

Prebiotic and Probiotic Foods

This handout explains how eating a variety of prebiotic and probiotic foods each day can support healthy gut bacteria, improve digestion, and lists specific foods and tips for adding them to your diet.

Benefits of Prebiotics and Probiotics

Probiotics are “good” bacteria that live in your intestines. They help break down food, fight off harmful germs, and keep your digestion healthy. **Prebiotics** are special types of fiber that your body can’t digest, but the good bacteria can. They are the food for probiotics, helping them grow and stay strong. Eating both prebiotics and probiotics gives you the best balance for a healthy gut.

Eating both prebiotics and probiotics can help the “good” bacteria in your intestines (called microflora). This can help you have better health and more normal bowel movements. Many of these foods have a lot of fiber — both soluble and insoluble. Add them slowly to your diet, a little more each day, until you reach a healthy amount. Eating too much at once can cause stomach pain and extra gas.



There are many delicious foods to try with probiotics and prebiotics.

Prebiotic Foods

- Acacia Gum (gum Arabic)
 - Purchase as a powder to mix with water.
 - 1 Tablespoon provides 6 grams insoluble fiber
- Raw Chicory Root – has a coffee flavor
- Raw Jerusalem Artichoke - also called sunroot or earth apple)
- Raw Dandelion Greens – try adding to salads and vegetables
- Raw Garlic
- Raw or Cooked Onion
- Raw Leeks
- Raw Asparagus
- Bananas



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Probiotic Foods

Probiotic foods, including fermented foods, change the bacteria in your large intestine (colon) in a healthy way.

- Active culture yogurt
 - Avoid added sugars or fruit.
 - Try adding your own fresh or frozen berries.
- Apple Cider Vinegar
- Cheese, cottage cheese, acidophilus milk, buttermilk
- Fermented meat, fish, and eggs – corned beef, pickled sardines, fermented hard-boiled eggs
- Kefir – fermented drinkable yogurt that is high in lactobacilli and bifidobacterial.
 - This can be high in sugar so be careful of the portion size and added sugars.
 - Look for unsweetened kefir in the yogurt aisle. It is tangy and delicious!
- Kimchi – mixture of fermented vegetables and spices
- Kombucha tea – fermented black or green tea that is fizzy. This can be made at home.
- Kvass – a fermented drink made from rye bread
- Miso
- Natto – a Japanese food made from fermented soybeans
- Pickles
- Pickled fruits and vegetables - only helpful if pickled in brine (not vinegar) and unpasteurized
- Sauerkraut
- Sourdough
- Tempeh – fermented soy. This is a great substitute for meat and has all the essential amino acids.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

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