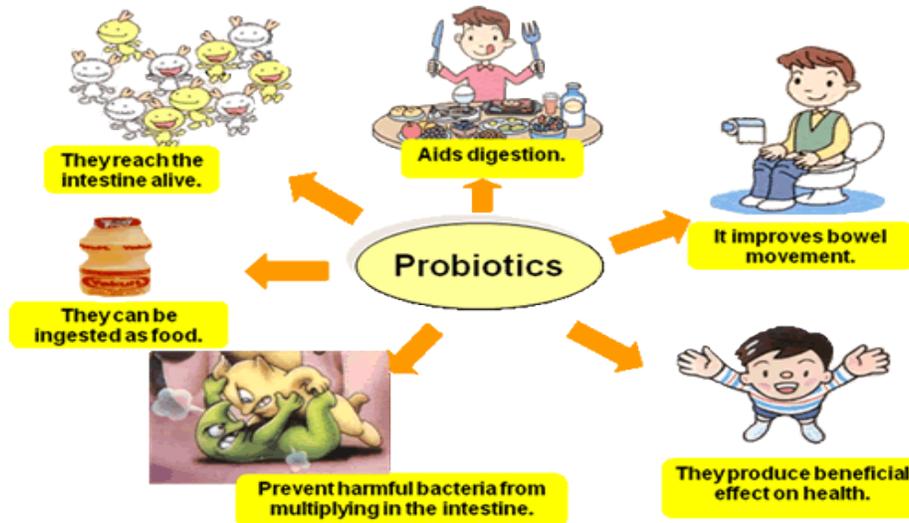


8 Things You Absolutely Must Consider Before Taking Your Next Probiotic Supplement



This picture is what most people think of have when they hear the term “probiotics” and probiotic health. If this is what you do indeed envision, my next question to you would be then, “What is your idea of how to get those probiotics?”

I bet your initial response is from a pill or supplement.

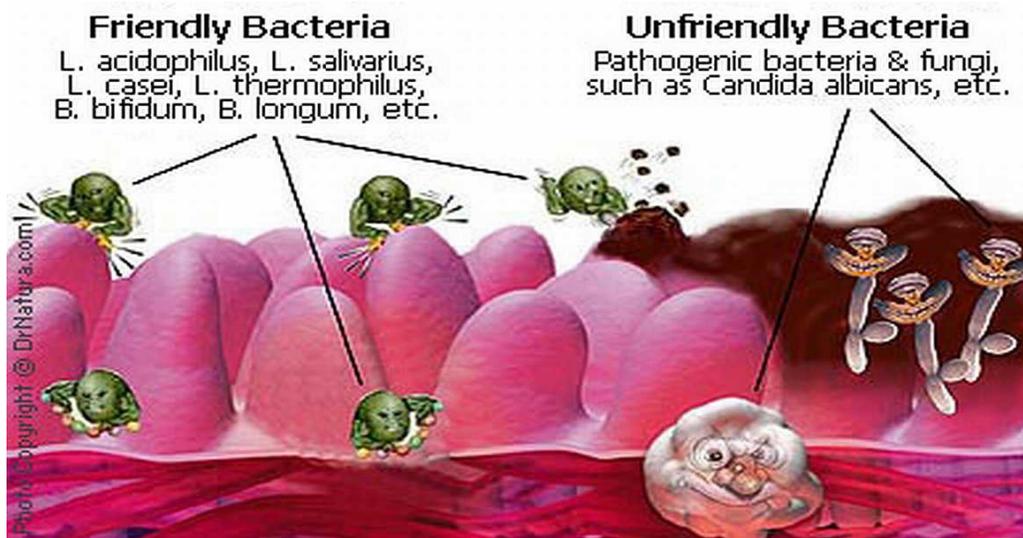
I've seen lots of people benefit from taking probiotics, including myself, but within the last year, I have stopped taking probiotics in supplement form. Why? After my own bit of research (which I highly encourage you to do as well), I have come to the conclusion that there may be potential issues associated with probiotic use which I'll describe below. It's not necessarily that they aren't effective; they can be in the right situation. I simply believe there are other, more desirable options. So why do I recommend that many people stop taking probiotics as well? Here are my 8 reasons.

Reason #1: Those probiotic supplements you are taking are manufactured in a laboratory.

