

## Probiotics and Prebiotics



Whether we realize it or not, the human body contains millions of kinds of bacteria. The balance of these bacteria help our body systems run well. Each kind of bacteria is responsible for different functions in supporting our health. For example, the bacteria *E. coli* and *Cyanocobalamin* in the intestines help the process of food digestion. Any problems which affect the balance of the intestinal bacteria will cause digestive system disorders. Probiotics and prebiotics prevent these disorders.

### **What are Probiotics?**

Simply speaking, probiotics are live bacteria which can be taken as a health supplement. The good bacteria in probiotics are beneficial not only for humans, but also for animals since it helps improve intestinal microflora balance. Probiotics are good for intestinal health as well as for preventing harmful bacteria that may cause serious disease and also affect the body's immune system.

Originally, probiotics came from bacterial cultures. Some of the most common probiotics used are *Lactobacillus Acidophilus* and *Bifidobacterium*. There are many forms of probiotics, such as tablets, capsules, powders, or mixed in the food. If we consume probiotics in the right dosage, it will bring great health benefits.

Probiotics are used in a lot of medicines and health supplements due to their ability to help bolster the body's immunity from any contagious diseases like influenza. If you love milk and dairy products but you are actually lactose-intolerant, then you can consume probiotic supplements to reduce the effects. (Digestive enzymes are an additional solution to this and other digestive issues. Click [here](#) to read my blog post about digestive enzymes).

Probiotics are also useful to prevent diseases of the digestive system such as diarrhea, gastroenteritis, vaginal and urogenital infections, as well as intestinal diseases. They also help reduce blood pressure by regulating hypertension and cholesterol concentrations. Probiotics are also good to prevent carcinogenic substances which cause cancer. Despite all of these benefits, we should remember that these microorganisms are not the same as the ones living naturally in our intestines, so we should not consume too much.

### **What are Prebiotics?**

Different from probiotics, prebiotics are non-digestible food ingredient or food components that cannot be digested by the digestive enzymes. The main work of prebiotics is to supply the necessary nutrients needed by the good bacteria. Some examples of prebiotics are Fructooligosaccharides (FOS) such as inulin and Galactooligosaccharides (GOS). These substances can be found naturally in some food sources around you, such as onions, garlic, bananas, leeks, artichokes, asparagus, soy, wheat, legumes, as well as nuts.

Prebiotics bring good effects by triggering bacteria activity which will improve the body's immunity. It also helps increasing the absorption of various minerals from the food we consume. In addition, prebiotics helps keep the balance in the amount of bacteria in our digestive system. This results in prevention of indigestion and other digestion problems such as bowel syndrome irritation, colitis or large intestine inflammation. In long-term use, prebiotics will even reduce the risk of large intestine cancer. (Remember,

I'm not a doctor, however).

Where do I get good probiotic supplements?

For many years, I got most of my probiotic supplementation via greek yogurt. About five years ago I found a supplement that I really liked and would still recommend to those only looking for a probiotic source (Clicking on th photo below will take you to my affiliate link):

Full Disclosure: About a year and a half ago I switched to a comprehensive program that makes it easy to fill all my nutritional gaps while also filling my probiotic/prebiotic needs. I am a promoter for the products I now use, so I won't name them here. If this is something you would be interested in, click [here](#) for product info and ordering options.

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