

THYROID TRANSFORMATION

with Dr. Angela Mazza



Probiotics

The human body is made up of more than just human cells. We also have trillions of tiny living organisms called microorganisms that live inside us. These microorganisms make up what we call the microbiome.

The microbiome is like a bustling community of bacteria, fungi, viruses, and other tiny creatures. They live in various parts of our body, such as our skin, mouth, and especially in our gut (which is the long tube that helps us digest food). In fact, the microorganisms of our gut microbiome outnumber us ten to one.

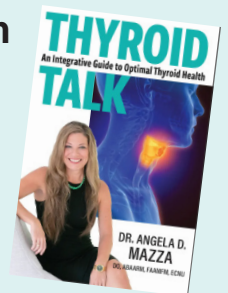
Our microbiome not only makes up about 80% of our immune system, but ongoing research shows it likely plays a key role in the development of chronic diseases like diabetes, dementia, and thyroid disease.

Learn more about how to thrive and achieve optimal thyroid health from Dr. Mazza : www.birthebook.com/drmazza

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What is a probiotic?

A probiotic is a living microorganism, typically bacteria or yeast, that can provide health benefits when consumed in adequate amounts. These microorganisms are considered beneficial for the human body, particularly for the digestive system and overall well-being. Probiotics are commonly found in certain foods and dietary supplements.



The most common types of probiotics belong to the *Lactobacillus* and *Bifidobacterium* genera, although there are many other types and strains available.

Probiotics work by colonizing the gut and promoting a healthy balance of bacteria in the intestinal tract.

While the specific mechanisms of probiotic action are still being researched, they are believed to provide several benefits, including:

1. **Improved Digestive Health:** Probiotics can help maintain a healthy gut microbiota, which aids in digestion and nutrient absorption. They may also alleviate symptoms of digestive disorders such as irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and diarrhea.
2. **Enhanced Immune Function:** Probiotics can support the immune system by stimulating the production of antibodies and enhancing the activity of immune cells.
3. **Reduced Risk of Infections:** Certain probiotic strains have been shown to inhibit the growth of harmful bacteria in the gut, reducing the risk of infections such as urinary tract infections, respiratory tract infections, and vaginal yeast infections.
4. **Management of Certain Conditions:** Probiotics have shown promise in managing conditions like lactose intolerance, inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), and certain allergies. They may also play a role in maintaining mental health, as the gut and brain are interconnected through the gut-brain axis.

Probiotics can be found naturally in fermented foods like yogurt, sauerkraut, kimchi, and kefir. They are also available as dietary supplements in the form of capsules, tablets, powders, or liquids. It's important to note that different probiotic strains have specific benefits, so it's advisable to choose a product that matches your specific needs and consult with a healthcare professional if you have any concerns or medical conditions.



Why do you need a probiotic?

Over time our microbiome can be altered, known as dysbiosis, so a good probiotic helps to replace the beneficial bacteria of the gut. Dysbiosis can be caused by medications, dietary changes, stress, travel, and age. When our good bacteria are outnumbered by bad bacteria, this leads to “leaky gut” and inflammation, which can affect the rest of our bodies as well. Inflammation can cause you to feel swollen, tired, achy, and foggy.



It can make it difficult to lose weight. What's more, as we discussed in *Thyroid Talk*, when dysbiosis causes inflammation, it can trigger your immune system to misrecognize your own body as a threat causing autoimmune diseases.

What are good bacteria cultures to look for in a probiotic?

Always read the label when choosing a probiotic. They should clearly list the strains, similar to a first name and last name – like *Lactobacillus acidophilus*.



Here are our healthy strains to look for:

- *Lactobacillus* – *acidophilus*, *salivarius*, *ramnosus*, *gasseri*, *paracasei*, *casei*, *plantarum*, *fermetum*
- *Bifidobacterium* – *animalis*, *bifidum*, *longum*, *breve*
- *Streptococcus salivarius*
- *Saccharomyces* - *cerevisiae*, *boulardii*

How many “cultures” do you really need in a probiotic?

When you are in your regular daily health, you should take a probiotic with at least 12 billion colony forming units (CFUs) or cultures. When you are ill or have been on antibiotics, look for CFUs closer to 50 billion.

What’s the difference between a room temperature and refrigerated probiotic?



Certain probiotic strains are heat sensitive and need to be refrigerated, while others are more heat resistant so they can be kept at room temperature. One is not necessarily better than the other, but it is a good idea to rotate between the two.

Consider, however, out of sight can be out of mind. Just don’t forget about that probiotic in the refrigerator!

What's the difference between a probiotic and prebiotic?

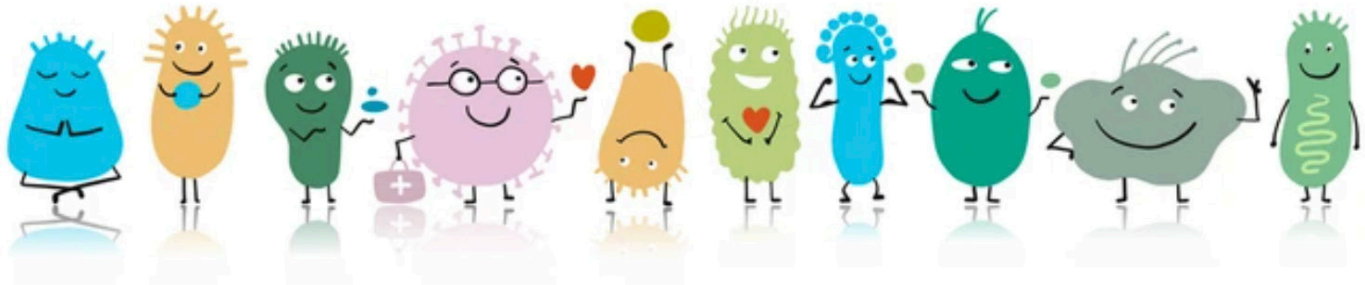
A probiotic is a specialized combination of beneficial bacteria, but a prebiotic essentially feeds the good bacteria. Prebiotics are high fiber substances that nourish the microflora and promote healthy growth.

You can take a prebiotic along with your probiotic or you can look for foods that act as prebiotics, such as apples, not fully ripened bananas, dandelion greens, and asparagus. Not everyone tolerates prebiotics.

Some people may experience bloating or gas, but introducing them slowly may alleviate these side effects.



How do you choose the probiotic that will be best for you?



Since all formulations of probiotics are a little different, a one size does not always fit all. Start with one that is at least 12 billion CFUs and has *Lactobacillus acidophilus*.

If you note any sort of new GI discomfort, either decrease to taking it every other day or pick a different formulation with a lower amount of CFUs. Your GI health can dictate your tolerability. So, you may have to start low and work up!

Final tips on probiotics :

- **Don't use the same probiotic for an extended amount of time. It's a good idea to change your formulation and/or brand every few months to increase the diversity of your microbiome.**
- **Eat half of an unripen banana before bedtime which not only acts as a prebiotic, but can also improve insulin resistance.**
- **Take a good quality probiotic and always read the label. The product should clearly state the strains that are included. If it doesn't, don't take it!**

My favorite probiotic products are Multi-Probiotic by Douglas Laboratories or one of the HMF Forte formulations by Genestra. My favorite prebiotic is Poly-Prebiotic powder by Pure Encapsulations. You can shop for them yourself from a reliable source or you can purchase them from our Wellness Store :

<https://www.metaboliccenterforwellness.com>.