**“Pre and Pro” Biotic Breakdown**

Antibiotics, prebiotics, and probiotics...all these “biotics” but what do they actually mean? Most people know that antibiotics help fight infection, but the terms “pre and pro” biotics are a little more mysterious. Whether you have heard these two terms in a television commercial for yogurt or read them while scanning an ingredient label, prebiotics and probiotics are hot topics in the world of digestive health.

**PREBIOTICS: FEED YOUR BODY’S BACTERIA**

If you counted every cell in your body, the number of bacterial cells would far outnumber your own. The good bacteria residing in your digestive system, called your microbiome, are just as hungry as you are! Your microbiome is comprised of good and bad bacteria, and prebiotics work to overpower the bad ones. Every time you eat fiber, found in foods like fruits, vegetables, legumes, and whole grains, you are eating prebiotics. Fiber arrives in your colon where the “friendly” bacteria in your microbiome digest the prebiotics to help your gastrointestinal health and immune system.

**PROBIOTICS: THE “GOOD” BACTERIA**

Not all bacteria have a negative effect on your health. The live active cultures in probiotics can positively alter the composition of your microbiome. However, this effect will only last as long as you are taking them daily. As soon as you stop taking probiotics, your microbiome will revert back to its original makeup. Probiotics are often prescribed with antibiotics to keep your gut flora balanced. Yogurt with live active cultures is a good source of probiotics. For the adventurous, explore your nearest health food store for other great sources including miso paste (not miso soup as the bacteria is killed off with the boiling water used to make the soup), kefir, or sauerkraut.

Here are some ways you can add prebiotics and probiotics to your meal in the dining hall:

- Fill a whole grain tortilla with mixed vegetables sautéed in garlic oil or topped with garlic powder for an additional dose of prebiotics and flavor.
- Add prebiotic rich soymilk to your cereal instead of whole milk.
- For a prebiotic filled pasta dish, ask for whole wheat pasta with asparagus, onions, and garlic.
- The perfect “pro and pre” combo: a Greek yogurt parfait with fresh fruit and a handful of whole grain cereal, such as Cheerios.

“**Everyday I’m Doublin’” – Bacteria**

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Questions? Post on our Facebook (RU Healthy Dining Team), Twitter (@RUHDT), Instagram (@RU_HDT), SnapChat (RU_HDT) or e-mail us at peggyp@dining.edu. Our mission is to educate students about nutrition and encourage them to make healthier food and lifestyle choices. For more info, nutrient analysis and past newsletters, visit our web page at http://food.rutgers.edu.