

DEEPER THAN SYMPTOMS

GUT HEALTH · TESTING

The Gut Health Root Cause Guide

What a GI-MAP test measures, what it costs, and how to read your results — so you walk in with sharper questions.

Inside this guide

A plain-English breakdown of the 40+ markers a GI-MAP reports, how to read your color-coded report, real US cost expectations, and the sharper questions to bring your practitioner.

A free resource from

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What the GI-MAP Test Actually Measures

The GI-MAP (Gastrointestinal Microbial Assay Plus) is a comprehensive stool test that maps your gut from a single at-home sample. Instead of culturing organisms in a dish — where fragile or slow-growing microbes slip through — it uses quantitative PCR (qPCR) to read the actual **DNA** of each organism. That's why it catches organisms standard cultures miss in an estimated 30–50% of cases.

One honest caveat up front

Because qPCR detects DNA, a positive reflects genetic material — it can't always tell a live organism from a dead one passing through. That's exactly why results are meant to be read alongside your symptoms, never in isolation.

The Categories It Reports On (40+ markers)

Category	What it looks at	Why it matters
Pathogens	Bacterial, viral & parasitic organisms (e.g. Salmonella, Giardia, norovirus)	Known drivers of acute or chronic illness.
H. pylori	Presence plus virulence & antibiotic-resistance genes	Explains why some carry it symptom-free while others get ulcers or reflux.
Dysbiosis markers	Opportunistic & overgrowth bacteria, beneficial flora levels	The core of imbalance — too little good, too much of the wrong.
Fungi / yeast	Candida and other fungal organisms	Overgrowth can drive a range of gut & systemic symptoms.
Intestinal health	Calprotectin, secretory IgA, elastase-1, steatocrit, anti-gliadin IgA, beta-glucuronidase, occult blood	Shows inflammation, immune function, digestion & hormone/toxin clearance.

How to Read Your Report

Your report arrives as a color-coded chart — each marker measured against a reference range and flagged as within range, elevated, or reduced. High pathogens or inflammation jump out; depleted beneficial flora shows up on the low end. (A full report can run well over a dozen pages.)

Detection is not diagnosis

A number on a page isn't a diagnosis, and detection doesn't equal disease — many organisms show up at low levels in healthy people. Real interpretation means reading *patterns across markers* and connecting them to your symptoms, history, diet, and stress. Two people with the same marker can need completely different plans.

Cost & Practical Notes (US)

- **Cost:** typically the low-to-mid hundreds of dollars out of pocket; varies by lab and ordering practitioner.
- **Insurance:** most plans don't cover it, but some providers accept HSA/FSA funds or offer payment plans.
- **Collection:** a single at-home stool sample, mailed to the lab.
- **Always** confirm current pricing and prep steps before you book.

Sharper Questions for Your Appointment

- Based on my symptoms, is the GI-MAP the right test — or would another stool panel fit better?
- Will we review the full report *together* and tie findings to my history?
- What's the order of operations if something shows up (e.g. H. pylori before reseeded)?
- What does a realistic follow-up and retest timeline look like?

Your next step

A comprehensive stool analysis is only as useful as the plan it leads to. Read the full GI-MAP guide — including how it compares to GI Effects — at deeperthansymptoms.com.