

# Eating to enhance gut health

The health of your gut microbiome is a significant factor in the health of your entire digestive system. How well your stomach and intestines digest and absorb the food you eat depends on the condition of the microorganisms in your gut.

In turn, what you eat can either support the diversity of your microbiome or disrupt the delicate balance.

Certain foods provide necessary nutrients to support the growth of beneficial bacteria. The more beneficial bacteria you have in your digestive tract, the less room there is for unhealthy bacteria to grow.

## PROBIOTICS

Probiotics are live bacteria and yeasts which have beneficial functions in the body. Probiotics may be present in foods that have undergone fermentation. Ingesting probiotics through food or supplements can boost the number of beneficial microorganisms in your digestive system.



Regular consumption of foods that contain probiotics may improve digestive health and boost the immune system. Choose some of these foods as part of your daily diet:

- Yogurt (with live active cultures) or kefir
- Saukraut
- Kombucha
- Tempah
- Miso
- Kimchi
- Pickles

## PREBIOTICS

Prebiotics provide essential nutrients that feed beneficial bacteria and encourage their growth.

Most prebiotics are a type of fiber that is indigestible to the body. The microorganisms in the digestive tract can break down these fibers into short-chain fatty acids (SCFA). These SCFAs provide valuable food for the probiotic communities in the body. Beneficial prebiotic foods include:

- Garlic
- Onion
- Asparagus
- Bananas
- Oats
- Flaxseeds
- Apples



## SHOULD YOU TAKE A SUPPLEMENT?



Supplements containing probiotics are widely available. However, supplements are not regulated by the FDA and should be approached with caution.

Talk to your doctor before starting any supplement to make sure it is a safe choice for you. In the meantime, probiotic and prebiotic foods are a generally safe way to support gut health.