wonderful - but only when the gut is ready for them. If introduced too early, they can inflame the gut.

Here we add:

- raw fruits
- raw vegetables
- salads
- smoothies

Raw foods provide enzymes, antioxidants, and natural detox support.

The gut is ready when:

Fats are digested well, there is no undigested food in stool, sleep is stable, mood is steady, and inflammation is quiet.

If raw foods cause any issues, we simply go back to Stage 5 and try again later.

Signs That Healing Is Working

Healing shows up in small, quiet ways first. Parents often miss the early signals, but they matter so much.

You'll start noticing things like:

- morning stiffness easing

- pain episodes shorter
- better appetite
- more stable mood
- improved sleep
- more predictable stools
- fewer food reactions
- increased energy
- improved color and vibrancy

These are the signs your child's body is moving in the right direction.

When We Pause or Slow Down

You never move forward when your child is experiencing:

- joint swelling
- increasing pain
- new food reactions
- behavior regression
- sleep disruption
- rashes or eczema
- diarrhea or constipation
- anxiety or irritability
- signs of detox overwhelm

These aren't failures-they're signals. And we always respond to the body, not the calendar.

Customizing GAPS for JIA

This is where The JIA Blueprint becomes incredibly powerful. The GAPS principles give us the structure, but **your child's body gives us the instructions.**

Some children move quickly. Others need more time in certain stages. Some need to wait longer before dairy. Others require digestive enzymes or probiotics sooner. And many picky eaters need to begin with Full GAPS for emotional safety before ever moving into Intro.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach. There is only *your* child, *your* family, and what works for *your* real life.

The Core 5 Supplements of The JIA Blueprint

To support the gut, immune system, and detox pathways, we use five foundational supplements. These are chosen because kids with JIA share

predictable biological patterns: poor absorption, microbial imbalance, nutrient depletion, mitochondrial stress, slow detox pathways, and a damaged gut lining.

Here they are, written in a clear, simple way-but still inside a warm, readable narrative.

1. Probiotic - Restoring Microbial Balance

A disrupted microbiome is one of the biggest drivers of JIA. A high-quality probiotic helps repopulate good bacteria, reduce inflammation, crowd out yeast and pathogens, and support digestion and mood.

GAPS teaches that the gut lining cannot heal until beneficial bacteria rebuild and protect it. For most JIA kids, this is the single most important supplement.

2. Cod Liver Oil - Natural Anti-Inflammatory Support

Cod liver oil delivers natural vitamin A, natural vitamin D, EPA, and DHA-all critical for immune regulation, gut healing, and brain support. Children with gut damage can't convert nutrients well, so cod

liver oil gives them these nutrients in their active forms.

It's one of the fastest-working supplements for reducing inflammation and calming joint pain.

3. Digestive Enzymes - Helping the Body Absorb Nutrition

Most JIA kids struggle with digestion. Digestive enzymes help break down protein, fats, and fiber, which reduces bloating, gas, and discomfort.

They also prevent undigested food from feeding harmful microbes - accelerating overall healing.

4. Essential Fatty Acids (Omega-3 & 6) - Rebuilding and Regulating

EFA's help rebuild the gut lining, soothe inflammation, regulate immune signaling, support detox, stabilize mood, and nourish the nervous system.

Children with chronic inflammation almost always have an omega imbalance. Correcting that is crucial for healing.

5. A Bioavailable Multivitamin - Filling Nutritional Gaps

Most kids with JIA are nutrient depleted from chronic inflammation and poor absorption. A high-quality, bioavailable multivitamin restores:

- minerals
- trace elements
- B-vitamins
- antioxidants
- fat-soluble vitamins
- detox cofactors

The body cannot repair itself without nutrients-and this ensures it has everything it needs.

Understanding Glyphosate and Why It Matters

This is something every parent needs to understand: glyphosate is everywhere, and it's deeply damaging to the gut and joints.

Glyphosate mimics glycine—an amino acid the body uses to create collagen. When glyphosate replaces glycine, it weakens tissues, disrupts collagen, destroys the gut lining, and fuels inflammation.

This is why joint pain increases when glyphosate exposure is high.

Here's how we reduce exposure:

- choose organic produce whenever possible
- soak produce in baking soda water
- ferment vegetables to help break down toxins
- cook vegetables (especially in meat stock)
- use traditional preparation methods (soaking, fermenting, simmering)

These steps matter. Every single one of them.

Healing from the Ground Up

Between GAPS, detox, targeted supplements, and reducing toxin exposure, we are rebuilding your child's health from the inside out. This isn't rigid or aggressive, but it's also not hands-off. It's attentive. It's responsive. It's guided.

And that's why it works.

In The JIA Blueprint, we adjust daily. We look at your child's symptoms, behavior, digestion, mood, and appetite to determine the right pace. You're never alone, and you're never guessing.

Because this isn't about following a protocol. It's about following your *child*.

Next Step: The Third Prong of Healing - Immune System Modulation

Now that you understand detox and dense nutrition, we're ready to move into the third prong of healing: **immune system modulation.**

Come with me as I share with you how the groundbreaking science of epigenetics has completely turned on its head, what was previously believed about autoimmunity- that its irreversible. Let's go!

Chapter 6: Epigenetics & Functional Medicine

If there is one thing I want you to hold in your heart as you read this chapter, it's this:

Your child is not broken. Their genes are not broken. Their immune system is not broken.
Autoimmunity is not destiny.

It is a pattern - and patterns can be rewritten.

This is the foundation of everything we do inside The JIA Blueprint. And it's why children who have struggled for years can suddenly begin to shift in ways their parents never imagined possible.

To understand this fully, we're going to step into the world of epigenetics - one of the most important scientific discoveries of the last fifty years, yet the least explained to parents. Once you understand what epigenetics truly tells us, you'll see your child's diagnosis in a completely different way.

Let's walk through this slowly, together.

This is the chapter that changes everything.

What Epigenetics Really Means - And Why It Changes the Whole Story

Most parents have been told variations of:

“Autoimmune disease runs in your family.”

“It’s genetic.”

“She was born with it.”

“It’s just how her immune system is.”

“There’s nothing you can do except manage it.”

And none of that is actually true.

Epigenetics (from the Greek “epi,” meaning “above”) is the study of how the environment influences gene expression.

Think of it this way:

Genes are the instructions...

but the environment decides which instructions get used.

This discovery flipped medicine on its head.

For decades, researchers believed genes were fixed - like a blueprint set in stone. But starting in the 1990s, researchers uncovered something stunning:

**Genes respond to the world around them.
They respond to food, toxins, stress, sleep,
microbiome health, inflammation - and healing.**

Your child's DNA isn't the problem.

The environment is.

And that is why autoimmune disease is reversible.

What Epigenetics Shows Us About Autoimmunity

Chronic illness - whether JIA, eczema, asthma, psoriasis, Crohn's, or allergies - isn't caused by a "broken" immune system.

It's caused by an overwhelmed immune system.

Something in the child's world sends repeated distress signals:

gut inflammation

fungal overgrowth

mold exposure

glyphosate

nutrient deficiencies

chronic infections

processed foods

stress hormones

Over time, the immune system learns to stay “on.”
It gets stuck in protection mode.

In epigenetic terms:

certain immune genes get switched on and stay on.

The miracle of this science is:

Genes that turn on can turn off again.

Inflammation that becomes chronic can become temporary.

The immune system can relearn balance.

This isn't theory.

This is documented, studied, repeatable science.

Your Child Can Reset Their Immune System - Permanently

One of the most profound findings in epigenetics is this:

When a child's environment changes, their immune expression changes.

When we:

heal the gut

clear toxins

rebalance microbes

restore nutrient density

support detox pathways

stabilize the nervous system

calm inflammation

The immune system begins responding differently.

Inflammatory genes turn off.

Regulatory genes turn on.

The body stops attacking.

Tolerance returns.

Balance restores.

And here's the part that still gives me chills:

If we help a child modulate their immune system early - ideally before age 19 - this healthy immune pattern can “lock in” for life.

