



BC DINING
FEED YOUR MIND.

Nutrition Tip

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Please share this with staff, and let us know if there is something specific you want to learn about in an upcoming tip.

Best, Kate Sweeney, MS, RDN, LDN

You Are What You(r Microbiota) Eat

By: Ali Hulse

Chances are you have heard the word “prebiotic”, “probiotic”, or “microbiome” in the news lately. Gut health is among the latest trendy topics in the health and wellness industry. But what do they really mean?

The Microbiome

The microbiome consists of a unique accumulation of microorganisms, including bacteria, fungi, and viruses, that live on and inside our bodies. These microbes coexist peacefully in a healthy person and promote many key functions of the human body. The majority are found in the gut, particularly the large intestine to help digest food, protect the immune system, and produce important vitamins and amino acids.



The “Biotics”

Prebiotics are indigestible fibers of certain foods that stimulate the growth of the helpful microorganisms in your gut. They are naturally found in a wide array of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Some examples include bananas, onions, asparagus, and whole wheat pasta.

Probiotics are active cultures, bacteria or yeast, found in fermented foods like yogurt, sauerkraut, tempeh, and aged cheeses. These living organisms are very similar to the “good” bugs in your digestive tract helping to boost immunity and overall health.

Use this trick to remember the difference:
The ‘e’ in prebiotics is for ‘energy’
The ‘o’ in probiotics is for ‘organism’

Don’t Get Caught Up In The Craze

Though they are readily available in most health food stores, prebiotic and probiotic supplements are typically unnecessary (and unregulated by the FDA!). For most individuals, a balanced diet provides adequate prebiotics to nourish digestive bacteria. Listening to your intuitive hunger signals when choosing foods and focusing on variation in meals over the course of a week should do just fine!

