



PROBIOTICS

What Are Probiotics?

Probiotics are microorganisms such as bacteria or yeast that are believed to improve health. They are available in supplements and foods. The idea of taking live bacteria or yeast may seem odd at first. After all, we use antibacterial substances to fight bacteria but our bodies naturally teem with such organisms.

The digestive system is home to more than 500 different bacterial species. They help keep intestinal linings healthy and assist in breaking down food. Beneficial organisms are also believed to help regulate healthy immune response.

Women sometimes take probiotics to help prevent yeast infections. Research has shown they help with mineral absorption, reduce inflammation, lower blood pressure and cholesterol, improve immune function and help with lactose intolerance.

Group Beta Streptococci (GBS), Bacterial Vaginosis & UTI Prevention

GBS bacteria, as well as other normal digestive gut flora like E.coli, Klebsiella, and Enterobacter are responsible for 80-90% of initial urinary infections (and 70-80% of recurrent cases). These bacteria are also prone to be antibiotic resistant so it is important to create healthier gut flora by keeping your bacteria levels in balance. One way to do this is to take a daily probiotic. This is important since it has been suggested that GBS & BV infections can be a cause of preterm labor. A study published in Canadian Family Physician found that daily ingestion of probiotics can decrease the risk of BV. As of 2010, studies are underway to determine the effects of these probiotics on women at risk for preterm labor.

Midwives' Recommendation: MegaFood, MegaFlora, Optimal Potency Probiotic Formula

You can buy it online at www.iHerb.com or call your local vitamin / natural food store to see if they have it. This formula needs to be refrigerated so it's important that you check to make sure it has been properly stored or just buy it online as iHerb ships it on ice overnight.

Note: Follow the dosage recommendation on the bottle. However, if you experience diarrhea or constipation you may need to cut back your intake and work your way slowly back up to the daily dosage since this is a strong probiotic that you may need to develop a tolerance for. Do not give up though. Having a strong reaction may mean that you were out of balance so it will take time to get yourself back to a healthy state.