It's important to know that probiotic supplements are proprietary strains made in a pharmaceutical company's laboratory and don't come specifically from natural foods. What this means is that they are formulated to be patented and sold for a profit. Now, don't get me wrong, there is not anything wrong with that. I like to think that most companies do what's in the best interest of their consumers. But it's my take that there are more desirable, easier, and tastier ways to get your daily dose of probiotics.... from foods. I believe that in most instances, foods provide our bodies with a significant amount more amount of health benefits needed to prosper. Fortunately, you can't patent foods, and that means there are limited opportunities for profit for companies.

Reason #2: From a cost perspective, it can be quite expensive.

If you have bought a “high quality” probiotic, you'll find yourself spending well over \$30-\$40 bottle. (If you spend less than \$10 bottle, in most instances the quality of the supplement is something significantly less than desired and would seriously consider replacing). When I used to recommend certain probiotic supplements, I found the best quality ones were sometimes well over \$50. There has to be a better way to spend \$50 a month, right? I believe by choosing to find alternative sources of good, natural probiotics through foods, you could save you and your family \$400-\$500 a year.



Reason #3: The preventative nature of taking probiotic supplements may be completely ineffective and unnecessary.

When people have digestive issues or begin to understand the importance of taking probiotics, oftentimes they take a supplement to bring their body into balance. After a while, a difference is noted as that bacterial balance is shifted in favor of a healthy eco-gut system. What many people may not realize is that probiotics coming from a lab via a pill or softgel don't grow or prosper in our bodies... They essentially die out. So taking your daily dosage of probiotics are not creating a fertile land of good bacteria, but trying to ensure that the number of good bacteria outnumbers the bad. But as discussed in reason #1, while the bacterial are adapting and changing, your probiotic pills are not.

Wouldn't it be better to allow the bacteria to thrive and prosper on the own? Eating fermented foods and following that up by feeding your gut bacteria good foods to feed on (or prebiotics) are far more effective and cheaper than taking probiotic supplements.

Reason #4: The quality of the probiotics in the supplement you are taking may not be all what it seems.

Even though it may read that there are billions of probiotics in your pill, there will always be serious questions as to about how many actual live microorganisms are actually left in a probiotic capsule by the time you actually ingest it. From a physiological standpoint, probiotics cannot tolerate high temperatures, and if they haven't been constantly refrigerated, there is a good chance they have lost most of their live cultures.

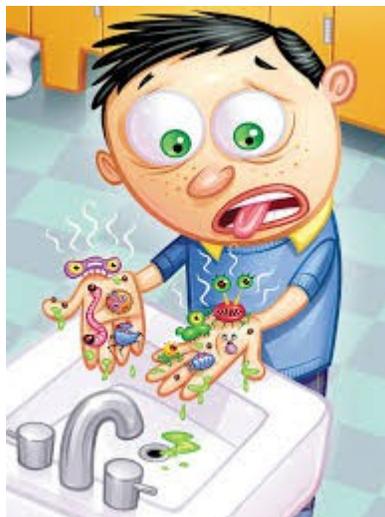
On top of that, even though you may have taken extra precautions in keeping the pills refrigerated, unless they are specially coated, many supplements do not survive well in the gut and organisms may die off before taking effect in the digestive system, reducing possible negative effects.

Reason #5: Your body's bacteria is in a constant state of evolution.

You might recognize the strains of Lactobacillus and/or Bifidobacteria on the label and maybe a few others, but every pharmaceutical company or lab has a different formulation of different strains with different studies and their own reasons why their specific formulation is best. It's important to know not all strains of every type of patented formulas of probiotics interact in our own bodies, and more specifically with the gut in exactly the same way as another.

This is no more apparent than in the widespread use of antibiotics in humans and in our food sources. With the increased usage and availability of antibiotics, it is part of nature that causes that bacteria to learn how to adapt and becomes resistant to certain things. There is the old adage that nothing can stay the same forever and is generally thought of as the reason why there is not one antibiotic that can work for everything. Add to the fact that every body part, like armpits, stomach, intestines, toenails, ears all have vastly different niches for different strains of good or bad bacteria, and you can see there are many opportunities to create more antibiotics.

So what does this mean? In most instances, an initially supply of probiotics may help in the short term and resolve some digestive issues. But over the long term, they are living things, and living things are adaptable. This adaptability leads to the question of which specific strains of bacteria are most important or the realization that maybe these strains are not as important as once thought?



Reason #6: If you only take probiotic pill, you are missing the bigger picture.

There is more to getting into optimal digestive health than by eating a cup of Activa and hoping that you make regular trips to the bathroom. Look at most strains in most probiotic supplements. They have what, a dozen species? What about the other 99% of species? Even if you decided to take every probiotic supplement known to mankind, you'd probably only get about 50-60 different species. That is certain great, but what about the other 95%?

