



ANTIBIOTICS, PROBIOTICS, AND ALLERGIC REACTIONS TO ANTIBIOTICS

Here at Morris County Dental, we have adopted the recommendation of taking a probiotic if antibiotics have been advised. For simplicity, we suggest Activia yogurt by Dannon. Take 2 tablespoons 2 hours before each dose followed by 2 tablespoons after each dose. Please read below for details and explanations.

Antibiotics are medications intended to kill bad bacteria, but unfortunately, they often kill good bacteria, too. Good bacteria are needed for multiple functions: proper digestion, vitamin absorption & creation, subduing secondary complications such as yeast infections, and maintaining your body's immune system. Probiotics are a simple and effective ways to replenish these helpful and friendly bacteria.

If the balance of good & bad bacteria gets disrupted, nuisances such as bloating, cramping, and diarrhea can occur. Even worse conditions such as Clostridium difficile infections can occur. This bacteria can have serious consequences: it can cause severe diarrhea, pseudomembranous colitis (a severe inflammation of the colon), and rarely toxic megacolon, which can be life-threatening.

FORMS OF PROBIOTICS: Probiotics are available in three main forms: yogurt, pills, and liquids. It is important to make sure that whichever form you choose, it contains live organisms. Ideally, look for an item containing 4 billion live organisms (1 billion for a child). Two key probiotic families are Lactobacillus and Bifidobacterium. Find a probiotic that contains species from both of these families such as L. acidophilus and B. bifidum. While we recommend Activia® yogurt for simplicity, please note it does not contain bacteria from the Lactobacillus family.

WHEN TO TAKE: Take the probiotic either two hours before or two hours after each antibiotic dose. Also, continue the probiotic for 2 weeks after finishing the antibiotic course. There is also nothing wrong with continuing probiotics as long as you'd like after the antibiotic regimen: they are not harmful to the body.

HOW TO KEEP: Refrigeration is a requirement for the probiotic, regardless of its form: this is because the probiotic consists of live organisms. Be wary of probiotics claiming refrigeration is not necessary.

ALLERGIC REACTIONS TO ANTIBIOTICS: Many patients report an allergy to certain antibiotics. However, there is a difference between a true allergy and an unwanted reaction. Many medications (including antibiotics) can cause unwanted reactions such as stomach irritation, cramping, and diarrhea. These are not necessarily true allergies, and can possibly be controlled with probiotics. Speak with your medical doctor if you would like to investigate your particular situation.



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