## THE BETTER HEALTH NEWS

## **PROBIOTICS AND HEALTH**

DIGESTION PROBIOTICS. 2 STRESS & DIGESTION PROBIOTICS & 2 SURGERY **PROBIOTICS AND** 3 COLITIS STRATEGIES FOR 4 IBS TAKE A FREE 5 HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRE PROBIOTICS & 6 CHILDREN'S HEALTH

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The colon is an ecosystem containing several pounds of bacteria--they belong there. They remove toxins, keep pathogens in check, and create nutrients that are beneficial to the GI lining and to the rest of the body. There is a fair amount of research demonstrating the value of supplementation with probiotics. Here are a few of the studies.

A meta-analysis of randomized, controlled studies published in Epidemiology (Epublished ahead of print Mar 21, 2012) looked at probiotic supplementation in pregnant women, and in infants shortly after birth, and the relation to the incidence of allergic dermatitis in their infants after birth. A total of 14 studies were included in the analysis. Overall, the studies showed that probiotic supplementation was helpful in preventing atopic dermatitis.

Research appearing in the *Journal* of *Perinatology* (epublished ahead of print March 22, 2012) looked at

probiotic supplementation in infants with low birth weight. The subjects of the double-blind, placebocontrolled study were 31 low-weight infants. Postprandial (after meal) increase in time-averaged mean velocity (a measurement of intestinal blood flow) increased in the group given the probiotic supplements.

Research appearing in Inflammation & Allergy--Drug Targets (Epublished ahead of print March 28, 2012) looked at 80 patients with H. pylori and the effect supplementation with probiotics had on their condition. The subjects were given either a placebo or a supplement containing eight species of probiotic bacteria for a period of 10 days. One month later stool samples were tested for H. pylori stool antigen and given a urea breath test. The testing revealed that 13 out of the 40 subjects given the probiotic were free of H. pylori one month after the supplementation.

## **PROBIOTICS, STRESS &** DIGESTION

Research published in the journal Nutritional Research (Volume 28, Issue 1, January 2008, Pages 1-5) tested probiotic supplements and their effect on nausea and vomiting. The subjects of the study were 75 men and women between the ages of 16 and 60 who

were randomly divided into two groups and given either a placebo or a proprietary blend of probiotics. At the end of three weeks, the group receiving the probiotic reported less abdominal pain, nausea or vomiting, compared to the placebo group.

## **PROBIOTICS & SURGERY**

Researchers in China [Zhonghua Wei

Chang Wai Ke Za Zhi,( 2010 Jan; 13(1): 40-3)] looked at effect the supplementing probiotics in colorectal cancer patients had on surgical outcomes. Sixty with patients

colorectal cancer were randomly selected to receive either a probiotic containing bifidobacterium or placebo. The group receiving the probiotic had fewer post-operative infections. They also had an overall improvement in immunity (the levels o f immunoglobulins [Ig], proteins involved with the immune system, showed improvment). IgG, IgM, IgA and IL-6 levels were lower in the blood tests of the supplemented group--



system was more active where surgery the took place. Additionally, C-reactive protein levels were lower in the supplemented group, indicating less inflammation. Probiotic supplementation may be benefit patients undergoing surgery for colorectal cancer.

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Whole Health Web is a site designed to teach people about the value of natural health care. Our goal is to inform you and to help you to start a conversation with your doctor about natural health care. Most of our articles are about scientific research. We will also provide opinion pieces provided by natural health practitioners. Visit us often, as we are continually adding new content

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## **PROBIOTICS AND COLITIS**

Research appearing in the *World Journal of Gastroenterology* (2010 Sept 7; 16(33): 4145-51) looked at the effect supplementation with probiotics had on patients with mild to moderate ulcerative colitis. The 30 subjects were being treated with sulfasalazine. It was found that giving a probiotic supplement (containing Lactobacillus delbruekii and Lactobacillus fermentum) was more

effective than treating the patients with the drug alone. Addition of the probiotic reduced inflammation, as evidenced by lower levels of certain chemicals in the blood (IL-6, TNF-alpha, NF -kappaB p65). The authors concluded that, "Oral supplementation with probiotics could be helpful in maintaining remission and preventing relapse of UC (ulcerative colitis)."

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## STRATEGIES FOR IBS

Research on natural therapies for IBS is kind of a mixed bag. There are various natural approaches that help, but no single therapy helps all of the patients. Sometimes it is best to classify a disease by mechanism and not by symptoms. The symptoms of IBS include gas, bloating, abdominal pain and diarrhea, but effective treatment varies from patient to patient. Sometimes allergy elimination is effective, sometimes probiotics help and other times killing bacteria in the small intestine is an effective strategy.

There are studies that show that elimination of gluten from the diet does improve the symptoms of at least some IBS sufferers. Scientists are quick to point out that the symptoms of celiac disease match the symptoms of IBS. As many as 75% of the patients suffering from celiac have IBS symptoms. A pair of sprue studies, one published in the Lancet (November 3, 2001;358:1504-1508), another Gastroenterology and in (2004; 126(7); 1721-1732)both recommend screening for celiac disease in IBS patients. Other studies have shown that some IBS patients benefit from eliminating other specific foods. Clearly, finding and eliminating food sensitivities will help at least some of your IBS patients--but not all of them.

Another mechanism worth looking at is bacterial overgrowth in the small intestine. This issue has been covered in research published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (August 2004;292(7):852-858) and the 18. American Journal of Gastroenterology (December 2000;95(12):3503-3506). Addressing bacterial overgrowth helps some IBS sufferers, but not all of them.

A comprehensive approach that looks at hidden food sensitivities and bacterial overgrowth may be the best approach. Testing the patient for food sensitivity, do a trial avoidance of the common problem foods (gluten, dairy, peanuts, eggs and citrus for example), or have the patient go on a stricter elimination program are good starts. But don't stop there, give a good probiotic, which will help to kill small intestine bacteria. Also, consider that a patient who has overgrowth of bacteria in the small intestine may not be digesting well to begin with. He or she may need an HCI or pancreatic enzyme supplement, like Hydrozyme, HCL Plus or Bio 6 Plus. Frequently this problem is the result of eating too much carbohydrate and it may be necessary to cut down on consumption. Testing for yeast overgrowth or parasites in the stool may also be necessary. Dysbiocide is a good antiparasitic. Not all IBS patients are alike, so it is wise to treat the patient who has the disease and not the disease that has the patient.

Healing is a matter of time, but it is sometimes also a matter of opportunity.

**Hippocrates** 

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## **PROBIOTICS AND CHILDREN'S HEALTH**

A randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled

study looked at the effect a specific probiotic supplement had on school children and the common infectious diseases experienced by children during the winter. The subjects of the study were 135 children between the ages of three and seven. Over a period of three months during the winter, 73 of the children received a placebo and 63 of them

received a specific probiotic supplement (a mixture containing Lactobacillus helveticus R0052, Bifidobacterium infantis R0033,

Bifidobacterium



bifidum R0071 and fructooligosaccharide). Of the group receiving the probiotic supplement, 51.6% contracted at least one illness during the course of the study. In the placebo group, 67.1% of the students became ill. Overall, the control group missed more school, with 42.5% of them missing at least one day. Only 25.8% of the supplemented group missed a day or more of school. The

study suggests that supplementing with probiotics reduces the risk of common childhood infections.