

Did you know?...

...Rx Information from Jenny

PROBIOTICS

A growing number of products with probiotics are being promoted to improve GI function and immunity.

Probiotics contain strains of "friendly" gut bacteria...(ex: *Bifidobacterium*, *Lactobacillus*, *Saccharomyces*, and others).

The idea is to recolonize the gut with good bacteria and crowd out harmful ones. They might also stimulate the immune system.

Some probiotics are more beneficial for certain conditions.

Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) Try *Align* (*Bifidobacterium infantis*) for abdominal pain and bloating due to IBS...or *VSL#3* (*Bifidobacterium/Lactobacillus/Strep thermophilus*) for bloating with diarrhea-predominant IBS.

Ulcerative colitis *VSL#3* should help maintain remission of ulcerative colitis.

Antibiotic-associated diarrhea *Culturelle* (*Lactobacillus GG*), *DanActive* (*Lactobacillus/Strep thermophilus*), or *Florastor* (*Saccharomyces boulardii*) should help prevent diarrhea from antibiotics.

Take the probiotic during antibiotic treatment and up to a week afterwards for best results.

Also, take the probiotic 2 hours AFTER each antibiotic dose...so the probiotic is more likely to survive.

Constipation. *Activia* (*Bifidobacterium*) seems to decrease gut transit time (helps food to be digested faster) and *Yakult* (*Lactobacillus casei*) might help soften stools...but they're not proven to prevent constipation.

Respiratory tract infections. Preliminary evidence suggests a specific combo of *Lactobacillus* and *Bifidobacterium* (*Howaru Protect*) decreases respiratory symptoms and antibiotic use in preschoolers.

However, this combo product won't be available until 2010.

Probiotics are usually safe and well tolerated. However, immunocompromised patients (those having a weakened immune system due to certain diseases or treatments) should play it safe and avoid them.

Be sure not to confuse PRObiotics with PREbiotics. Prebiotics are sugars or carbohydrates that encourage the growth of good bacteria in the gut.

Call me if you have any questions!

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