

Benefits of Probiotic Supplementation

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What exactly are probiotics, and why is it often necessary to supplement them despite eating a healthy diet? Probiotics are supplements containing live microorganisms which are taken by mouth. An estimated 100 trillion bacteria live in your gut. Of these bacteria, some are good, and some not so good. Growing research has proven that the good bacteria in your gut are directly responsible for a wide range of benefits, from enhancing absorption of nutrients in food, to improving immune function, hormone health, mental health, and even decreasing inflammation due to chronic diseases.

Why Supplementation is usually necessary

Today's farming practices have seen decreased crop rotation and soil quality and an increase in pesticide use, giving us food with low to no beneficial bacteria on them for us to consume. Most easily eaten and processed foods are rich in trans fats and other substances that feed a very narrow spectrum of bacteria in our guts. This combination, along with the high price of fermented foods with beneficial probiotics in them, has left many people with an overgrowth of some types of bacteria that has disrupted the microbiome of gut flora needed for optimal health. This

What to look for when choosing a Probiotic Supplement:

- Refrigerated products are usually the most potent and effective
- Label states AT LEAST 1 BILLION active cultures or CFUs (colony forming units)
- Supplements with clearly labeled probiotic species and quantities

Foods with Beneficial Probiotics:

- Kefir
- Sauerkraut
- Kombucha
- Yogurt
- Tempeh
- Cottage Cheese
- Miso soup



imbalance of bacteria can manifest itself in many ways. The most common are listed in the sidebar.

As you can tell, supplementing a healthy, whole-food based diet with a probiotic supplement or probiotic containing foods is a great way to optimize your health, and improve outcomes of any chronic disease state. Probiotics have been shown to decrease the incidence and severity of bacterial and viral infections and enhance nutrient extraction from food. It is important to discuss your wellness concerns with your healthcare practitioner, who can recommend specific probiotic blends to help you reach your health goals.

What probiotics are best for overall healthy and immunity?

With all the different supplements on the internet and in pharmacies, how do you know which one to choose? Many patients do well on a multi-strain supplement with a variety of good bacteria. Some of the most beneficial species include;

- *Lactobacillus rhamnosus*
- *Lactobacillus acidophilus*
- *Lactobacillus casei*
- *Lactobacillus gasseri*
- *Lactobacillus planterum*
- *Streptococcus thermophilus*
- *Bifidobacterium longum*
- *Bifidobacterium breve*

Before beginning any new probiotic supplement, be sure to check with your prescriber or pharmacist for which formulation might be best for you and your wellness goals.

Symptoms of Imbalanced Bacteria

- Bloating/ abdominal pain
- Gas
- Chronic illnesses
- Food sensitivities
- Inflammatory Diseases
- Vitamin Deficiencies

References

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