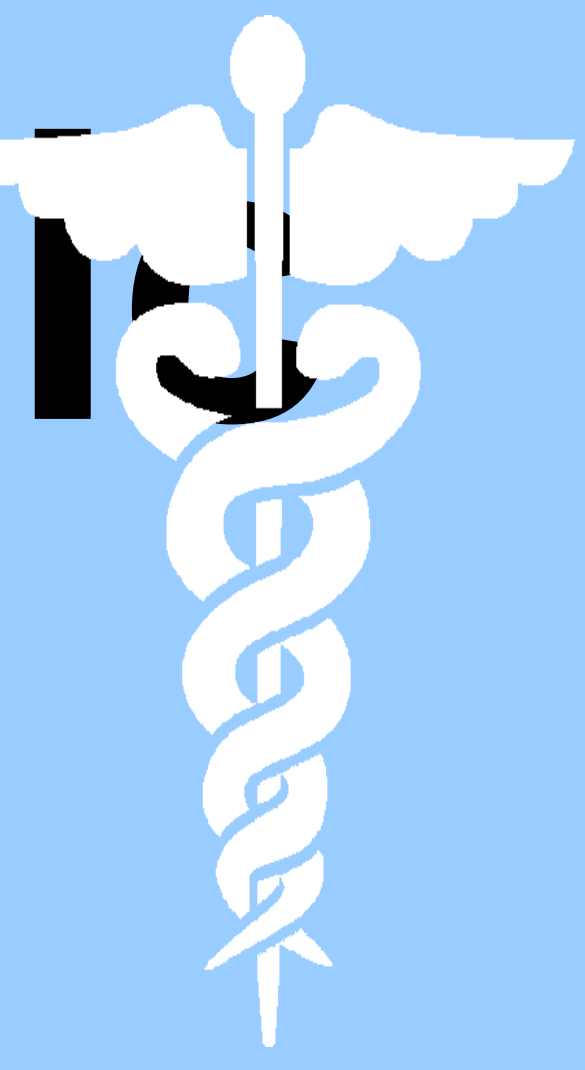


Beneficial effects of probiotics use in food

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1 Introduction

Probiotics are defined as live microorganisms which when administered in adequate amounts confer a health benefit on the host. Although food containing probiotic bacteria as reported have been consuming for more than 4000 years, it was not scientific progress until the middle of the 20th century. Developing scientific methods ensure profound investigation of the therapeutic potential of these microorganisms.

2 Aim

The aim was to evaluate the health effects of probiotics regarding to food production of probiotic functional food

3 Results

The investigations have shown that the ingestion of probiotics results in number of effects. Many of the health claims are still controversial, although novel molecular methods enable analysis of the underlying complex mechanisms of action. Some of the health effects are:

- Improvement in lactose utilisation
- Preventing antibiotic, pathogenic bacteria and viruses-associated diarrhea
- Reducing incidence of coronary heart disease
- Immune enhancement
- Prevention and treatment of *H. pylori* infection and complications
- Prevention of allergic diseases onset
- Prevention and treatment of bacterial and yeast vaginitis
- Lowering risk of urinary tract infections
- Prevention of hypercholesterolaemia
- Certain antitumor activities

4 Conclusion

Regarding the many proven positive effects probiotics demonstrate, it is necessary to stress out the benefit of their frequent consumption. Consumer awareness of the influence of the food to the health has made the idea of functional food. Inclusion of carefully selected probiotic strains, along with application of good manufacturing practice in food production, generates a whole variety of "probiotic functional food" - dairy and non-dairy products, some of which already available on the market