This is something Dr. David Bilstrom has spoken about for years, emphasizing that the immune system has a developmental window. When we bring it back into balance during childhood or adolescence, the body adopts that balance as its new baseline.

This means:

autoimmune tendencies can dissolve

inflammatory patterns can unwind

immune confusion can reset

normal immune function can return

This isn't managing disease.

This is reprogramming the immune system.

And because epigenetic changes can be inherited-

Your child's future children, and even their grandchildren, may inherit a healthier immune blueprint.

You're not just helping your child heal.
You are breaking a generational cycle.

Epigenetics Gives Us Something Medicine Never Did: HOPE

Before epigenetics, medicine could only offer symptom control.

Now we understand:

why autoimmune conditions happen

how inflammation becomes chronic

how genes respond to environment

how to reverse the triggers

how to rebuild immune tolerance

how to stabilize immunity long-term

Epigenetics tells us autoimmune disease is NOT a life sentence.

It's an environmental pattern.

And environmental patterns can change.

Inside The JIA Blueprint, every single thing we do sends new signals to the immune system.

We're not just feeding different foods.

We're changing the environment their genes read.

We are teaching the immune system something new.

And every time we-

seal the gut

support detox

restore minerals

lower toxins

reduce infections

calm inflammation

rebuild microbial balance

The body receives a message:

“You are safe now. You don’t need to be inflamed anymore.”

And the immune system listens.

It always listens.

Functional Medicine: How We Listen to the Body and Respond to What It Needs

Inside The JIA Blueprint, our use of Functional Medicine is not supplement stacking or chasing symptoms. It’s a way of *listening*.

Functional Medicine helps us understand:

what is overwhelming the immune system

what pathways are stuck

what infections the body is fighting

what toxins are burdening the liver

what the gut is struggling with

what the nervous system needs

what the terrain looks like

We're not forcing the body.
We're supporting it.

We're not shutting down the immune system.
We're teaching it how to function correctly again.

Functional Medicine allows us to interpret
symptoms instead of fearing them:

“That flare is detox - here's how to support it.”
“That rash is the gut clearing something.”
“That fatigue is the immune system recalibrating.”

Instead of panicking, we understand.
Instead of fighting the body, we partner with it.

And because our approach is grounded in
epigenetics, every intervention is designed to shift
the signals the body is reading.

This is why our results are so profound - and so
lasting

**Why We Sometimes Use Testing -and Why It's
Not Always Required**

Now let's talk about something moms ask all the time:

“Do we have to run tests?”

The honest answer?

Not always.

The work we do inside The JIA Blueprint is powerful enough to address the very issues the tests reveal - because gut healing, detox, microbiome rebalance, and inflammation reduction naturally correct the imbalances those tests identify.

But tests can give us valuable insights.

They can show us *why* your child's immune system is overwhelmed.

They can help us personalize the pace.

They can reveal hidden infections or toxins.

And more importantly -

they help parents understand their child's body better.

So while they aren't mandatory, they can be deeply helpful.

Inside The JIA Blueprint, we run all tests **in-house**:

- We order them
- We teach you how to collect them
- We interpret them WITH you
- We explain every marker in simple, loving, non-medical language
- We apply the results directly to your child's plan

You are *never* left staring at confusing numbers alone.

Let's talk about the three tests families typically choose - and why they matter.

1. The GI-MAP: Your Child's Gut "Snapshot"

A lot of parents wonder:

"Do we really need a stool test?"

And I always tell them this:

If autoimmunity started in the gut, doesn't it make sense to see what's actually happening inside the gut?

The GI-MAP shows us:

Candida

fungal overgrowth

bad bacteria

good bacteria

parasites

viruses

leaky gut markers

digestive enzyme levels

inflammation inside the gut

how stressed the immune system is

It gives us a detailed snapshot of what your child's immune system has been battling behind the scenes.

This test often gives parents a huge sense of relief - not because it shows something "bad," but because it finally explains their child's symptoms.

It turns mystery into clarity

2. Candida Antibody Panel: How Hard Is the Immune System Fighting?

This is a blood test that answers a simple but important question:

“How long has your child’s immune system been battling Candida?”

It looks at:

IgA (gut-level irritation)

IgG (long-term exposure)

IgM (recent or active infection)

This test helps us understand the timeline.

And sometimes the timeline explains everything.

For example:

A child with chronic bloating, irritability, eczema, and joint flares often has elevated IgG - meaning Candida has been stressing their immune system for years.

Knowing this helps us support detox more gently and build safety first.

3. The Mycotoxin Test: When Mold Is the Hidden Trigger

Moms are always surprised by this test.

They'll say:

“Could mold really cause all this?”

Yes - and most people never know they've been exposed.

Mycotoxins (mold toxins) can:

inflamm the entire body

suppress detox pathways

worsen Candida

trigger autoimmunity

cause neurological symptoms

disrupt sleep

lower immunity

This test gives us answers to questions parents have been asking for years.

Not everyone needs this test.

But when a child is flaring with no clear reason, it can be the missing puzzle piece.

Testing Is Not About Fear - It's About Clarity

Whether a family chooses testing or not, healing still happens.

The protocol still works.

The gut still heals.

The immune system still rebalances.

Testing simply gives us more clarity.

It helps us personalize.

It helps us go deeper when needed.

But it is never required for healing.

Inside The JIA Blueprint, YOU always get to choose.

Bringing It All Together: You Are Rewriting Your Child's Immune Story

Your child's immune system is not stuck.

It is not doomed.

It is not broken.

It is responding to the environment it has been in -
and the moment we begin changing that
environment, the immune system begins changing
too.

Epigenetics shows us healing is possible.

Testing gives us clarity when needed.

Functional Medicine guides us.

Nutrition and detox provide the raw materials.

And your daily commitment drives the
transformation.

You are not just reducing inflammation.

You are re-teaching your child's genes how to
function.

You are changing the story for generations to come.

This is the power inside your hands.

This is the hope epigenetics gives us.

This is why The JIA Blueprint works.

And now that you understand the science behind reversing inflammation at its root, we're ready to move into one of the biggest obstacles most families face:

Picky eating.

Because none of this beautiful healing can happen unless we can nourish the body with the foods that actually heal it.

In the next chapter, you'll learn:

why picky eating is rarely behavioral

how gut imbalance drives food aversions

how inflammation affects taste and texture

and how we gently, consistently help children expand their diets - often in just weeks

You're doing something extraordinary.

Let's keep going.

Chapter 7: Overcoming Picky Eating-Strategies for a Healing, Nourishing Diet

If your child has an autoimmune condition, chances are they've also developed picky eating habits. But don't worry -this isn't about your child being difficult or stubborn. The root cause of picky eating in kids with autoimmune issues often lies in the gut microbiome. When the gut is out of balance and ruled by bad bacteria, those "bad players" need sugar to survive and thrive. This leads to intense cravings for sugary, starchy foods and resistance to healthier options.

It's important to remember that it's not your child who is picky-it's the gut-brain connection calling the shots. Once we turn around the microbiome and heal the gut, picky eating often disappears entirely. My clients are always shocked because they thought their child would always be picky. But the truth is, when we address the underlying issues in the gut, those picky tendencies fade away.

Understanding the Gut-Brain Axis: Why the Gut Drives Picky Eating

So, how does the gut influence what your child wants to eat? It all comes down to the gut-brain axis, the communication system between the gut and the brain. The gut is often referred to as the "second brain" because it plays a huge role in regulating everything from digestion to mood and even cravings.

Here's how it works:

The gut is home to trillions of bacteria, both good and bad. In a healthy gut, the good bacteria keep the bad ones in check. But in children with autoimmune conditions, the bad bacteria often take over. These bacteria thrive on sugar and processed foods, so they send signals to the brain, essentially saying, "Feed me more sugar!"

These signals are sent via the vagus nerve, which runs from the gut to the brain. The brain listens to these signals and starts craving the foods that the bad bacteria want, not what's actually healthy for your child.

