

PROBIOTICS: HEALTH BENEFIT EFFECTIVENESS AND ADVERSE EFFECTS

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ABSTRACT

Probiotics, particularly lactobacilli, lactococci and Bifid bacterium are thought to be generally safe, beneficial to health with daily ingestion by millions of individuals. Probiotics have been suggested for the treatment of infectious gastroenteritis, treatment and prevention of Clostridium difficile associated diarrhea. Recent findings suggest that probiotics may help atopic eczema, irritable bowel disease, Helicobacter pylori infection, and recurrence of superficial bladder cancer. Probiotic are also effective in rotavirus and antibiotic associated diarrhea. Research will validate the value of probiotics for their use as growth promoters in animals. Population based studies raise concerns about the use of at least certain probiotics in vulnerable patients, particularly immunocompromised hosts, patients with intravenous catheters, prosthetic material, short bowel syndrome, abnormal cardiac valves, elderly patients, and in infectious complications of acute pancreatitis reported increased mortality in probiotic treatment group. Mortality or sepsis has been reported as due to invasive Lactobacillus spp. or S. boulardi infections associated with probiotic use. Clinicians need to be aware of the risks and benefits of this treatment

KEYWORDS: Probiotics, Lactobacillus, Bacteremia, Sepsis