

PROBIOTICS: SUPPORTING DIGESTIVE HEALTH[†]

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 60 to 70 million Americans are affected by digestive issues. A growing body of research suggests that consumption of Probiotics, known as the “good” bacteria that naturally exist in the digestive system, can help support a healthy digestive system.[†]

Specifically, probiotics may help support regularity of bowel movements, a healthy gut microflora, and digestive health during travel. The production and absorption of certain nutrients in the colon may also be enhanced by probiotics.[†] For example, a lower pH in the colon may enhance the absorption of calcium.

KNOW THE SCIENCE

Understanding the scientific evidence supporting a particular probiotic is very important to ensuring your patient is taking one that will work for their specific digestive concern. This will center on the specific genus, species and strain contained in a probiotic product. The most common probiotics you will find are from the Lactobacillus or Bifidobacterium genus or a Bacillus coagulans species.

Lactobacillus is a genus of non-pathogenic bacteria and has long been considered a probiotic. Lactobacillus makes up a small but important portion of the gut microbiota, primarily residing in the small intestine. Lactobacillus plantarum 299v has been scientifically studied in randomized, placebo controlled clinical studies to support digestive health and the growth of beneficial intestinal bacteria.^{1,2†}

Bifidobacterium is another genus of non-pathogenic bacteria that is also classified as a probiotic. Bifidobacterium reside primarily in the large intestine. Bifidobacterium lactis SD-5674 has been scientifically studied to support bowel movement regularity and the growth of beneficial intestinal bacteria.^{3†}

Bacillus coagulans is another non-pathogenic bacteria, and it is a heat resistant probiotic strain that exists mainly as spores. Bacillus coagulans IS-2 is a strain that has been studied clinically and shown to support digestive health.^{4,5†}

Not all probiotics are the same. Different probiotic strains have been studied for different effects. Be sure the probiotic your patients are taking have strains that have been scientifically studied, and that the science has verified the desired health benefits.



WHAT TO LOOK FOR ON A PROBIOTIC PRODUCT LABEL:

GENUS, SPECIES & STRAIN

These should be specified, such as Bifidobacterium lactis SD5674 or Lactobacillus plantarum 299V.

SUGGESTED DOSE

This is most commonly noted as Colony Forming Units, or CFUs. Look for the number of live microorganisms in each serving or dose through the expiration date, not at the time of manufacture.

PROPER STORAGE CONDITIONS

Storage of probiotics should be clear on the label. Refrigeration is not required for all probiotics. Some probiotics stored properly in sealed blister packs do not require refrigeration to deliver the suggested dose of the live microorganism(s).

HEALTH BENEFITS

Be certain the claims on the probiotic coincide with scientific research on the specific genus, species and strain in the probiotic supplement.



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*Find those Nature Made USP verified products on NatureMade.com/USP **Based on 2017 U.S. News & World Report—Pharmacy Times survey

[†]These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. These products are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.

References

- 1 P.A. Waller et. al., Dose response effect of Bifidobacterium lactis HN019 on whole gut transit time and functional gastrointestinal symptoms in adults. Scandinavian Journal of Gastroenterology 46: 1057 – 1064, 2011.
- 2 Ducrotte P et al. Clinical trial: Lactobacillus plantarum 299v (DSM 9843) improves symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome. World J Gastroenterol 2012;18:4012-8.
- 3 Ahmed M, et al. Impact of consumption of different levels of Bifidobacterium Lactis HN019 on the intestinal microflora of elderly human subjects. The Journal of Nutrition, Health and Aging, 2007;11:26-31.
- 4 R.M. Sudha and S. Bhoonagiri. Efficacy of bacillus coagulans UNIQUE II-2 in the treatment of patients with acute diarrhea. International Journal of Probiotics and Prebiotics 7:1 – 5, 2012.
- 5 Pharmavite Internal Study, 2015. Randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled parallel study to investigate the effect of a probiotic gummy with Bacillus coagulans IS-2 on functional bloating and occasional diarrhea. KGG Synergeize Inc., 255 Queens Avenue, London, Ontario, Canada, N6A 5R8.