

PROBIOTICS

What are they?

Probiotics are friendly bacteria that we eat and have various healthful effects on our bodies. At any given moment we can have up to 3lbs of bacteria in our colon (lower gut). Although we naturally have a specific colony of bacteria in our gut, events such as prolonged illness, lack of nutrients in our diet, antibiotics, and aging can deplete us of our natural bacteria. Eating a variety of probiotics can help support our bodies until our natural gut flora can restore itself.

What do they do?

When we eat probiotics, they survive the acid in our stomach and gather in our colon. Sometimes they may form colonies in our colon and other times they may simply enhance the health effects of the bacteria in our gut.

Some of their effects include

- Enhancing our immune system
- Providing us with nutrients such as energy and vitamin K
- Managing diarrhea and constipation
- Decreasing inflammation in the gut
- Protection us against unfriendly bacteria and infections

Sources

You can get them from supplements and a wide range of foods such as

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| ▪ Yogurt | ▪ Kim Chi |
| ▪ Kefir | ▪ Sauerkraut |
| ▪ Buttermilk | ▪ Brewer's Yeast |
| ▪ Tempeh | ▪ Kombucha |
| ▪ Miso | |

What to look for in yogurt

Some yogurts and probiotic products are treated with heat after the friendly bacteria have fermented, effectively destroying the active cultures and their health benefits. When shopping for probiotic yogurt, look for one that carries the "Live & Active Cultures" seal as seen below.



Other products may not disclose whether or not they have active culture or if they have been heat treated. Be mindful about the source of the product and if you have the opportunity, ask the producer.

Sources

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<http://www.probiotic.org/intestinal-flora.htm>

<http://www.drbillcode.com/probiotics.html>

<http://www.usprobiotics.org/products.asp>