



**Did You Know** some bacteria can be good for you? Yes, some strains are harmful to us, but many are a normal part of your body—and a vital component of good health. How can you make sure you have all the good bacteria you need? Probiotics are your best bet.



What are probiotics? They are live, good bacteria that are found naturally in some fermented foods and are added to other foods or provided in a supplement for their health benefits. How do they work? After consuming a product that contains probiotics, the good bacteria are passed into the digestive tract where they help to improve the overall balance of bacteria in the digestive system. Essentially, probiotics offer something beneficial to a host.

Factors such as diet, stress and antibiotics can upset the balance of good bacteria in the digestive system. Probiotics can help to balance out the harmful bacteria, keeping the digestive system healthy.

Here are a few sources of probiotics:

- **Yogurt** is a cultured or fermented milk food made with lactic acid-producing cultures.
- **Kefir** is drinkable yogurt-like food made from fermented cow, goat or sheep milk.
- **Buttermilk** (which, by the way, contains no butter) is made from lactic acid bacteria that form cultures—and probiotics. That's what give it a tangy taste. Cooking buttermilk kills probiotics, so drink low-fat buttermilk by the glass or use as an ingredient in a cold soup or homemade salad dressing.

### **Sauerkraut and Kimchi**

Both are made with fermented cabbage.

### **Miso**

Miso paste comes from aging and fermenting soybeans, a process that produces probiotics. Use it in place of salt in recipes or enjoy a delicious bowl of miso soup.