


# What Should You Look For In a Probiotic?

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You already know **probiotics** play an important role in supporting optimal digestion and health.‡ But with so many products to choose from, what factors are important when it comes to choosing an effective **probiotic supplement**? Here are a few quick basics:



- **Look at the *culture count* to determine the strength or potency of a probiotic.** Culture count refers to the total amount of bacteria cultures in a single serving. Most experts recommend at least 15 billion or CFUs (colony forming units) daily to make an impact on your health.‡ However, research is showing more is better, you may benefit from more depending upon specific concerns.‡ Total live cultures will often be determined at time of manufacture, but very few remain at full strength through their expiration date. Look for a high culture count that displays potency on the label *at time of expiration, not manufacture*.
- **Pay attention to the number of strains.** The strains, or specific types of probiotics, and their culture count of each should be listed on the label. Over 1,000 strains of beneficial bacteria can be found in the **human gut**, so it makes sense to choose a probiotic supplement that reflects this natural diversity.
- **Look for lots of Ls and Bs.** When you scan the label of a good probiotic you will see many that begin with Ls and Bs, such as *Lactobacilli* and *Bifidobacteria*. A good trick to remember is that the L strains are more native to the **l**ittle (small) intestine and the Bs are generally found in the **b**ig (large) intestine, or **colon**. Look for lots of Ls and Bs.

## Health, Probiotic



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person's body utilizes certain probiotic strains differently than others.

- **Choose delayed-release capsules.** While probiotics are also utilized in the tract, the majority of bacterial populations exist in the lower small and large intestine. How do the good bacteria get all the way down there? Probiotics must travel through a harsh stomach environment and be delivered to the intestines to colonize. Delayed-release capsules are engineered to remain intact through the stomach and begin releasing in the intestines, where they are needed most.

A probiotic supplement, when delivered to the right place, with the right amount of culture, can help promote **digestive health** and bowel regularity as well as support immune health. Always read the label so you know you are giving your body the probiotic it needs.

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