The result? Your child might start refusing vegetables, protein, or nutrient-dense foods because the bad bacteria are in control, driving those intense cravings for sugar and carbs.

The good news is that once we start healing the gut and rebalancing the microbiome, those cravings change. The brain-gut communication improves, and your child's natural cravings shift to healthier options. This is why, in **The JIA Blueprint**, we focus on healing the gut as the first step in overcoming picky eating. As the microbiome rebalances, the brain stops getting signals to crave junk food, and your child naturally becomes more open to new, nourishing foods.

Step 1: Healing the Gut to Address Picky Eating

The first and most important step in overcoming picky eating is healing the gut. As we've discussed in previous chapters, healing the gut is essential for immune system modulation, reducing inflammation, and supporting your child's overall health. But it's also key to shifting their eating habits.

Here's how gut healing helps:

Eliminating bad bacteria: By cutting off the bad bacteria's food supply (typically sugar and processed foods) and introducing gut-healing foods like meat stock and fermented vegetables, we start to rebalance the microbiome.

Repairing the gut lining: Once the gut lining starts to heal, your child's body will become more efficient at absorbing nutrients, and their brain will get clearer signals about what foods are needed for healing.

Reducing inflammation: As inflammation in the gut decreases, so do the sensory sensitivities that might be making certain textures or flavors seem overwhelming.

Step 2: Using Reward Systems and Games

While we're healing the gut, it's also important to make mealtimes fun and engaging. Kids love games and reward systems, and these can be powerful tools to help them try new foods without the pressure.

Here are a few ideas:

Candyland or Chutes and Ladders: These classic board games can be turned into a fun way to

introduce new foods. For example, every time your child takes a bite of a new food, they can move a space on the board. It's a great way to turn mealtime into playtime.

Stickers or small rewards: Create a chart where your child gets a sticker every time they try something new or finish a meal. After a certain number of stickers, they can earn a small reward like a toy or a special activity.

Taste-test challenges: Set up a mini taste-test challenge with a variety of new foods. You can let your child be the judge, rating each food on a scale of 1 to 10. This empowers them to explore new flavors in a playful and non-threatening way.

Step 3: Introducing New Foods Slowly

When it comes to overcoming picky eating, slow and steady is key. Rather than overhauling your child's diet overnight, we introduce new foods gradually. Start with small amounts of gut-healing foods like meat stock, fermented vegetables, or soft-cooked, peeled, and de-seeded vegetables. As they become

more comfortable with these, we slowly introduce more variety.

Here are some tips for success:

One new food at a time: Instead of overwhelming your child with multiple new foods offer one at a time.

Pair it with a favorite: Serve new foods alongside something your child already enjoys.

Involve them in cooking: Let your child help prepare meals! This can make them more excited to try what they've helped make.

Step 4: Celebrating Progress

Remember to celebrate every small victory. Overcoming picky eating is a process, and it's important to acknowledge progress along the way.

The Importance of Support and Next Steps

It's important to remember that this process may take time and requires patience. However, with this

direct and proven approach to reversing picky eating, it takes less than 21 days to reverse picky eating, even in children who have neurological and sensory issues surrounding food. In most children, it is much quicker, and many picky eaters do not need to do the Picky Eating Protocol at all; they simply stop being picky when we rebalance their gut microbiome.

Every healing food you introduce to your child is a win, and each step forward, no matter how small, is progress toward long-term health. If you find yourself feeling overwhelmed, remember that you are not alone on this journey. **The JIA Blueprint** offers a community of support, guidance, and coaching.

As we move forward to the next chapter, we'll dive into the **Mind-Body Connection**-an essential part of your child's healing.

Chapter 8: The Mind-Body Connection

When your child is dealing with JIA, it's natural to focus on the physical aspects-inflammation, pain, and flare-ups. As parents, we want to do everything in our power to relieve their suffering, so we often jump into action with treatments, dietary changes, and supplements. But there's a deeper layer that sometimes gets overlooked: emotional health. This can be the key to unlocking true healing.

Our minds and bodies are intricately connected. When your child is carrying unspoken emotions like fear, frustration, or sadness, their body responds. It's almost as though the brain is sending a signal that something is wrong, keeping the body in fight-or-flight mode. In this state, healing is nearly impossible. The body is too busy managing stress to focus on recovery. But when we help our children calm their minds and feel emotionally safe, everything shifts. The body can finally move into rest-and-repair mode - and that's where healing happens.

Adverse Childhood Events (ACEs) and Their Impact

Let's start with something that can have a huge impact on your child's emotional and physical health-Adverse Childhood Events (ACEs). Research has shown that children who experience significant stress or trauma during their early years are at a much higher risk of developing chronic health conditions, including autoimmune diseases like JIA. These traumatic events create lasting effects on the body because trauma fundamentally alters how the immune and nervous systems function.

The 10 recognized ACEs are:

Physical abuse

Emotional abuse

Sexual abuse

Physical neglect

Emotional neglect

Household substance abuse

Household mental illness

Domestic violence

Parental separation or divorce

Incarceration of a family member

However, it's essential to understand that some of these traumas may not have happened to your child directly but rather to you, your spouse, or even a grandparent. This is where the concept of **generational trauma** comes into play.

Generational trauma refers to the idea that traumatic experiences from one generation can affect the physical and emotional well-being of future generations. Traumatic experiences can be passed down through generations, affecting children in ways that may not seem directly related to their own life events. Just as we can pass on autoimmune diseases genetically (through inherited DNA), we can also pass on emotional wounds.

Research in **epigenetics** (the study of changes in gene expression that don't involve changes to the underlying DNA sequence) shows that traumatic

experiences leave a mark on our DNA, potentially altering the way our genes are expressed in future generations. When a parent or grandparent experiences trauma, their nervous system becomes dysregulated (out of balance), and these changes can be passed on to their children. The result? A child might carry the burden of unresolved trauma without having lived through the events themselves, influencing their emotional and physical health. Understanding and addressing these generational patterns is crucial for breaking the cycle and helping our children heal on a deeper level.

Behavioral health therapists like Jody Bilstrom understand the profound impact of ACEs and generational trauma on children's health. Jody works with children to help them process not only their own past trauma but also the unresolved trauma from previous generations. By calming their nervous systems (helping them feel safe and balanced), they allow the immune system to settle down and stop being in overdrive, which is crucial in helping children heal emotionally and physically.

Play Therapy: Helping Children Express Emotions

Children often don't have the words to express what they're feeling, especially when they're dealing with something as big as chronic illness. They may not be able to articulate their fear, frustration, or sadness, but that doesn't mean they aren't feeling those emotions deeply. This is where play therapy becomes incredibly valuable.

Play therapy provides children with a safe space to express themselves without the pressure of using words. As the Association for Play Therapy describes, "Play is to the child what verbalization is to the adult." Through play, children can express complex emotions, sometimes without even realizing they're doing it. This is especially important for children dealing with chronic illnesses like JIA, where emotional stress can easily build up over time.

Example of Play Therapy at Home

You can use simple play therapy techniques at home to help your child express their emotions in a safe,

non-verbal way. Here's a fun activity you can try with them:

The Emotion Sorting Game:

Gather materials: Get some colored paper or cards and assign each color to an emotion (for example, red = anger, blue = sadness, yellow = happiness, green = calm).

Create a story: Talk about a recent event where your child might have felt a range of emotions-maybe a doctor's visit, a day they missed out on playing with friends, or a time they felt frustrated about their symptoms.

Ask for their response: As you go through the story, ask your child to choose a color that represents how they felt during different parts of the event. For example, they might choose red when they felt anxious before the doctor's visit or blue when they felt sad about missing a playdate.

Encourage them to explain: Once they pick a color, gently ask them to explain why they felt that way. This opens the door for them to talk about their

emotions without feeling pressured to explain too much.

Use toys or action figures: If your child enjoys using toys, you can incorporate action figures or dolls. Let them act out the scenario using their toys, which can sometimes make it easier for them to express their feelings.

This game helps your child identify and understand their emotions in a way that feels safe and fun. It's an easy way to bring emotional awareness into everyday moments, giving your child the space to process and release what they're feeling.

