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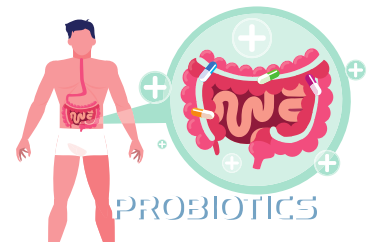
Personal Training and Fitness Solutions

# HEALTH TOPIC OF THE WEEK

## 12/12 - How To Pick A High-Quality Probiotic

### Introduction

Probiotics have been used in different forms for hundreds of years to improve digestion and overall well-being. Probiotics are live microorganisms. These “good” bacteria help keep the “bad” bacteria in your stomach from multiplying. Probiotics are essential to maintain a healthy balance of gut bacteria. Modern science has worked hard to unravel the mystery behind specific probiotic strains. These mighty microbes help support healthy weight, digestive health, menopause, anxiety and mood, energy, immune and inflammatory response, and even memory. No wonder probiotics have become so popular. Today, hundreds of probiotic supplements flood the marketplace. Buyers beware. Some use ineffective types of probiotics or insufficient dosages. Others use strains that do not have enough scientific support.



### What To Avoid:

#### Lack Of Strain Diversity

Clinical studies have shown that specific strains address particular health concerns. While the human gut contains thousands of different bacterial strains, most probiotics include only a few generic Lactobacillus or Bifidobacterium strains. To support proper microbiome balance, look for a probiotic that has at least 11-14 unique strains.

#### Cheap Generic Strains

Store shelves are filled with brands that list cheap generic forms of popular strains on their labels. A 2018 study showed that not all probiotic strains produce the same results, even if they have the same name. Like most things in life, it comes down to the details.

A high-quality brand will list the strain and a combination of letters and numbers, such as L. acidophilus La-14™, known as a substrain. A specific identifier tells you that one or more clinical studies back the strain being used. Avoid probiotics that don't list substrains.



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## Plastic Bottles

Don't throw away hard-earned money on probiotics in cheap plastic bottles. Your probiotics may arrive dead at your doorstep! Moisture vapor transmission rate (MVTR) studies on probiotics packaged in plastic bottles have shown that cheap plastic bottles allow moisture to enter during storage. This lowers strain survival rates and shortens shelf life.

### What to Look For:

## Glass Bottles

Moisture is the number one factor that destroys the stability of probiotics, even if freeze-dried. Close to 60 studies have shown that glass bottles are the best packaging for probiotics because they allow practically no moisture to enter. Look for a probiotic that comes in a dark amber glass bottle. Only glass can keep out harmful moisture and light.

## Prebiotics

Once probiotics make their way to your gut, they begin to feed off prebiotics, a fiber-based form of food needed to help them survive, grow and populate. We suggest looking for a formula that explicitly includes the prebiotic NutraFlora®. It has twenty years of research and over 200 studies proving it helps stimulate probiotic growth. Don't just take a brand's word that they include a prebiotic. Check the back of their label to make sure NutraFlora®, not some generic form, is listed.

## High CFU Counts

You can have the highest quality strains, but if they aren't potent enough, they will be ineffective among the trillions of other bacteria in the gut. Probiotic quality is measured in Colony Forming Units (CFUs). Look for a formula containing a minimum of 45 Billion CFUs per dose.

## Clinically Studied Strains

Supply chain issues and inflationary pricing have driven many manufacturers to pursue more readily available cheap generic strains that have not been proven effective in clinical testing. Check the supplement facts section of the probiotic label to see if it has the trademark™ or registered symbol® next to each strain's substrain. This symbol tells you the strain has been clinically tested. Remember, not all strains perform the same, even if they have the same general name.



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## Top Probiotic Performers

### 1. *Lactobacillus gasseri*

#### Healthy Weight Support

- A review of over a dozen human randomized controlled trials concluded that *L. gasseri* supports healthy weight management. Other studies have shown this strain supports the reduction of fatty tissue and improves metabolism.

#### Bone Density

- Shown to have anti-menopausal effects by increasing bone mineral density and lowering pain sensitivity.

### 2. *Lactobacillus rhamnosus*

#### Diarrhea

- Helps protect against various causes of diarrhea, including acute watery, antibiotic-related, and traveler's diarrhea.

#### Vaginal Yeast Infections

- Reduces risk of yeast infections by helping inhibit overgrowth of the harmful bacteria *Candida albicans*, the most common cause of genital yeast infections.

#### Mood & Anxiety

- Lowers anxiety, reduces stress and boosts mood by changing the expression of the chemical messenger GABA, which communicates with the brain to produce a calming effect.

### 3. *Lactobacillus reuteri*

#### Leaky Gut

- Helps strengthen and repair the intestinal barrier, which, when damaged, can allow harmful bacteria to enter the body, resulting in bloating, gas, cramps, and food sensitivities.

#### Urinary Tract Infections

- Helps combat and ease urinary tract infections (UTI's) in females.

#### Dental Health

- One of the few probiotics found in the mouth. Studies have shown it helps deter *Streptococcus mutans*, the bacteria that causes tooth decay.

#### Pylori Defense

- May help reduce the presence of *Helicobacter pylori* (*H. pylori*), a harmful bacteria which researchers have linked to peptic ulcers and other digestive diseases.



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#### **4. *Lactobacillus acidophilus***

##### **Dairy Defense**

- Produces lactase, the enzyme needed to break down the sugar in milk called lactose. Helps alleviate diarrhea.

##### **Mineral Absorption**

- Increases absorption of minerals such as iron, calcium, and magnesium.

##### **Vaginal Health**

- Produces high lactic acid levels, promoting an acidic environment in the vagina necessary to keep proper bacterial balance and helping to avoid a harmful condition known as bacterial vaginosis (BV).

#### **5. *Bifidobacterium bifidum***

##### **Constipation**

- Fights chronic constipation by increasing production of mucus in the colon. Supports smoother bowel movements.

##### **Allergy Relief**

- Discourages histamine production, which is what triggers an allergic reaction.

#### **6. *Bifidobacterium longum***

##### **Gluten Defense**

- Helps reduce gastrointestinal symptoms in those with Celiac disease (CD) by reducing intestinal inflammation.

##### **Liver Health**

- Human clinical studies show that *B. longum* paired with the prebiotic FOS plays a beneficial role in combating fatty liver.

##### **Immune Support**

- Strengthens the body's natural defenses against harmful pathogens and improves resistance to respiratory tract infections.

We hope this condensed guide has been helpful. Navigating the supplement industry isn't always clear sailing. The water can get quite murky. If you're feeling overwhelmed, you can count on us for unbiased, accurate and scientific recommendations.

Take a quick look at the 59 references below. This is why you should let us help you and not try to make sense of the supplement industry on your own. Reach out to EPT for a nutrition and supplementation consult. We are here to help.



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