

# Wellness

## REVIEW

### The Best Belly Bug is a Probiotic



#### A Healthy Gut = A Healthy Body!

The term probiotic is derived from the Latin and Greek language with the literal meaning “for life” - and when you look at their many health promoting effects it’s easy to see why. The digestive process is highly dependent on the balance of beneficial bacteria throughout the digestive tract. Probiotics enhance digestive system function and overall wellbeing, as well as regulate immune function through interacting with the large proportion of immune cells located within the digestive tract.

#### The Beneficial Bug Barrier

The gastrointestinal system is comprised of bacteria; roughly 400 species of good bacteria live inside your digestive tract. In fact, you have more bacteria living inside you than you have cells in your entire body! To maintain optimal health and wellbeing, it is important to have the right balance of “good” and “bad” bacteria making up your intestinal microflora. An overgrowth of pathogenic “bad” bacteria can cause various symptoms such as:

- Poor digestive function.
- Symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome - constipation, diarrhoea, bloating and/or flatulence.
- Increase in allergies/intolerances or eczema.
- Immune dysfunction.

#### Barrier Blow Out – What Are the Causes?

An important role of the intestinal microflora is to create a “barrier effect” in the gut, which helps the “good” bacteria to flourish while reducing “bad” bacteria. The integrity of this barrier can become impaired due to stress, illness, antibiotic treatments, poor diet, excessive alcohol consumption or physical alterations in the gut. These factors contribute to the overgrowth of “bad” bugs, causing an imbalance known as dysbiosis, which affects digestion and immune system function. Probiotics can help replenish the “good” bacteria, supporting the integrity and function of the gastrointestinal tract.

#### One Size Does NOT Fit All

When selecting a probiotic supplement, it is important to choose the right probiotic strain for the right condition, as not all are created equal. Probiotics are made up of a genus, species and a strain; for example, *Lactobacillus* (genus) *plantarum* (species) 299v (strain). Scientific evidence has shown that particular strains exert different effects within the body, making them beneficial in helping with specific health concerns.

**The most effective therapeutic strains recommended include:**

- ***Lactobacillus acidophilus* (NCFM):** Is one of the most extensively tested and proven probiotic strains available. Numerous studies demonstrate the many beneficial

properties of NCFM, making it a great everyday probiotic to maintain bacterial balance. It is particularly useful for restoring friendly bacteria in your intestines following a course of antibiotics.

- ***Bifidobacterium lactis* (Bi-07):** A scientifically proven strain well-suited for intestinal survival. Bi-07 has been shown to support balanced and healthy immune system function and it can help prevent symptoms of dysbiosis. It has also been shown to help reduce gastrointestinal disturbances, especially after antibiotic use.
- ***Lactobacillus rhamnosus* GG (LGG®):** This strain has been studied in over 350 clinical trials and shown to survive the acidic digestive conditions. LGG® may help to decrease the risk of stomach upset, including diarrhoea, in both adults and children, as well as shorten the duration if you do fall sick. Additionally, LGG® has the ability to modulate immune system function and should be the probiotic of choice to help decrease the incidence of developing eczema and other atopic conditions, as well as helping to alleviate the symptoms of allergies and eczema.
- ***Lactobacillus plantarum* 299v:** A highly bioactive strain whose range of actions differ from other *Lactobacillus* strains. This probiotic has been extensively validated in assisting to manage the symptoms of medically-diagnosed irritable bowel syndrome and other inflammatory bowel disorders. It has demonstrated effectiveness in promoting improvements of IBS symptoms such as bloating, flatulence, helping to relieve pain and inflammation of the digestive tract and regulate bowel motions.

#### Probiotic Shopping List

In addition to selecting the most suitable strain for your needs, some tips to help you choose an effective and quality probiotic include making sure it:

- Contains acid and bile resistant strains so it can survive the passage through the digestive tract.
- Has been shown to be of therapeutic benefit in humans.
- Contains species and strains that are indigenous to the human body.
- Contains a therapeutically proven dose of probiotics.
- Is produced under the highest quality control standards to ensure viability, potency, stability and efficacy.

#### Maximise Your Wellness

Supporting good gastrointestinal health is essential for wellness. As we are faced with many daily dietary and lifestyle factors which can disrupt the balance of bacteria occupying our intestines, taking a high-strength probiotic can help to maintain the right balance in your digestive tract to help you to function at your best. Come in and talk to your Practitioner today so they can select the most appropriate probiotic formulation to help you achieve optimal health and vitality.