Creating a Healing Environment Through Calm and Conscious Practices

A calm and peaceful environment is essential for healing. The body is constantly communicating with its surroundings, and stressful environments can hinder recovery. Setting a tone of calmness in the home supports not only your child's healing but also your own well-being as a parent. Whether it's reducing noise, playing soft music, or simply

encouraging quiet time, creating a space where your child can feel safe and relaxed is invaluable.

The Importance of Conscious Eating for Healing

Another key component is practicing conscious eating. When your child eats slowly and mindfully, it engages the parasympathetic nervous system - the “rest and digest” state - allowing the body to focus on digestion and healing. Encourage them to chew their food thoroughly, savor each bite, and take their time with meals. This simple habit can drastically improve digestion, reduce inflammation, and allow the body to absorb more nutrients, all of which are essential for rebuilding and healing.

Exploring Bioenergetic Therapies

For deeper healing, especially in dealing with traumas and stressors that are hard to process or even remember, bioenergetic therapies can be highly beneficial. Bioenergetics works by reading and balancing the body's energy field, which stores past traumas, stresses, and emotional blockages. This method allows you to bypass the conscious mind,

which might struggle to process or recall these events, enabling you to address the root cause of many health issues. Incorporating therapies like these can complement the rest of your child's healing journey, providing another layer of support in releasing deep-seated stress and promoting overall well-being.

The Role of Hydration and Structured Water in Healing

Once you've established a nutrient dense diet, regular and safe detox, started working on the epigenetic component to healing and have created a calming environment and begun fostering mindful eating practices, the next essential step is ensuring proper hydration. Hydration is crucial for every system in the body, particularly during healing, as it helps flush toxins, supports digestion, and keeps the detox organs functioning optimally. Not just any water will do-structured water, which mimics the natural, living water found in fruits and vegetables, is particularly beneficial. Structured water is believed to be more easily absorbed by the cells, helping with hydration at a deeper level. Drinking properly

filtered, structured water, along with herbal teas and room-temperature liquids, further supports the body's natural detox processes. We will discuss this in the next chapter.

Chapter 9: Hidden Drivers & Co-Factors

Every mom who comes into The JIA Blueprint eventually reaches the same moment... the moment when you look at your child's symptoms and think:

“Okay... something else is going on here.”

Maybe the pain isn't matching the food reactions. Maybe the detox spikes are stronger than you expected.

Maybe your child's labs come back with things like MTHFR mutations, Lyme, mold exposure, high oxalates, high histamines, mycotoxins, or heavy metals - and suddenly everything feels more complicated.

If you've ever had that moment, let me reassure you:

Your child is not “too complex.”

Nothing your child has is beyond healing.

And none of these factors block the path to reversal.

One of the most beautiful things about GAPS - and about the Blueprint as a whole - is that we don't address symptoms, and we don't address diagnoses. We address the *terrain*.

And when you rebuild the terrain, every cofactor and complication begins to lose its power.

But I also know how overwhelming these words can feel.

“Lyme.”

“MTHFR mutation.”

“Mold toxicity.”

“Oxalates.”

“Histamines.”

“EBV.”

“Parasites.”

“Heavy metals.”

It can feel like a mountain - but I want to show you how, from a GAPS perspective and from the way we do things inside the Blueprint, every single one of these issues fits into a really clear, understandable pattern.

Let's talk through them together.

Before we begin, I want to say this clearly:

This chapter covers many of the big, common cofactors we see - but it doesn't even come close to covering everything we handle inside the Blueprint.

If I listed everything we're able to navigate, this chapter would turn into its own book. The reality is that children today are dealing with layers we simply didn't see a generation ago. Environmental toxicants, weakened microbiomes, suppressed detox pathways, epigenetic stressors, generational trauma patterns, chronic infections... it's endless.

But here's the comforting truth:

**When you heal the terrain, you heal everything.
And when you understand the pattern, none of
these diagnoses feel scary anymore.**

Let's walk through the most common cofactors we see and exactly how we approach them - gently, systematically, and without overwhelming the body or the child.

The MTHFR Mutation - and Why It's Not the Monster You've Been Told It Is

So many moms come to me in a panic after running genetic tests.

They've been told:

“Your child has the MTHFR mutation - this changes everything.”

Here's what I want you to know:

The MTHFR gene is not the problem. The inflamed terrain is the problem.

Dr. Natasha explains it so beautifully. She reminds us that so-called “mutations” are usually *adaptations*. They're the body's attempt to protect itself from a toxic environment. When the gut is damaged, when detox pathways are blocked, when the liver is overwhelmed, the body changes the way certain genes express.

When you heal the gut and restore nutrient density, these “mutations” lose their influence.

Will we support methylation gently?

Yes, of course.

But we do it through:

- the right foods
- the right fats
- the right minerals
- restoring the microbiome
- repairing the gut lining
- stabilizing detox
- and calming inflammation

Not by blasting kids with high-dose methylated vitamins that often make them worse.

Inside the Blueprint, children with MTHFR patterns heal beautifully because we fix the underlying reason the gene was struggling in the first place.

Lyme Disease - What It Really Means from a GAPS Perspective

Lyme is one of those diagnoses that sends moms into absolute terror.

But here's the truth we don't hear often:

**Lyme doesn't thrive in a healthy terrain.
It only becomes aggressive in a weakened one.**

Dr. Natasha has always taught that pathogens - bacteria, viruses, parasites - only take advantage when the gut lining is compromised, detox pathways are blocked, and inflammation is high.

So, when we work with a child who has Lyme, we never attack the Lyme.

We rebuild the terrain Lyme grew out of.

And guess what happens?

The immune system begins doing what it was always designed to do. It starts clearing the infection naturally, steadily, gently - without harming the body.

Inside the Blueprint, Lyme is something we approach patiently and intelligently:

- we stabilize the gut
- we calm inflammation
- we restore nutrients
- we support detox
- we rebuild the microbiome

And the child begins to get stronger, not sicker.
Lyme stops running the show.
The immune system starts leading again.

Epstein-Barr Virus (EBV) - The Exhaustion Infection

EBV is a stealthy little thing.
It hides, it waits, and it spikes when the body is overwhelmed.
And you'll see it in children who:

- have been sick often
- have poor detox
- have chronic inflammation
- have weakened gut barriers
- have high toxic load
- have mold exposure
- have chronic stress

EBV doesn't cause all these problems - it responds to them.

So, our approach is never, "How do we kill EBV?"
It's, "How do we take away what EBV is feeding on?"

Because EBV loves:

- inflammation
- liver stagnation
- heavy metals
- methylation blocks
- mold
- and dysbiosis

Inside the Blueprint, as we rebuild the gut and restore detox and nourish the body deeply, EBV naturally retreats.

Kids start to wake up with energy again.

The dark circles fade.

The joint pain eases.

The flare cycles get shorter.

And EBV stops being the monster it once felt like.

Mold Toxicity - The Great Immune Disruptor

Mold is one of the biggest cofactors I see in JIA kids today.

It suppresses detox pathways, inflames the gut, weakens immunity, triggers mast cells, raises histamines, feeds fungal overgrowth, and overwhelms the liver.

But here's the reassuring thing:

You do not have to “fix mold first” before you can heal.

Parents are often told that healing has to stop until mold is addressed.

That's simply not true.

Inside the Blueprint, we gently open the body's natural drainage pathways - the bowels, liver, kidneys, lymph, skin - while supporting the liver and rebuilding the gut.

This stabilizes the child so mold can release without causing huge flares.

Mold is not something to panic about.

It's something to support skillfully.

And that's exactly what we do, step by step.

Heavy Metal Toxicity - The Burdened Body

Heavy metals are everywhere now - food, water, soil, air.

And kids with inflamed guts absorb more of them.

This is why Dr. Natasha teaches:

Heal the gut first - detox will follow automatically.

We do not jump into chelation.

We do not force detox before the body is ready.

We do not overwhelm the liver.

