

See what you should be doing to have better digestive health.



Add more [probiotics](#) and [prebiotics](#) to your diet.

Probiotics are live strains of bacteria. Available in pills, powders, or liquids, as well as in foods like yogurt, kefir, kimchi, sauerkraut, and more, they can help build a healthier gut population. Key strains to look for include Bifidobacterium and Lactobacillus, says Frank Lipman, M.D. founder of the Eleven-Eleven Wellness Center in New York and author of *10 Reasons You Feel Old and Get Fat*.

Prebiotics are the foods and/or supplements that help nourish healthy bacteria. They're usually made up of fiber compounds that pass undigested through the GI tract. "They're like dinner for the bacteria to dine on," explains Raphael Kellman, M.D., found of the Kellman Center for Integrative and Functional Medicine in New York and author of *The Microbiome Diet*. The bacteria feast on the fibers by fermenting them, creating by-products that can help improve insulin sensitivity and protect against inflammation, he adds. Prebiotics include foods like asparagus, garlic, Jerusalem artichokes, jicama, leeks, onions, and radishes.

SEE ALSO: [5 Reasons to Reboot Your Gut Health](#)

In addition to taking in probiotics, you can improve your gut health with a few other sources. Carnosine, glutamine, N-acetylglucosamine, and zinc can all help repair the gut wall, says Kellman. Garlic, oregano oil, and wormwood can also aid in removing unhealthy bacteria from the intestines.

The “hygiene hypothesis” theorizes that the more your [immune system](#) (including the gut) is exposed to germs and other microbes, the better your body will be at fighting off disease. “Don’t be afraid to get a little dirty now and then,” says Robynne Chutkan, M.D., founder of the Digestive Center for Women in Chevy Chase, MD, and author of *The Microbiome Solution*. While you’re at it, avoid using antibacterial products to wash up. “These products aren’t especially effective against viruses, and they can damage the gut and endocrine systems,” she says. To get clean, use good old-fashioned soap and water instead.

ATTUNE DARK CHOCOLATE PROBIOTIC BAR is made from 68% antioxidant-rich cocoa and has 6.1 billion probiotic cultures, including B. Lactis, L. Acidophilus, and L. Casei. Plus, each bar has just 6 grams of sugar per serving. (\$6, attunefoods.com)

LESSER EVIL’S NOW THAT’S A GOOD COOKIE supplies your body with 1 billion CFU of the probiotic Bacillus Coagulans—not to mention up to 6 grams of protein per serving. Available in yummy flavors like quinoa apple pie, dark chocolate flax, and cashew ginger spice. (\$5.50, lesserevil.com)

RUBY ROCKETS FRUIT & VEGGIE ICE POPS are low-sugar, nondairy snacks that are like [smoothies](#) on a stick. They're a delicious blend of naturally sweet, non-GMO fruits and vegetables with healthy probiotics. Plus, they're vegan and just 35 calories per serving. Available in fun flavors like far out fudge and meteorite mango. (\$15 FOR 3 boxes, rubyrockets.com)