



Felician Village

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Learning about Prebiotics and Probiotics

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In your gastrointestinal (GI) tract are millions of microorganisms, some of which are good bacteria called probiotics. Probiotics help to improve the health of your GI tract. You may have also heard about prebiotics. Prebiotics are non-digestible components of food that serve as food for probiotics allowing them to flourish in your gut.

There are many benefits to having a healthy population of probiotics and prebiotics in your gut:

1. Boost the immune system.
2. Prevent infections.
3. Improve digestion and the body's ability to absorb the nutrients in food.
4. Help to manage gastrointestinal diseases such as Crohn's disease, colitis, irritable bowel syndrome, diarrhea, and even prevent colon cancer.
5. Help control blood sugar levels.
6. Prevent and manage some allergies.
7. Manage eczema.
8. Alleviate constipation.

Some medications (such as antibiotics), health conditions, and an unhealthy diet can destroy the beneficial bacteria in your gut, allowing unhealthy bacteria to flourish and leading to an unhealthy GI tract. It is important to maintain the level of beneficial bacteria in our bodies by consuming probiotics and prebiotics on a daily basis. It is especially important to include them in our diets while taking antibiotics.

Where can one find probiotics and prebiotics?

1. Probiotic Dietary Sources: yogurt with active cultures, Kefir, fermented vegetables (sauerkraut), Kombucha tea, fermented soy foods (tempeh, miso), buttermilk.
2. Prebiotic Dietary Sources: garlic, onions, leeks, asparagus, bananas, berries, chicory root, wheat, barley, rye, oats, flax, honey, legumes, leafy greens.
3. Probiotic Supplements: look for a supplement with several probiotic strains and a count of at least 3 billion.