Inside the Blueprint, we gently support:

- bile flow
- liver repair
- mineral repletion
- antioxidant pathways
- microbial balance

And slowly, safely, the body begins letting go of what it has been holding onto.

Heavy metals aren't the enemy - stagnation is.

Once the terrain is restored, metals no longer stick.

Oxalates - When Healthy Foods Aren't Actually Helping

Oxalates are tricky.

On paper, they're in many "healthy" foods - spinach, almonds, sweet potatoes, berries, nuts, seeds.

But when the gut is leaky or the microbiome is off, oxalates turn into tiny shards that irritate the body. Joint pain, bladder pain, rashes, anxiety, sensory issues - all can be oxalate-related.

So, inside the Blueprint, we modify oxalates gently. We don't rip them out overnight (that causes dumping).

We support minerals.

We lower inflammation.

We strengthen detox.

We heal the gut lining.

And oxalates slowly stop causing trouble.

It's not about restriction,

It's about pacing.

Histamines - When the Body Feels "On Fire"

High histamines show up as:

flushing

itching

rashes
swelling
headaches
sleep disruption
food reactions
behavior changes

But histamines are not the problem.
They're the *response*.

Histamines rise because:

- mast cells are overloaded
- the liver is overburdened
- the microbiome is imbalanced
- mold is present
- inflammation is high
- the gut lining is weak

So, inside the Blueprint, we don't focus on
antihistamines or lifelong restriction.
We focus on calming the internal storm.

We support:

- the nervous system
- detox pathways
- the gut lining

- the microbiome
- mineral balance

And histamines naturally settle.

Parasites - The Builders of Chaos in a Weak Terrain

Parasites are not random.

They thrive in:

gut stagnation

low stomach acid

sluggish bile

poor digestion

high toxic load

weakened microbiomes

Dr. Natasha says something so important about parasites:

“They come to clean when the body cannot clean itself.”

So, we don't attack parasites first.

We support the gut so the body becomes a place where parasites simply cannot thrive.

And when the terrain is no longer a match,
parasites leave.

Bringing It All Together - Your Child Is Not “Too Complicated” to Heal

I know this chapter covered a lot.
And the truth is, I could have written another
hundred pages.

Because the list of cofactors we see in kids today is
endless.

But the point of this chapter is not the list - it's the
pattern.

**No matter what diagnosis your child carries,
no matter what genes you've been told they
have,
no matter how many cofactors are involved
healing happens the same way.**

We don't chase infections.

We don't chase toxins.

We don't chase genes.

We don't chase symptoms.

We rebuild the terrain.
We restore the gut.
We calm the immune system.
We support detox.
We repair the microbiome.
We nourish deeply.
We respond instead of react.

And the body does the rest.

Inside The JIA Blueprint, every single one of these cofactors is something we handle every day - smoothly, gently, systematically - because healing the terrain is healing the root.

You are not alone in this.
Your child is not stuck with this.
And nothing they have is beyond the reach of healing.

Chapter 10: The Nourished Child: How to Live, Eat, and Grow After Reversing JIA

When I think about this phase of the journey - the part where your child steps out of the intensity of healing and into true resilience - I get emotional every time. Because this chapter isn't just about food. It isn't just about maintenance. This is where everything begins to open up. This is the chapter where you realize your child's world is expanding again - not shrinking. And maybe even more importantly, this is where your world expands, too.

And before we go into the details of what life looks like after reversing JIA, I want to say something with love:

You are not behind.

You are not late.

You are not starting from scratch.

You are stepping onto a path that countless families have walked before you - and they healed.

And you will, too.

I want this chapter to feel like I'm sitting right across from you, hands wrapped around a warm mug, saying, "Let me show you what's ahead. Let me show you why it's worth every bit of the work."

Because what's coming is beautiful, freeing, and deeply life-giving.

Healing Isn't the End - It's the Beginning of a New Way of Living

So many parents come into this journey feeling crushed by the idea of restriction - terrified their child will never eat "normally" again, never enjoy food, never go to a birthday party without fear, never eat something without scanning for pain or swelling afterward.

And I need you to hear this:

The JIA Blueprint is not a lifelong elimination diet.

It is a rebuilding strategy.

A restoration strategy.

A nourishment strategy.

Every single thing we do in the beginning stages - sealing, detoxing, calming, rebuilding - has one purpose:

To return your child to full food freedom.

That means:

bread

dairy

grains

fruit

starches

raw milk

sourdough

honey

potatoes

soaked oats

sprouted rice

homemade treats

everything wholesome and God-made

Not just tolerated, but nourishing.

You do not stay on GAPS forever.

You do not live in restriction forever.

You do not stay in fear forever.

The whole point is to rebuild the digestive system, repair the terrain, restore immune modulation, and give the body back its natural resilience so that eventually:

Your child can live a normal, joyful, vibrant life - without JIA casting a shadow.

This is the philosophical difference between what we do and what the internet screams at you:

Carnivore shrinks the microbiome.

AIP removes everything without rebuilding the terrain.

Eliminations manage symptoms, not the root.

Food fear diets create fragility, not resilience.

But The JIA Blueprint is the opposite.

We rebuild so your child can expand.

We nourish so your child can thrive.

We strengthen the terrain so your child becomes resilient - not fragile.

And this is exactly why Weston A. Price becomes the natural next step.

Why We Move into Weston A. Price - The Freedom Phase

Once the gut has healed, once inflammation has calmed, once detox pathways have opened, and once the immune system has rebalanced, your child becomes ready for something beautiful: ancestral nourishment.

Weston A. Price isn't trendy. It isn't extreme. It isn't restrictive.

It's the oldest, most time-tested way of feeding human beings - especially growing children.

Traditional cultures fed children diets filled with:

- nutrient-dense fats
- raw and cultured dairy
- soaked grains
- organ meats
- bone broths

fermented vegetables
mineral-rich foods

This is what created strong bones, wide dental arches, stable moods, clear minds, and disease-free generations.

It all comes down to two principles:

Nutrient density
Proper preparation

And that's exactly what we reintroduce here.

Step by Step: Reintroducing Traditional Foods Without Fear

This part is where most parents need the most reassurance - because after watching their child react to foods for months or years, expansion can feel terrifying.

So, let's slow down.

1. New Potatoes - the “first doorway” to food freedom

We peel, boil, and coat them generously in butter or animal fat.

Traditional diets always paired carbs with fats - modern diets separated them.

Fat protects the digestive tract, stabilizes blood sugar, and reduces inflammation.

This is your first glimpse of your child's freedom.

2. Properly Prepared Grains - a return to humanity

Fear of grains is a modern creation.

Traditional societies thrived on grains - because they prepared them correctly.

Soaked rice

Sprouted grains

Sourdough bread

Fermented oats

These aren't inflammatory.

They're deeply nourishing.

They support:

the microbiome
mineral absorption
stable energy
digestive comfort
long-term immune resilience

This is where mealtimes become joyful again.

3. Raw Milk - the symbol of full recovery

This one deserves its own moment.

Raw milk isn't just tolerated.

It's strengthening.

It supports the immune system, soothes the gut, provides enzymes and probiotics, and nourishes the body on a deep, cellular level.

And here is the real, verified Sally Fallon quote to include:

“Raw milk is a complete food, rich in vitamins, enzymes, and beneficial bacteria that support the delicate ecosystem of the human gut.”

- *Sally Fallon, Nourishing Traditions*

For many moms, this is the moment the tears come.
It signals that the gut is no longer fragile.
It means resilience has returned.

4. Traditional rhythms - your lifelong foundation

Once your child tolerates potatoes, grains, and raw dairy, the whole world of Weston A. Price opens up.

This is where you start feeding your family:

slow-cooked meats
raw and cultured dairy
fermented vegetables
properly prepared grains
nutrient-dense broths
seasonal produce
healthy fats

Not because you “have to,” but because it feels good, tastes good, and supports health effortlessly.

This is not a diet.

It is a rhythm - a generational way of living.

Monitoring Healing as the Body Strengthens

Parents often ask, “How do I know my child is truly healed?”

