

ACIDOPHILUS USES AND BENEFITS

Lactobacillus acidophilus, more commonly known as acidophilus, is a probiotic supplement. Many “good” bacteria exist in the human intestines and vagina, where they protect against the “bad” bacteria that can cause disease. Acidophilus, as a good bacteria, breaks the food in the intestine down into substances which will create an unsuitable environment for the growth of bad bacterial.

USES

Acidophilus use is suggested while a patient is on an antibiotic regimen since antibiotics kill the good and the bad bacteria together, making patients susceptible to secondary infections. It will help to rebalance the digestive tract with friendly, good bacteria and will help with the common antibiotic side effects, such as cramping and flatulence. Acidophilus should be taken two hours before or after taking antibiotics.

Acidophilus is also taken in order to treat or prevent vaginal yeast infections.

It is also used either alone or in combination with another form of probiotic (Lactobacillus GG) to prevent “traveler’s diarrhea,” caused by the consumption of contaminated foods.

According to the National Institutes of Health, acidophilus may help lower low-density lipoprotein (LDL) also known as “bad cholesterol,” while reducing the overall levels of cholesterol in the blood stream.

It has been shown to treat symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome, Crohn’s disease, and ulcerative colitis.

It may enhance the immune system.

It reduces the risk of childhood eczema.

It improves lactose tolerance in lactose intolerant patients because it produces the lactase enzyme.

It lowers the risk and severity of symptoms of pollen allergies.

And last but not least, it treats constipation.

SOURCES

Dietary sources of acidophilus include yogurt, miso, tempeh, or milk that has been enriched with acidophilus.

Acidophilus preparations consist of dried or liquid cultures of the living bacterial. They are usually grown in milk but can also be grown in a milk-free culture. They are available as freeze dried powders, capsules, liquid preparations, oral tablets, and vaginal suppositories.

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HOW TO TAKE ACIDOPHILUS

Probiotics are now recommended in newborns and infants and come as drops or powders that can be added to breast milk or formula. The recommended adult dose for acidophilus depends on which health condition is being treated.

The acidophilus supplements available on the market all vary in the number of viable organisms, so the information on each product should be studied so the correct dose can be determined.

It's best to refrigerate acidophilus supplements, however, there are preparations that do not break down under normal temperatures, which are convenient for travelers, or when the supplement cannot be refrigerated.

Acidophilus is considered very safe and beneficial for most people. However, patients with artificial heart valves should not take acidophilus because of the rare chance of bacterial infection.