



HEALTH AND HEALING

Probiotics are essential for health

by **Mike Ventresca**

Vital Choice

Have you ever thought about the meaning of the word *antibiotic*? It literally means “against life.” Isn’t it funny that when we’re sick, we’re often prescribed something that’s against life? Of course antibiotics play an important and necessary role in



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modern medicine, but these days I find myself talking more about how critical *probiotics* are.

Probiotics are the collection of bacteria that reside in and on our bodies. They support every tissue, fluid and body function, and are

considered our primary immune response. In fact, this community of beneficial bacteria governs more than 70% of our immune response. They are also critical to proper digestion and are even responsible for the creation of certain vitamins—like vitamin K2, which is crucial to both cardiovascular and bone health. Simply put, the more we have of them the better we feel. And that’s why it’s important to know that antibiotics kill them.

Please don’t misunderstand. If an antibiotic is prescribed you should take it.

But according to many health experts, you should also take a probiotic. This helps re-establish the good bacteria and optimize health. In fact, many natural health experts believe that probiotics are essential to good health and should be taken daily—regardless of antibiotic use.

So, how do you choose among the many options available? I base my decision on three criteria: the number of strains of bacteria, the total bacteria counts, and, perhaps most importantly, the base or medium the bacteria are in. While there are many excellent products available, I take All-Flora®. All-Flora is a high potency multi-strain probiotic that offers a perfect base of whole foods, and soluble and insoluble fibers that, according to research, maximize performance and yield beneficial effects, such as improved digestion and overall health.

Mike Ventresca is co-owner of Vital Choice, a health food and nutrition store located at 9243 Sprague Road in North Royalton’s Timber Ridge Plaza. The phone number is 440-885-9505. They are open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and Sunday noon to 5 p.m.

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