Here’s the truth:

Healing isn’t defined by one moment.

It’s revealed through patterns.

Physical signs of stability

less stiffness upon waking

comfortable joints

good energy

steady digestion

normal appetite

restful sleep

Emotional signs

calm mood

better emotional regulation

more flexibility

less overwhelm

Growth signs

healthy skin

steady weight

strong nails

clear eyes

height and strength returning

These are the markers that matter.

Yes - if you want confirmation, labs can be helpful:

ANA dropping

ESR normalizing

CRP lowering

RF decreasing

Functional tests can offer deeper clarity:

stool tests

sensitivity tests

nutrient absorption markers

But these are optional.

The JIA Blueprint takes care of the root causes regardless of what tests show.

The most important thing is how your child feels and functions day to day.

Healing Isn't Linear - And That's Okay

Every child has ups and downs.

A flare isn't failure.

A setback isn't regression.

A tough week isn't the beginning of a spiral.

Inside The JIA Blueprint, you'll learn to interpret symptoms the way practitioners do - calmly and confidently.

Sometimes a flare means detox.

Sometimes it means the immune system is recalibrating.

Sometimes it means their nervous system is shifting.

Sometimes it's related to sleep or stress.

We don't panic.

We observe, support, and adjust.

This is where your confidence grows.

**You Are Not Doing This Alone - The Power of
Community**

I have seen the transformation that happens when moms stop trying to do this in isolation.

You walk into the Blueprint carrying fear, overwhelm, decision fatigue, guilt, and exhaustion... and you realize - sometimes for the first time - that there are other mothers who understand exactly what you're walking through.

You gain:

stories

successes

support

encouragement

wisdom

friends

There is always someone who has been where you are.

There is always someone who can offer insight.

There is always someone who can say, "This is normal. You're doing it right."

This community is a lifeline.

Ongoing Guidance - What Makes This Different

The JIA Blueprint is not a PDF.

Not a recipe list.

Not a video course.

Not a temporary diet.

It is full, ongoing support- until your child no longer needs it .

Daily guidance

Troubleshooting

Adjustments

Group coaching

Education

Real-time answers

A community that stays with you until your child is fully healed

Every family who joins is supported until they reach their goal.

And now... Let's Talk About You

Mothers are often the nervous system of the household.

Your calm becomes your child's calm.

Your overwhelm becomes their overwhelm.

So, we prioritize your self-care too.

Small practices like:

deep breathing
five minutes of quiet
a warm cup of tea
a walk in the fresh air
asking for help
connecting with other moms

These are not luxuries.

They are part of the healing ecosystem.

Your child's microbiome mirrors yours more than most people realize.

When you are regulated, their healing accelerates.

Bringing It All Together

This chapter is your vision of what's possible - the life waiting on the other side:

food freedom
joyful eating
a strong immune system
a healed gut

ancestral nourishment
a confident mother
a thriving, resilient child

The JIA Blueprint is designed to lead you here step by step, with full support, full clarity, and full community.

You're stepping into a beautiful phase of this journey - one filled with hope, nourishment, and the stability you've prayed for.

Chapter 11: The JIA Blueprint: Why It Was Created and How It Transforms Lives

We've covered a lot of ground in this book, from understanding the root causes of juvenile arthritis to learning how to heal your child's body from the inside out. But I know that, as a mom, this can still feel like an overwhelming mountain to climb. You're likely asking yourself, "Can I really do this? Will this work for my child?" That's where **The JIA Blueprint** comes in.

What Is The JIA Blueprint?

The JIA Blueprint isn't just another program or a collection of steps-it's your **roadmap to healing**. It's designed specifically for moms like you who want to reverse their child's juvenile arthritis but aren't sure how to navigate the journey alone. The Blueprint is here to guide you, offering you personalized, hands-on support every single day.

You'll know exactly what to do when to do it, and how to adjust along the way.

But this isn't just about following a plan-it's about **transforming your family's health**. Through The JIA Blueprint, you'll gain **ongoing access** to a community of supportive moms, real-time coaching, and daily guidance from me. This means you'll never have to figure it out on your own. I'm with you, step by step.

One **Blueprint mom** shared:

"I felt completely lost when my daughter was diagnosed with JIA. I didn't know where to start or what to believe. Finding Starr and The JIA Blueprint changed everything for us. Her guidance, the community, the step-by-step plan- it gave us hope, and most importantly, it gave us results. My daughter is living pain-free and back to being the kid she was meant to be."

Hands-On Coaching That Makes All the Difference

The truth is, most programs give you information but leave you to figure out the rest on your own. **The JIA Blueprint** is different. You're not just

getting a protocol - you're getting a **partner** in this healing journey. I work with you closely, offering personalized coaching and making adjustments based on your child's unique needs. Healing isn't a straight path, and it's critical to have someone by your side to guide you through the twists and turns.

If your child has a flare-up, if something isn't working, or if you just need reassurance, I'm here for you. You won't have to wonder, "What do I do next?" Together, we'll make sure your child gets the exact support they need at every stage of healing.

Here's what another **Blueprint mom** had to say about this personalized support:

"Starr's daily guidance and her ability to adjust the protocol to fit my child's needs was a game-changer. I never felt alone in this process. Every question I had was answered, and every roadblock was met with a solution. We couldn't have done this without her."

A Program That Supports the Whole Family

JIA is often just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to family health. As moms, we see how stress,

environmental toxins, and poor nutrition affect everyone in the family. **The JIA Blueprint** is designed to **heal the entire family**, not just the child with JIA.

We focus on gut health, detoxification, and immune modulation for everyone in your household. When your child heals, your family heals. Whether it's siblings with other health issues or even your own health concerns as a mom, you'll find that the principles in The JIA Blueprint can change the trajectory of your family's well-being.

One **Blueprint mom** shared:

"It's not just our daughter who's healthier-our whole family is thriving now. We used to be constantly sick, dealing with different autoimmune issues, and just feeling exhausted all the time. But through the Blueprint, we've healed as a family. Everyone's health has improved, and we're finally living the life we dreamed of."

You Cannot Fail - Here's Why

Let me say this clearly: **You cannot fail** if you join **The JIA Blueprint**. Why? Because this program is

designed to leave no stone unturned. It gives you everything you need - tools, guidance, and support- to **guarantee success**. When you show up, engage, and accept the help offered, your child will heal. That's what sets this program apart.

This isn't about hoping for the best or wondering if it will work. With The JIA Blueprint, you will know exactly what to do every day, and you'll have the confidence that your child's healing is inevitable.

Real Moms, Real Results

I could tell you about the power of **The JIA Blueprint** all day, but hearing from other moms who've been where you are might be the most powerful message. These are real moms, facing real challenges, who found hope and healing through the Blueprint.

"I cannot express how much Starr and The JIA Blueprint have meant to us. When my child was first diagnosed with JIA, we felt completely helpless. Traditional treatments weren't working, and the doctors told us we'd be managing this disease for life. But Starr showed us a different way. Her

program works. My son is living pain-free, medication-free, and thriving. I'm forever grateful."

-Blueprint mom

"Joining The JLA Blueprint was the best decision we ever made for our family. It's not just about reversing JLA - it's about learning how to support our bodies, live healthier, and break free from autoimmune issues. Starr and her team gave us the tools and support we needed to heal, and now we're stronger as a family because of it."

-Blueprint mom

Is The JIA Blueprint Right for You?

By the time most moms reach this point in the book, they're thinking one of two things:

"This makes so much sense. This is exactly what I've been looking for..."

or

"This makes sense... but it feels like a lot. I don't know if I could ever do all of this on my own."

If either one of those thoughts has crossed your mind, then you're in the right place.

Because here's the truth I want you to hear clearly:

You are not meant to do this alone.

And inside The JIA Blueprint, you never will.

This program was created *for* the moms who want to reverse their child's juvenile arthritis... but who also know they need structure, guidance, accountability, troubleshooting, reassurance, and a community that understands this journey on a soul-deep level.

