

# Probiotic Checklist:

## MAKING A SMART SELECTION

Not all products labelled “probiotic” are true probiotics



### **It's backed by science**

Be prepared to hunt a little: there's no single place to look for scientific evidence of probiotic health benefits. See [www.ISAPPscience.org](http://www.ISAPPscience.org) resources page for some guides.



### **It provides an effective dose**

When it comes to microorganisms, more are not necessarily better. The studies backing the product determine the 'effective dose'. Most often, effective doses range from 100 million to 50 billion or more colony forming units (CFU)/dose.



### **It provides the benefit I'm seeking**

Different probiotic strains have different benefits—ranging from improving aspects of intestinal function to helping you fight off colds. Choose a product with evidence showing it can give you the health benefit you want.



### **It's safe for me**

For healthy people, probiotics are generally safe to consume. Be sure to follow the instructions on the label. Pregnant women, infants, people with compromised immune systems, or people with short bowel syndrome should talk to a healthcare professional and the probiotic manufacturer before consuming.

**Probiotics:** Live microorganisms that, when administered in adequate amounts, confer a health benefit on the host.

Both foods and supplements can deliver authentic probiotics.



### **It's labeled properly**

For more details, see “Deciphering a Probiotic Label” at [www.ISAPPscience.org/infographics/](http://www.ISAPPscience.org/infographics/)

**Names of the microbes.** Look for the genus, species, and strain for every microbe in the product. This tells you what's in the product.

**CFU.** This number tells you how many live microorganisms are in each serving or dose, all the way through to the expiration date (not “At time of manufacture”).

**Suggested dose or serving size.** This tells you how much to take for the benefit.

**Proper storage conditions.** Refrigeration may not be necessary.

**Company contact information.** To get more information or report any problems related to the product.

A high-quality, effective probiotic does NOT have to be:

- Naturally found in the human gut (or 'human-derived')
- Able to colonize in the human gastrointestinal tract – most probiotics do not
- Coated to survive passage through the stomach (enteric coated)
- Composed of multiple strains



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