



EATING 101

RU DINING HEALTHY?



A Weekly Newsletter Brought to You by the RU Healthy Dining -

A Joint Project Between RU Dining Services and The Department of Nutritional Sciences

The Friendly Bacteria

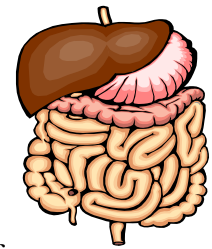
Millions of bacteria reside in our gut, but don't be worried! Contrary to popular belief, many kinds of bacteria are beneficial to the human body. These good bacteria, however, live in the intestines alongside *bad* bacteria. It is believed that if a positive balance of good bacteria is maintained, the bad bacteria are less able to cause disease and irritation. So, how can you control this warring bacterial count? The answer—probiotics! Probiotics (the name literally means “pro-life”) are live microbial food ingredients that have a beneficial effect on human health.

Probiotics, also referred to as the *good* or *friendly* bacteria, have been used for centuries. In 76 BC, a Roman historian recommended fermented milk for treating gastroenteritis (inflammation of the stomach and intestine). However, research pertaining to probiotics is fairly recent, and more of its functions and benefits are uncovered every day.

Here are the answers to some frequently asked questions regarding probiotics:

How can our “good bacteria” count decrease?

A number of factors can upset the balance between the levels of good and bad bacteria in the body. For instance, in an effort to fight off infectious diseases and germs, the usage of antibiotics kills both good *and* bad bacteria. This can result in yeast infections, diarrhea, and other uncomfortable conditions.



What health benefits are associated with probiotics?

Recent research suggests probiotics may help keep the immune system healthy by strengthening the gut flora present in the body. These good bacteria produce fuels, which are necessary to maintain a healthy colon.

Probiotics may also help shorten the duration of diarrhea and reduce the symptoms of lactose intolerance, irritable bowel syndrome and allergies.



Where can I find some?

To reap the full health benefits, make probiotics part of your daily diet. The most frequently used bacteria in food products include the *Lactobacillus* and *Bifidobacterium* species. Next time you're in the dining hall, grab some yogurt as a probiotic source. For the probiotic adventurous, explore your nearest health food store or supermarket for other great sources including miso paste (not miso soup as the bacteria is killed off with the boiling water used to make the soup) or kefir.

Eat Your Bacteria Today and Keep the *Good Bugs* Alive!

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References: <http://www.dairycouncilofca.org/PDFs/probiotics.pdf>

http://eatright.org/cps/rde/xchg/ada/hs.xsl/home_10861_ENU_HTML.htm

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