Let me put it simply:

If you're reading this chapter and thinking,

“This feels right. This feels true. This feels like the missing piece...”

then yes - The JIA Blueprint is absolutely for you.

**How You Know that The JIA Blueprint *Is* the
Next Right Step**

If you're wondering whether this is really your path, ask yourself:

Does the idea of **healing at the root** make more sense to you than suppressing symptoms?

Does a **clear, step-by-step roadmap** feel like exactly what you've been missing?

Do you want someone to **walk with you daily**, telling you what to do, what to adjust, what is normal, and what to expect next?

Do you want a program that doesn't just address food, but the **entire terrain** of the body - gut, immune system, detox pathways, nervous system, and environment?

Do you want **ongoing support**, not a short-term protocol you're left to figure out alone?

Do you want access to moms who are a few steps ahead of you, who can say, "We started where you are. We thought all the same thoughts. And our kids healed."

Does the science behind what you've read - the gut, the immune system, epigenetics, ancestral nutrition - just **click** in a way nothing else has?

If you're nodding along to any of these, then The JIA Blueprint is exactly where you belong.

“It Just Feels Like a Lot...”

Let's talk about this honestly.

Most moms feel overwhelmed even *thinking* about taking on something new - especially when their child is hurting and they already feel stretched thin.

And here's the truth:

**It is a lot... if you try to do it on your own.
But inside The JIA Blueprint, you will never be
doing this alone.**

This is why the program exists.

This is why the support is structured the way it is.

This is why we walk with you day after day, step by step.

Inside the Blueprint, you're not trying to figure out:

“What stage should we be in?”

“What food should I start today?”

“Is this flare normal?”

“Did I mess something up?”

“Is this a reaction or detox?”

“Should I move forward or slow down?”

We answer all of that **for you**, every single day.

You bring your questions.

We give you the next step.

You never guess.

You never wonder.

And you never, ever have to Google again.

What If I've Already Tried So Much?

Some moms come into the Blueprint after spending years - sometimes tens of thousands of dollars - on specialists, protocols, diets, doctors, supplements, and guesswork that never addressed the root issue.

If that's you, hear me:

You haven't failed.

You simply weren't given the right roadmap.

The JIA Blueprint is not "one more thing to try."

It is the first thing that brings everything together in the right order, in the right timing, with the right support.

And it's the first approach that says,

"Your child can heal. Let us show you how."

Your Next Step

So now the real question isn't:

"Is this too much?"

or

"Can I really do this?"

The real question is:

"Am I ready for real, lasting healing?"

and

"Do I want someone who knows the path to walk it with me?"

If the answer is yes - even if it's a hesitant, hopeful, shaky yes - then you are ready.

Your child is ready.

Your family is ready.

And the next chapter of your life is waiting for you.

When you're ready to explore The JIA Blueprint to see if it's the right fit for your family and take the first step into real, root-cause healing - I am here.

And I would love to help you begin.

Glossary of Terms

Autoimmunity

A condition where the immune system becomes overstimulated or dysregulated and begins responding to the body's own tissues as if they were threats. In children with JIA, this often begins with inflammation rooted in the gut and immune system imbalance - not because their body is "broken," but because it's overwhelmed by environmental triggers.

Bone Broth vs. Meat Stock

Meat stock is a shorter-cooked, gelatin-rich broth made from meaty bones, ideal for gut healing. *Bone broth* is cooked longer and extracts more minerals but can be too advanced for early gut repair.

Candida Overgrowth

A fungal imbalance in the gut that can cause inflammation, immune dysregulation, behavioral challenges, rashes, and digestive issues. Often a cofactor in autoimmune disease.

Calprotectin

A stool marker used to measure inflammation in the

gut. Elevated levels indicate intestinal inflammation, common in autoimmune conditions.

CRP (C-Reactive Protein)

A blood marker that indicates levels of systemic inflammation. A decrease in CRP is a strong sign the body is healing.

Dysbiosis

An imbalance of beneficial vs. harmful microbes in the gut. Dysbiosis is linked to inflammation, autoimmunity, food sensitivities, skin issues, and behavioral challenges.

Eczema

A skin condition often tied to gut inflammation, food sensitivities, or dysbiosis. Its presence can be a clue to deeper immune issues.

Epigenetics

The study of how environment - food, toxins, emotions, stress, microbiome, healing - can change how genes express themselves. Epigenetics teaches us that chronic illness is not genetic fate, but an environmental pattern that can be reversed.

ESR (Erythrocyte Sedimentation Rate)

A blood test that measures inflammation. Elevated ESR is common in autoimmune disease. A decreasing ESR reflects healing.

Fermentation

A traditional food preparation method that encourages beneficial bacteria to grow. Fermented foods help repopulate the gut microbiome, support digestion, and reduce inflammation.

Functional Medicine

A root-cause approach that looks at how systems in the body interact - gut, immune system, hormones, detox pathways, nervous system - to determine what is driving inflammation or dysfunction.

GAPS Diet

A therapeutic, gut-healing nutritional protocol created by Dr. Natasha Campbell-McBride. It focuses on meat stock, probiotic foods, healthy fats, and reducing inflammatory triggers.

GI-MAP Test

A DNA-based stool test that evaluates pathogens, dysbiosis, fungal overgrowth, parasites, digestive

function, inflammation, and immune activity in the gut.

Histamines

Chemical compounds released during immune responses. Some children with dysbiosis have difficulty breaking down histamines in food, causing reactions such as headaches, rashes, or behavioral shifts.

Immune Modulation

The process of teaching the immune system how to function properly - not suppressing it, but retraining it at the root.

Leaky Gut (Increased Intestinal Permeability)

A condition where the gut lining becomes inflamed or damaged, allowing food particles, toxins, and microbes to pass into the bloodstream and trigger immune reactions.

Lymphatic System

A detoxification system that filters waste, supports immunity, and carries fluid throughout the body. Supporting lymphatic flow is essential in autoimmune reversal.

Mycotoxins

Toxins produced by mold that can disrupt the immune system, inflame the gut, and contribute to autoimmunity.

Oxalates

Naturally occurring compounds in certain foods that can cause pain, inflammation, or digestive issues when the gut is imbalanced.

Rheumatoid Factor (RF)

A blood marker sometimes present in autoimmune arthritis. Decreases in RF levels can indicate healing.

Weston A. Price Diet (WAP) / Nourishing Traditions

An ancestral, nutrient-dense, whole-food-based approach emphasizing properly prepared grains, raw dairy, organ meats, fermented foods, and traditional fats - used for long-term nourishment after gut healing.

References & Suggested Reading

GAPS & Foundational Gut-Healing - Dr. Natasha Campbell-McBride

Gut and Psychology Syndrome (GAPS)

Gut and Physiology Syndrome

Vegetarianism Explained

Put Your Heart in Your Mouth

(Dr. Natasha's work is the cornerstone of gut-healing principles used inside The JLA Blueprint.)

Detox, Microbiome & Terrain Medicine - Becky Plotner

GAPS Stage by Stage With Recipes

The Nutritional Healing Cookbook

The GAPS Brain

The Four Phases of Detoxification

Environmental Illness: How to Identify and Address Toxic Exposures

Pathogenic Load: How Hidden Infections Influence Chronic Illness

The Gut Is the Boss

(Plotner's work is foundational for understanding microbial imbalance, mold illness, and detox pathways.)

GAPS Cooking, Fermentation & Practical Application - Monica Corrado

Ancestral Nutrition & Traditional Foods - Sally Fallon Morell / Weston A. Price Foundation

(Sally Fallon Morell's body of work is the foundation of nutrient-dense, sustainable eating after GAPS.)

Immune Modulation & Autoimmune Science - Dr. David Bilstrom

The Nurse Practitioner's Guide to Autoimmune Protocols
(Bilstrom's work provides the scientific bridge between epigenetics, immune modulation, and autoimmune reversal.)

