

PREBIOTICS/PROBIOTICS

FACTSHEET

Prebiotics promote the growth and proliferation of beneficial bacteria in the digestive system. Probiotics have been defined as live microorganisms which when administered in adequate amounts confer a health benefit on the host. Unlike probiotics, which are live organisms, prebiotics are components of food that are not otherwise easily digested by humans and these food components essentially feed beneficial bacteria in your gut.

Types of Prebiotics

Anything with sugar in it can be a prebiotic.

Inulin - Inulin is found in 36,000 plants such as:

- Herbs - chicory root, burdock root and dandelion root
- Fruits - such as apples, bananas
- Sweet vegetables - such as onions, garlic, asparagus, leeks and Jerusalem artichokes
- Raw apple cider vinegar
- EcoBloom - Body Ecology's prebiotic dietary fiber supplement
- § Mother's milk for babies
- Fructooligosaccharides (FOS), a subgroup of inulin, is also a prebiotic and is often added to dairy foods and baked goods. It improves the taste and stimulates the growth of the beneficial bacteria, bifidobacteria.

What Can Prebiotics Do For You?

• Heart Health

Prebiotics have been shown to moderate cholesterol and triglyceride levels- both indicators of heart disease. Specifically, one study shows that inulin can reduce arteriosclerosis, or hardening of the arteries by 30%.

As heart disease becomes more widespread among men and women, new approaches to treatment and prevention that do not involve medications are proving to be effective and have the added benefit of being side effect free, unless you count improved health as a side effect!

• Immunity

From an immunity standpoint, who doesn't want to feel better and get sick less often? In preliminary research, prebiotics boost white blood cells and killer T cells, and may even improve your body's response to vaccinations.

Children in one test group who ate yogurt containing inulin had fewer daycare absences, fewer doctor visits and took fewer antibiotics.

• Chronic Illness and Digestion

Because prebiotics act in your intestines, they have a profound effect on the pathogens and bad bacteria in your body that can cause disease. Prebiotics are being used to treat Irritable Bowel Syndrome and Crohn's Disease, and may also prove useful for treating cancer, osteoporosis and diabetes.

Probiotics

Probiotics are dietary supplements or food products that contain beneficial, friendly and good bacteria or yeasts normally found in human body.

Benefits of Probiotics:

Immune system

- Maintain optimal health and wellness.

- Provide a natural defense or immune system for your body.
- Prevent growth of harmful bacteria.
- Strengthen your immune system towards allergies and other autoimmune diseases.
- Help your body to produce vitamins.

Digestion system

- Support healthy digestion.
- Increase defecation and reduce constipation.
- Help control the illness-causing bacteria in your intestinal tract.
- Reduce the effects of Candida infection.
- Improve digestion of lactose, especially for you who are lactose-intolerant.
- Reducing your cholesterol level.
- Reducing blood pressure.
- Improving your body's absorption of minerals, especially calcium.
- Decreasing dental-caries-causing microbes in your mouth.

Probiotics To Prevent Disease

- Cure vaginal yeast infections.
- Urinary tract infections.
- Prevent diarrhea after having treatment with certain antibiotics.
- Prevent diarrhea caused by virus or Salmonella.
- Manage the signs and symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome (IBS).
- Strengthen the immune system to combat allergies and other immunal diseases.
- Reduce amounts of cancer-causing substances in your intestine.
- Reduce the effects of a Candida infection.
- Prevent and/or reduce colon cancer.
- Reduce the development of allergy in your children.
- Reduce infections and inflammation.
- Fighting eczema

Probiotics food

- Miso
- Cheese
- Kefir - Kefir has been a reputable fermented dairy product with many health benefits. Probiotics is one of them.
- Sauerkraut
- Pickles
- Chocolate
- Tofu
- Tempeh - A fermented soybean with a nutty taste food from Indonesia, that has become more popular for probiotics source of food.

Probiotics and Prebiotics: They Work Synergistically

It's important to remember that both probiotics and prebiotics work together, synergistically. While you may load up on probiotic supplements, it won't do your body much good if you continue to eat a diet devoid of fresh fruits, vegetables and other foods rich in inulin, fructans and oligosaccharides. Similarly, a diet rich in prebiotics will give your intestinal flora something to feed on, but it's likely that your intestinal flora could use a boost if you've typically eaten a poor diet or been at antibiotics at some point

References:

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