

Healing with Probiotics

What do probiotics do?

Did you know that there are 20 times more bacteria than cells in your body? In fact, at any one time, you have more bacteria in your body than the total number of people who have ever lived on the planet. So the next time you step on the bathroom scale, you need to remember that 1 pound of that weight is not you at all, but the billions of bugs that live in your gut. This may sound alarming, but many of these organisms are crucial to good health.

A probiotic is an organism which contributes to the health and balance of the intestinal tract. A probiotic is also referred to as the "friendly", "beneficial", or "good" bacteria which when ingested acts to maintain a healthy intestinal tract and help fight illness and disease.



A healthy lower intestine should contain at least 85% friendly bacteria to prevent the over colonization of disease causing micro-organisms like E. coli and salmonella. Our [colon](#) can maintain its health with 15% unfriendly bacteria, if the body contains at least 85% probiotic friendly bacteria. Most people have this percentage reversed.

The word "Probiotic" simply means "for life" which explains why these nutrients are so important. But if you want the proper scientific definition of a Probiotic here it is:

"A live microbial feed supplement, which beneficially affects the host by improving its intestinal microbial balance"

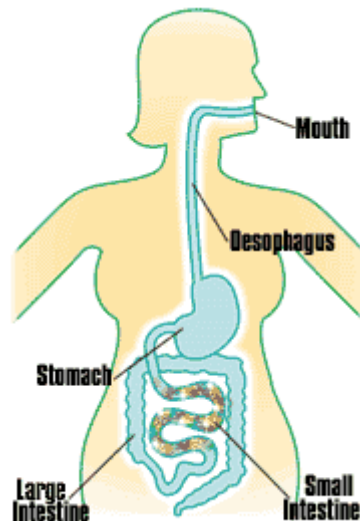
New research is establishing how important the supplementation of probiotics can be for a variety of conditions. Probiotics enhance the [immune system](#) by favorably altering the gut micro-ecology and preventing unfriendly organisms from gaining a foothold in the body. They prevent the overgrowth of yeast and fungus and produce substances that can lower cholesterol.

Probiotics are widely recommended for the treatment of Candida - a fungal infection - because they establish large, healthy populations of friendly bacteria that compete with the Candida that is trying to take up residence in the intestine. Probiotics are also essential in the treatment and prevention of thrush, vaginal yeast infections, and athlete's foot. Good health depends fundamentally upon the more than 400 types of friendly, symbiotic bacteria that inhabit the digestive tract.

Why Do We Need Probiotics?

Two of the most damaging substances to the delicate intestinal flora balance are [chlorine and sodium fluoride](#), present in most [treated city water](#), and thus also present in most beverages which one gets at restaurants. The drinking of alcoholic beverages also contributes to the destruction of the intestinal flora. Medical antibiotics, birth control pills and many other allopathic drugs cause damage to the intestinal flora and to the tissue in the intestinal wall.

Poor eating habits, chlorinated [drinking water](#), stress and disease and the use of antibiotics in food production as well as in medical treatments can wreak havoc in the gastrointestinal tract by destroying good bacteria and allowing undesirable bacteria to multiply. When the ratio of good bacteria to bad is lowered, problems begin to arise such as excessive gas, bloating, constipation, intestinal toxicity and poor absorption of nutrients.



While it's true that non-beneficial bacteria are naturally occurring in the intestinal tract, problems begin when their growth goes unchecked and probiotics play an especially important role in keeping in check the pathogenic bacteria that cause disease.

A good probiotic supplement will contain millions and millions of live bacteria to bolster and replenish levels of the health promoting good bugs in your digestive tract. Once there, these probiotic reinforcements join forces with the existing friendly bacteria to help inhibit the growth of more harmful microbes.

This, in turn, will help [improve the digestion](#) and absorption of your food and stimulate and support the [immune system](#).

Here's a summary of what probiotics can do:

- Inhibit the growth of harmful bacteria that cause digestive stress
- Improve digestion of food and absorption of vitamins
- Stimulate the body's natural defence mechanism - the [immune system](#)
- Help make vitamins needed by the body

Why are probiotics supplements necessary?

The answer is, that while it is true that certain foods - especially live yogurt, Japanese Miso, Tempeh and some cheeses have a probiotic action in the gut, you can never be sure what strain of bacteria you are eating or exactly how much is contained in these foods. And there is no way of knowing just how many of those replacement bacteria are going to survive and make it all the way through the acidic and bug-killing environment of the stomach to the [colon](#).

There are other foods, such as bananas, [garlic](#) and onions, which can also help repopulate levels of the good bacteria in the intestine. But we do not yet know how many you need to eat for the best results and, you can only eat so much [garlic](#) in a day!

Selecting a good probiotics supplement

The single most important thing you need to remember, is that even if all probiotics products contain what they promise on the label (and it appears that, according to clinical tests, many do not), only those probiotics which have a special coating to protect them as they pass through the stomach and small intestine will really hit the spot.

This is because the stomach is a sterile and acidic environment and has been designed to kill off bugs - the good ones along with the bad. And if the good bugs cannot get to the large [colon](#) - that part of the intestine where they are most needed - then you will not get the full benefit.

One way around this problem is to make tablets that are “enteric-coated.” This means the tablets are coated with a special protective layer to ensure the microbes will survive en route through the stomach and will get to the lower part of the intestine. This is where levels of existing bacteria, good and bad, are at their highest.

So, if you plan to take a probiotic, buy smart and buy one that has been “enteric” coated.

Reference website: <http://www.healingdaily.com/detoxification-diet/probiotics.htm>

[Bifidophilus Flora Force](#) and [Probiotic 11](#) are good choices for high quality probiotics.

Click [here](#) for ordering instructions.