Additional Resources: Gut Science, Epigenetics & Functional Medicine

Microbiome & Immunity

Missing Microbes - Martin J. Blaser, MD

The Good Gut - Justin & Erica Sonnenburg

Epigenetics

The Epigenetics Revolution - Nessa Carey

Peer-reviewed NIH research on immune gene modulation and transgenerational inheritance

Functional & Environmental Medicine

Institute for Functional Medicine resources

Research on chronic infections, mold toxicity, detox pathways, and environmental triggers

Traditional Foods & Sourcing

Weston A. Price Foundation (WAPF.org)

Realmilk.com (raw dairy education & safety)

Weston A. Price conference lectures & articles

Resource Guide

Trusted Tools, Foundations, and Sourcing for a Nourishing Life

This Resource Guide is designed to support you long after you finish reading this book. These are the places, tools, and trusted sources that will help you continue building a nutrient-dense lifestyle, find high-quality foods, access reliable education, and stay connected to communities who value ancestral wisdom and full-body healing.

These are the same resources I turn to-and the same ones JIA Blueprint families rely on every single day.

Use this guide as your “go-to” list whenever you need clarity, confidence, or direction.

1. Weston A. Price Foundation Resources

The Weston A. Price Foundation (WAPF) is one of the most important hubs of ancestral nutrition, traditional foods, and research on nutrient-dense living.

Website:

<https://www.westonaprice.org>

What you'll find there:

Detailed nutrition articles and research

Guides to traditional diets and food preparation

Local chapter directories with leaders who can help you find farmers in your area

Podcasts, videos, and updated educational materials

Articles by Sally Fallon Morell, Kaayla Daniel, Dr. Price, and other experts

2. Raw Milk & Dairy Sourcing

Finding safe, high-quality raw dairy is essential for families transitioning into the Nourishing Traditions style of eating.

Real Milk Finder (WAPF):

<https://www.realmilk.com>

This tool helps you locate:

Raw milk dairies

Herd-share programs

A2/A2 dairy herds

Raw butter, raw cream, raw cheese

Trusted small farms across the U.S. and internationally

3. Farms, Raised Meats & Traditional Animal Foods

High-quality animal foods are central to rebuilding and maintaining a strong immune system and healthy gut.

Trusted national sources:

US Wellness Meats - grass-fed meats, organ meats, broths, bones

<https://www.grasslandbeef.com>

White Oak Pastures - regenerative farming, beef, lamb, pork, poultry

<https://whiteoakpastures.com>

Local sourcing:

Visit your local WAPF chapter

<https://www.westonaprice.org/find-a-local-chapter-international>

Explore Farmers' Markets for pasture-raised meats

Search EatWild.com for grass-fed farms

4. Fermentation & Gut-Healing Tools

For those beginning or continuing the GAPS-style nourishment:

Essential supplies:

Glass fermentation jars (Fido / Weck / Mason)

Airlock lids (optional but helpful)

High-quality sea salt (Redmond Real Salt, Celtic, Himalayan)

Stainless steel strainers, funnels

Blenders & slow cookers

Recommended brands:

Cultures for Health - starter cultures for yogurt, kefir, vegetables

<https://www.culturesforhealth.com>

Supplements & Immune Support Resources

When families inside The JIA Blueprint need additional support for detoxification, immune modulation, or targeted healing, I often direct them to trusted, high-quality sources, places where I know the formulations are clean, effective, and backed by real clinical experience. One of those trusted sources is Dr. David Bilstrom's supplement line. His products are specifically created to support autoimmune recovery, inflammation reduction, mitochondrial healing, and whole-body immune balance.

Dr. David Bilstrom – Supplements & Immune Support Products

<https://drdavidbilstrom.com/shop>

5. Finding GAPS Food Sources & Tools

If you're in a stage where you still want or need therapeutic foods:

Food & supplies:

GAPS Certified Products Directory

www.drnatasha.com (official site)

Radiant Life - cookware, bone broth tools, water filters

<https://www.radiantlifecatalog.com>

Education:

Dr. Natasha's official GAPS site

<https://www.drnatasha.com>

6. Detox Support Tools

Gentle, home-based detox tools you will use throughout your healing journey:

Common essentials:

Epsom salts

Baking soda

Apple cider vinegar

Castor oil

Dry brushes

Infrared sauna blankets (for older teens/adults)

Magnesium lotions

Filtered water systems

Brands often recommended:

Ancient Minerals magnesium products

Berkey Water Filters

AquaTru Water Filters

Therasage Sauna Blankets (for adults)

7. Functional Testing Resources

Families inside The JIA Blueprint receive these tests at practitioner pricing and with in-house interpretation. If you are working independently, these are the labs most commonly used in functional medicine:

Gut & microbiome:

GI-MAP (Diagnostic Solutions Laboratory)

Genova GI Effects

Mold & environmental:

Great Plains Laboratory MycoTOX

RealTime Labs Mycotoxin Panel

Food sensitivities:

MRT / LEAP Testing

IgG Food Sensitivity Panels

Note:

These tests are helpful, but not required to heal. They offer insight, not direction. The true healing comes from changing the terrain-the diet, detox, environment, and lifestyle-not from chasing test results.

8. Finding Community, Education & Continued Support

Healing is too big of a journey to walk alone.

Ways to stay supported:

Your local Weston A. Price chapter

The Juvenile Arthritis and Uveitis Blueprint
Facebook Group

Homesteading, real-food, and fermentation groups

WAPF conferences and Wise Traditions events

Connection keeps you grounded, confident, and consistent—especially during phases of growth, reintroduction, or new chapters of life.

9. Staying Connected to Your Child's Healing

These tools help you continue to monitor progress and stay aligned with a nutrient-dense, nourishing lifestyle:

Symptom tracking apps

Food journals

Rheumatology blood markers (ESR, CRP, ANA, RF)

Growth, mood, and energy observations

Seasonal adjustments to lifestyle & foods

Remember: healing is not linear. These tools help you see patterns, not perfection.

A Final Word from My Heart to Yours

As I bring this book to a close, I want to speak to you not as an author, not as a practitioner, but simply as a mom. A mom who has sat where you're sitting. A mom whose heart has broken in the same places yours has. A mom who once held her own little girl, Serafina, and prayed for answers, prayed for strength, prayed for a way through.

I know this pain intimately. I know the fear, the confusion, the overwhelm, and the way your mind never fully rests when your child is suffering. I know the quiet moments when you wonder if you're strong enough for this. I know what it feels like to watch your baby hurt and feel like the world expects you to simply figure it out.

And that is why I wrote this book. Not to overwhelm you. Not to give you more things to worry about. But to give you the one thing I

needed more than anything all those years ago: hope that is grounded in truth, biology, science, and lived experience.

Serafina was the beginning of all of this. Our journey together changed everything for me-and now, years later, I've had the privilege of helping hundreds of families reverse their children's juvenile arthritis and countless other chronic conditions. I have watched moms just like you choose a different path, step by step, moment by moment, and create ripple effects that will last for generations.

Because that's what this work is. It's cycle-breaking. It's legacy-changing. When you heal a child, you change a family. When you change a family, you change a lineage. When you change a lineage, you change the world.

This road is not always easy. It requires devotion, patience, and courage. I often say, "Choose your hard," because every path in life has a cost-but healing is the only hard that pays you back. The only hard that gives your child

their childhood back. The only hard that hands your family a future you can feel excited about again. And even though this journey asks much of you, it gives even more in return.

It has been one of the greatest honors of my life to walk alongside the families I've served-to witness their children come back to life, to see mothers reclaim their confidence, to watch families heal not just physically but emotionally, spiritually, and generationally. If you are reading these words now, please know this: you are not alone, you are not without guidance, and you are absolutely capable of helping your child heal.

My deepest hope is that this book has given you clarity, peace, understanding, and a renewed belief in what is possible. I hope it has shown you that juvenile arthritis is not the end of your child's story. It is simply the place where healing begins.

There is help. There is a path. There is a way forward. And your child's body was designed-with breathtaking brilliance-to heal.

Thank you for letting me be a small part of your journey. It is truly, deeply an honor.

**With all my heart,
Starr**