In addition, most probiotic supplements are dairy-based or are derived from dairy. Again, that is great for digesting milk, but what about beyond that? Their benefits can be limiting.

Reason #7: Taking more pills is an inconvenience.

When you compare several different probiotic supplements, you'll find that probiotic dosages will vary between the various supplements used. Each bottle may have different suggestions as to when to take and how to take them, and how many to take as well. In general, most are recommended to be taken daily up to 30 minutes before you eat, several times a day. It is also recommended you take them for 30 days to determine if those supplement provide you with any noticeable changes. To me, this seems very cumbersome and time-consuming, having to create a separate schedule for taking probiotic pills separate from any other medicine you may be taking. If you have the time, then certainly this may work out for you. But if you are like most people I've worked with, simply including probiotic foods with meals you are already eating makes the most sense.

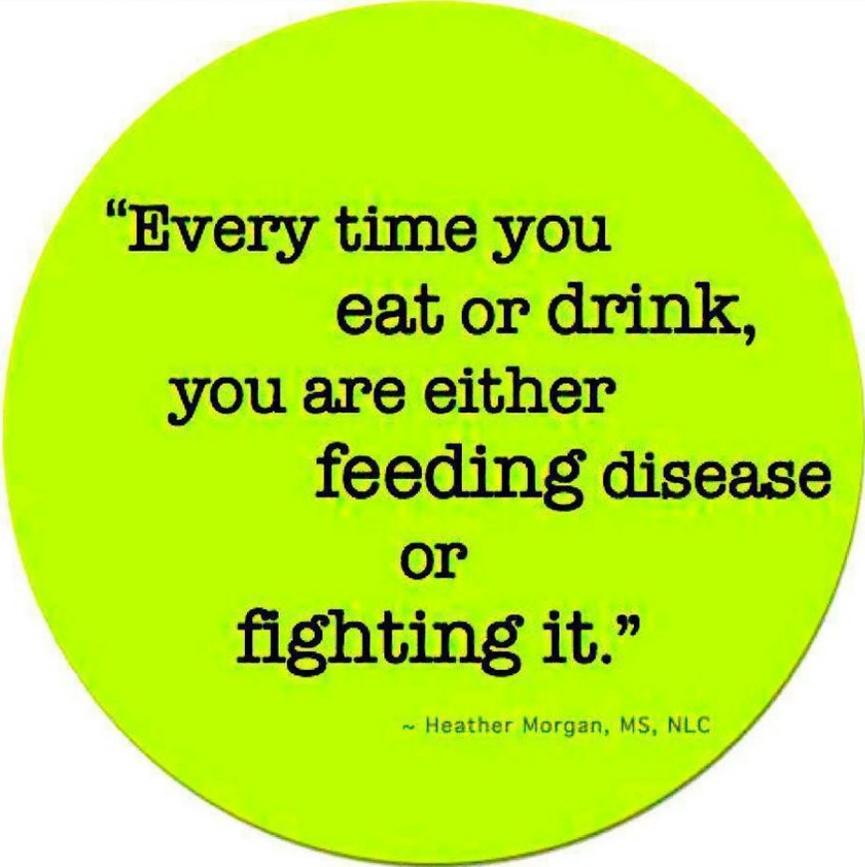


Reason #8: You can find more beneficial bacteria than the pills simply by opening up the refrigerator.

According to some sources, probiotic foods contain upwards of 100 times more good bacteria than an entire bottle of high potency probiotic supplement. Probiotic foods and drinks are not anything new. They have been around for hundreds of centuries. Fermented foods have been a part of nearly every traditional culture throughout the history of mankind, mostly in the form of cultured vegetables. It has only been in the last century and the widespread use of refrigeration have we, as a society, stopped using the traditional use of fermented foods.

This is ultimately the real reason why I don't take probiotic supplements. I have replaced probiotic supplements with fermented foods and probiotic drinks and a regimen of eating more soluble fiber. I believe this is a far healthier, cheaper, and tastier approach to maintaining gut health. So what can you do?

1. Look at your current probiotic supplements you are taking now. How many strains of bacteria does it have? What is the count? Begin to compare to other supplements in the marketplace and determine if that is the best option for you.
2. If you have been taking the same supplement for several months (possibly as prevention or from a cost perspective), and my reasons don't get you to consider making some changes, at least consider switching to another brand for variety.
3. Eat more probiotic foods. Try to have at least 1 meal a day that does include a fermented food.



**“Every time you
eat or drink,
you are either
feeding disease
or
fighting it.”**

~ Heather Morgan, MS, NLC