

Probiotics beneficial for both mother and baby

The use of probiotics by pregnant and nursing mothers can be beneficial for both mothers and their infants.

According to recent studies, the use of probiotics by pregnant and nursing mothers can be beneficial for both mothers and their infants. Probiotics are friendly bacteria that help support the natural balance of microorganisms in the body. They inhibit the growth of harmful bacteria, promote good digestion, can bolster the immune system and also help to resist infection.

"Probiotics are microorganisms that provide several health benefits, which is why taking them on a regular basis has so many advantages," explained dietitian and nutritionist Annie Jolicoeur. "They have a beneficial effect on the mother's intestinal flora as well as on the infant's developing flora.

"A multi-strain probiotic supplement, such as Probaclac, can significantly reduce a woman's risk of suffering from gestational diabetes," she added. "Furthermore, it has been proven that probiotics can improve blood sugar levels."

Here is an overview of the results of several studies done to determine the benefits of probiotics.

- * Pregnant women who take probiotics are less susceptible to preeclampsia, a condition characterized by high blood pressure along with an abnormal amount of protein in the urine. Women who have high blood pressure have a higher risk of miscarriage and preterm delivery of a low birth weight or stillborn baby.

- * Taking probiotics while pregnant can help fight yeast infections.

- * Probiotic supplements taken by women who are pregnant or breastfeeding promote the development of the child's immune system.

- * Newborns whose mothers take probiotics while breastfeeding may be less susceptible to lactose intolerance.

- * Probiotic supplements taken by women who are pregnant or breastfeeding can reduce the incidence of infantile atopic dermatitis, or eczema. Furthermore, we know that infantile eczema is often associated with asthma and other types of allergies.

- * Taking probiotics while breastfeeding also can reduce the risk of diarrhea.

- * Probiotics also can help reduce the incidence of infant allergies, according to the results of a recent study presented at the February 2013 American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology annual meeting in San Antonio, Texas. The results showed that children born to mothers who consumed probiotic lactobacilli during pregnancy had a 7 percent reduced risk for eczema at six months of age and a 12 percent reduced risk for hay fever at 18 to 36 months. More information and advice on probiotics is available at probaclac.ca.