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# Probiotic Supplements May Be A Waste Of Time: Here's The Diet You Need To Supercharge Your Gut

**Bea McMonagle**, CONTRIBUTOR*I cover prestige beauty, wellness, men's grooming and style.* [FULL BIO](#) ▾

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Probiotic supplements may be of little or no value to healthy adults says a recent Copenhagen study. The small study published in [Genome Medicine](#) of just under 200 healthy subjects found no difference in gut flora among those who took a daily probiotic supplement and those who did not. The study does not discount their effectiveness among those with chronic conditions. Why is your gut health so important? In the past ten years, a boon of research has yielded connections between the health of your gut and maladies such as obesity, diabetes, liver disease, inflammatory bowel disease, irritable bowel syndrome, celiac disease, autism, mental wellness and even aging. Dr. Robin Berzin, founder of [Parsley Health](#) a functional medical practice that prescribes both lifestyle changes as well as medication to patients to treat the root cause of illness states:

“Your gut health is the number one vital sign of your overall health—70% of your immune system and 95% of your serotonin in your body are in your gut. From immunity to mood, we know that digestive health is essential.”

Diet seems to be the most effective means for ensuring a healthy intestinal microbiota. Notes Dr. Berzin, “At Parsley, if your symptom score is 0 and you feel great, we don't recommend taking a probiotic. We simply recommend maintaining your healthy microbiome (your unique environment of bacteria) with a high-fiber, unprocessed and low-sugar diet.”



*Courtesy of Company*

Think seasonal vegetables—squashes, kale and broccoli, as well as whole grains like quinoa. Bone broth is high in n-butyrate which helps feed the cells that line the digestive tract. Fermented foods like kimchi and sauerkraut may also be helpful.

Phoebe Lapine, a chef and cookbook author who has a book coming out in 2017 called *The Wellness Project* that documents the lifestyle changes she implemented to deal with her autoimmune disease has some fantastic fermented food options and recipes she shared. Says Phoebe,

“The bacterial makeup of our gut is even more unique than a fingerprint. That means finding one probiotic pill that works for everyone is nearly impossible. Trying out a few different options can't hurt. But fermented foods contain much more diversity. So you'll be doing a kind of bet-hedging, and increasing your chances of replacing needed populations, by integrating as many different types as possible into your diet. Here's what Phoebe recommends.

### **Kefir**

“A good option is [Green Valley Organics](#) because it's lactose-free. Always buy plain and unsweetened otherwise you're just feeding your gut another ingredient that the bad guys thrive on: sugar!

I add kefir to smoothies or make dressings out of it like this [Kefir-jalapeno crema](#) for quick pulled pork and quinoa burrito bowls.”

## **Kraut**

“I love [Farmhouse Culture](#). They are national but based in California. For east coasters, smaller craft brands are Crock and Jar and Hosta Hill. The latter makes an AMAZING spicy kraut that I put on just about anything. Hot dogs are a classic kraut pairing. As a slightly healthier main, I like doing [bangers and mash with cider onions](#) then topping them with kraut.”

## **Kimchi**

“[Mother-in-Law's](#) is the best. Mix this into [sweet potato latkes](#) in the winter! Be careful about cooking fermented foods because too much heat will kill the bacteria. Top the latkes with a little dollop of yogurt and chopped kimchi to make sure to get the health benefits along with the flavor. Since it's spicy, kimchi also makes a great topping for tacos.”

## **Yogurt**

I love [Siggi's](#) or [Fage](#). Again, look for full-fat, plain and unsweetened. Besides just breakfast, I incorporate yogurt into a lot of savory dishes. This [tahini yogurt](#) sauce is great on any protein, especially fish.”