

Probiotics Demystified

Gut health is about a balance between various bacteria, viruses, pathogens, yeasts, etc. It's never too late to change your diet

Gut bacteria – some good, some bad – play a vital role in your health. Rebuilding the balance of beneficial bacteria and other microorganisms in your body is critical to your overall health, immune function. Research is showing how digestive issues can lead to health problems such as fatigue, brain fog, skin rashes, mood and mental health issues).

Beneficial bacteria are key to keeping potential pathogens from multiplying. (For example, Candida albicans is part of our normal microflora, but an overgrowth can cause a yeast infection.) While most of us associate probiotics with better digestion, there are many different types. Some do help to digest food, while others play a role in producing vitamins, destroying pathogens, and so on. Humans used to get probiotics all the time from both fermented foods and fresh produce harvested from probiotic-rich soil. Of course, this has all changed now. The use of pesticides and treating produce post-harvest has also cut down drastically on any probiotics we might get naturally. This means you have to be much more intentional about your probiotic intake.

If you have too few beneficial microbes, the pathogenic ones will get out of control. This is where probiotics come in. They work to restore proper function by replenishing helpful bacterial strains. This not only provides your gut and body with bacteria that are beneficial, it also keeps the harmful ones from doing damage.

Add good bacteria with probiotic foods

List of probiotic foods include:

- **Yogurt** - plain organic yogurt with live or active cultures
- **Kefir** - fermented yogurt-like drink which has its own strains of probiotic bacteria
- **Kombucha tea** - double fermented and sweetened tea contains vitamins, and amino acids
- **Sauerkraut & Kimchi** - fermented unpasteurized vegetables
- **Tempeh** - fermented soybeans makes a type of natural antibiotic that fights certain bacteria
- **Miso** - fermented soybean paste used to make a salty soup high in B vitamins
- **Sourdough Bread** - San Francisco's sourdough bread packs a probiotic that may help digestion
- **Acidophilus Milk** - fermented with bacteria it and Buttermilk is rich in probiotics
- **Kvass** - lacto-fermented beet juice or beet brine
- **Natto** - soybeans fermented with a bacteria called Bacillus subtilis has a pungent flavor and gluey texture
- **Soft Cheeses** - Fermented soft cheeses, like Gouda
- **Sour Pickles** - naturally fermented (no vinegar) sea salt and water feeds the growth of good bacteria



One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well - Virginia Wolf

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