

## Unlocking the Power of Probiotics: How Good Bacteria Can Benefit Your Health

Occasional digestive issues are common health concerns, affecting more than 40 percent of people worldwide.<sup>1</sup> The symptoms, which range from bloating to occasional constipation or diarrhea, are inconvenient and can affect a person's quality of life in many ways.

For many individuals, a functional approach can help manage occasional or even more persistent functional digestive symptoms. Improving gut health is the cornerstone of addressing concerns, with lifestyle changes, probiotics, and synbiotics (probiotics + prebiotics) playing a vital role.

### What Are Synbiotics?

The name “synbiotic”—a fusion of “synergy” and “biotic”—loosely translates to “working better together to promote life.” As this unique nomenclature suggests, [synbiotics](#) contain a synergistic combination of live bacteria and prebiotics that provides the nutrients needed to support optimal gut health.† Their combination of probiotics with prebiotics makes synbiotics even more powerful and effective than probiotics alone. This is also known as the [entourage effect](#).

Prebiotics are specific types of fiber and other nondigestible compounds that feed and encourage the growth of beneficial bacteria.<sup>2</sup> They exist naturally in foods like whole grains, unripe bananas, asparagus, onions, garlic, soybeans, and artichokes. Certain manufactured fibers like inulin and partially hydrolyzed guar gum are also prebiotics.

[Synbiotic ingredients](#) are specifically paired and work synergistically to seed and feed a healthy microbiota. Thus, synbiotics can have a more profound effect on the gut flora than probiotics or prebiotics alone.<sup>3</sup>

### How Do Synbiotics Work?

The correct species and strains of probiotics can be incredibly beneficial for gut health, often helping to support more comfortable digestion and relieve occasional constipation, diarrhea, and bloating. However, probiotic supplements often have transient effects, and sometimes they don't survive the journey to the colon where they're needed.

When probiotics are delivered alongside prebiotics in the form of synbiotics, they are better able to withstand the harsh conditions of the gut and colonize the large intestine more effectively, resulting in improved gut health.

Similar to probiotics, synbiotics can consist of a range of bacteria and yeasts, each exerting unique effects on the gut microbiome. Certain strains that enhance digestion, alleviate discomfort, and promote gut barrier health may be particularly advantageous for individuals

with digestive issues. These are key players to look for and how they can potentially benefit digestive health:

- ***Lactobacillus acidophilus* DDS®-1.** Supports the breakdown of gluten, casein, and carbohydrates that produce short-chain fatty acids, thereby promoting the development of a stronger and more resilient gut barrier.<sup>†</sup>
- ***Lactobacillus plantarum* UALp-05TM.** Metabolizes resistant starches found in vegetables, supports intestinal barrier function, and promotes microbiota balance.<sup>†</sup>
- ***Bifidobacterium lactis* UABla-12TM.** Supports normal bowel movement frequency and stool consistency and helps digest casein and gliadin.<sup>†</sup>
- ***Lactobacillus paracasei* UALpc-04TM.** Supports intestinal barrier function by fermenting prebiotic fibers, which release short-chain fatty acids.<sup>†</sup>
- ***Lactobacillus rhamnosus* GG.** Aids in the digestion of proteins. It has also been shown to promote stronger epithelial barrier function and to reduce the risk of occasional antibiotic-associated diarrhea.<sup>†</sup>
- ***Bifidobacterium bifidum* UABb-10TM.** Helps digest casein, strengthens intestinal barrier function, and promotes healthy microbiome balance.<sup>†</sup>
- ***Lactobacillus reuteri* UALre-16TM.** Strengthens the intestinal barrier and supports a healthy inflammatory response where inflammation is associated with occasional digestive discomfort.<sup>†</sup>

The prebiotic source in synbiotics can vary too. As probiotics digest and ferment prebiotic fibers, some can promote gas and bloating — not something a person with a sensitive GI tract needs or wants. A good prebiotic option is partially hydrolyzed guar gum (marketed as Sunfiber®). This [low FODMAP](#) medium-chain carbohydrate doesn't contribute to excess gas or GI discomfort, even in sensitive people.

### The Benefits of Synbiotics for Digestive Health

Regularly used probiotics and synbiotics encourage healthy gut flora which in turn supports healthy inflammation modulation. Individuals using specific strains of bacteria may notice improved digestive function and more comfortable digestion, especially with regard to occasional constipation, diarrhea, gas, and bloating.

Another vital benefit of these supplements is that certain strains of bacteria help maintain gut integrity by strengthening the intestinal epithelial lining — one of the body's primary immune defenses. This is crucial at all stages of life because intestinal permeability (leaky gut) is thought to play a role in whole-body health and wellness.<sup>4</sup> Maintaining a healthy gut contributes to a

strong immune system and supports heart health, brain health, healthy sleep, effective digestion, and mood balance.†

Products that SFI Health offers that support these guidelines include: [Ther-biotic® Synbiotic](#), [Biotagen®](#), and [EpiCor®](#).

#### REFERENCES:

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