

# HEALTH Q&A

## Probiotics: What You Should Know

(NAPSA)—A growing number of people are discovering the health benefits of probiotics, although many others are still unfamiliar with the restorative properties of these beneficial bacteria.

Here are answers to a few common questions about these “intestinal flora” from the experts at Vitacost, a nutritional supplement online retailer:

### **Q. What are probiotics?**

A. Probiotics are the good bacteria that live in our body. Probiotics help support healthy digestion, immunity and well-being. Most probiotics are found in dairy products that naturally contain two types of probiotic microbes: lactobacilli and bifidobacteria. The best-known probiotic is lactobacillus acidophilus, found in yogurt, acidophilus milk and probiotic supplements.

### **Q. How do I know whether to take probiotics?**

A. If you regularly have digestive problems such as gas, abdominal pain, diarrhea or constipation, you may have an insufficient amount of probiotics in your system and an imbalance of good/bad bacteria. Probiotics may be able to help with this.

### **Q. Which probiotic supplement is best for me?**

A. It's best to choose a probiotic supplement that guarantees its potency (the promised level of live bacteria) at time of use. Make sure that it contains a high-quality probiotic to nourish and sustain existing friendly bacterial colonies within the intestines.

### **Q. Are probiotics safe for children?**

A. Most probiotics are suitable for children over 5. However, it's best to consult your pediatrician before administering a probiotic supplement.



**Probiotic supplements are believed to help improve digestion in a number of ways.**

### **Q. Can I take probiotics if I'm lactose intolerant?**

A. Probiotics, in many cases, aid in the digestion of lactose.

### **Q. Do probiotics have other health benefits?**

A. Besides inhibiting the growth of harmful bacteria, these microorganisms may help promote healthy intestinal activity and colon regularity.

Probiotics may offer the following benefits:

- Aid in healthy digestion and nutrient assimilation;
- Replenish colonies of friendly bacteria that may be destroyed by antibiotics and certain health complications;
- Counter overgrowth of “bad” organisms in the gastrointestinal tract; and
- Enhance immune response (a large percentage of cells of the immune system are located in the digestive tract).

Nutraceutical Sciences Institute® (NSI®) offers a potent probiotic blend containing 15 different probiotic strains, each offering its own unique health benefits. It is manufactured using the patented LiveBac® process for an improved shelf life, even at room temperature. To learn more, visit [www.Vitacost.com/pro](http://www.Vitacost.com/pro).