



Taking probiotics with antibiotics

When taking antibiotics it is common to suffer associated side-effects, such as diarrhoea or thrush. However, studies suggest that the risk of these side effects can be drastically reduced, simply by taking a probiotic at the same time.

It's well established that antibiotics can have a negative effect on the friendly bacteria in the digestive system. Many people are aware of the importance of taking probiotics after a course of antibiotics, to help replenish the friendly bacteria levels. However, it is more vital to

take a probiotic **during** your antibiotic treatment - waiting until the end of your course may be too late!

Many people taking antibiotics suffer with side effects such as diarrhoea, tummy cramps, thrush and lowered energy levels. It is estimated that these side effects lead to 1 in 5 people to stop taking their antibiotic course before they have finished¹. This is a huge problem because it can contribute to antibiotic-resistance, which occurs when pathogenic (bad) bacteria is not completely eliminated by the antibiotic treatment. These pathogens then have the opportunity to become immune to the antibiotic that they were exposed to.

Which probiotic should you take?

Clinical trials reveal that two specific strains of probiotics are by far the most researched alongside antibiotics, and shown to help prevent antibiotic-associated side-effects. These are *Lactobacillus acidophilus* Rosell-52 and *Lactobacillus rhamnosus* Rosell-11.

Don't antibiotics kill probiotics?

Some people are concerned that taking a probiotic alongside an antibiotic is a waste of time. We only need to look at the clinical research to see that the opposite is true. *L. acidophilus* Rosell-52 and *L. rhamnosus* Rosell-11 survive to reach the gut alive, even during antibiotics, and what's more they help to protect against side effects².

Probiotics are never an alternative to antibiotics, but should be taken alongside.

What's the evidence?

In one trial conducted in 2005³, patients prescribed with antibiotics were split into two groups – one group received *L. acidophilus* Rosell-52 & *L. rhamnosus* Rosell-11 and the other group acted as a control. Over a third of the patients in the control group (36.7%) developed antibiotic-associated diarrhoea (AAD), whereas the vast majority (92.6%) of those taking probiotics were free from side effects.

Research into these two strains is plentiful and convincing. These probiotics have been clinically shown to help reduce side effects. Furthermore a number of trials demonstrate that even when taken at the exact same time of day as antibiotics, the results are no less impressive.

ANTIBIOTIC ESSENTIALS

Here are a few good practice tips when it comes to antibiotics...



Always finish your antibiotics course.



Only take them if prescribed.



Ask about a delayed prescription*.



Take probiotics during and after treatment.



Stay hydrated.



Get plenty of rest.

*GPs can give you a prescription that requires you to wait to see if you get better naturally, before using antibiotics.

Find a probiotic specifically formulated for those on antibiotics.

References:

1. Kliger, et al. (2008) Probiotics May Help People Taking Antibiotics. Probiotics. American Family Physician.
2. Foster et al. (2011) A comprehensive post-market review of studies on a probiotic product containing *Lactobacillus helveticus* (acidophilus) R0052 and *Lactobacillus rhamnosus* R0011. Beneficial Microbes, 2, 4, 319-334.
3. Ivanko O & Radutnaya E (2005) *Lactobacillus acidophilus* reduces frequency of diarrhoea caused by toxins *Clostridium difficile* A+B in children treated by antibiotics. Zaporozhye Medical Periodical 2 21-23.