

HOW PROBIOTICS CAN HELP MY PRETERM INFANT

INFANCY IS AN IMPORTANT TIME IN DEVELOPING A HEALTHY GUT MICROBIOME

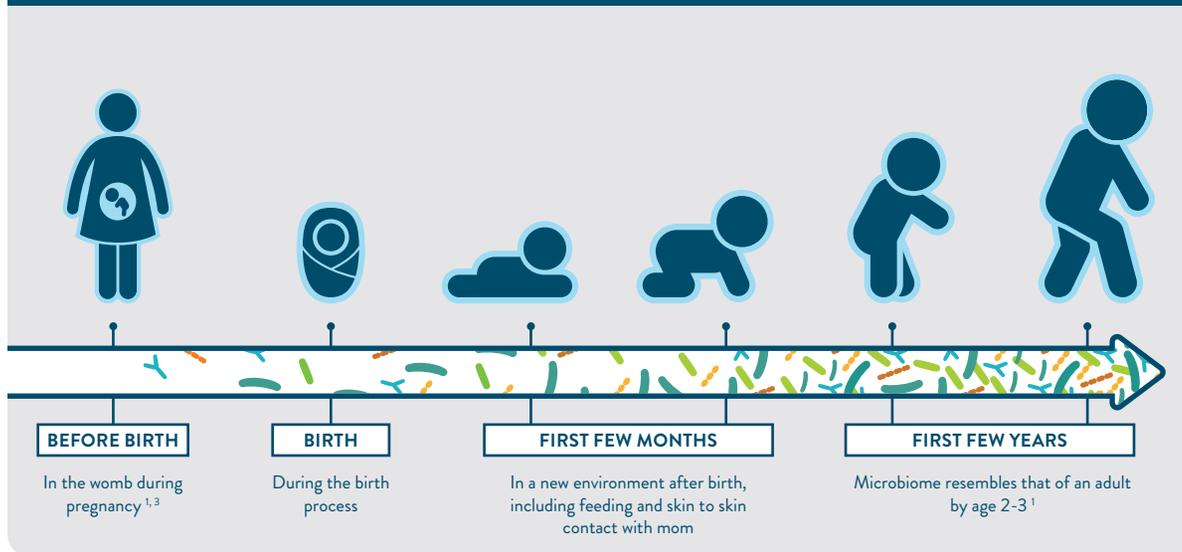


The digestive system, also called the gut, contains trillions of small living organisms including bacteria. This collection of small organisms is called a microbiome.¹

A healthy gut microbiome requires a favorable balance of beneficial (good) bacteria to harmful (bad) bacteria.²

Microbiome Development Timeline

Each phase adds new bacteria to the microbiome



The Microbiome Shapes Health

A healthy microbiome contributes to protection against infection and lays the foundation for a lifetime of good health.²

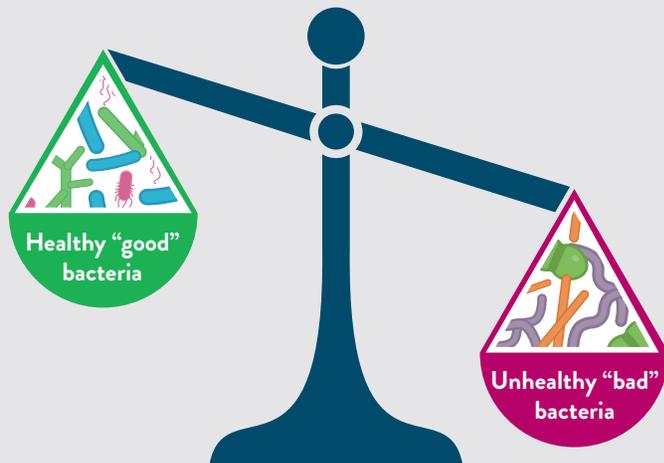
Preterm Infants May Face Challenges That Impact A Healthy Gut

The following factors can decrease good bacteria in the gut and cause an imbalance⁴⁻⁷

- Gut is not fully developed
- Fewer good bacteria at birth than full term infants
- C-section birth
- Timing of first feeding
- How your baby is being fed
- Source of feeding (introduction to non-mother's milk)
- Use of antibiotics and other medications
- Fewer opportunities for skin to skin contact

AN IMBALANCE OF GUT BACTERIA CAN INCREASE THE RISK FOR INFECTION AND INFLAMMATION

Probiotics increase the number of good bacteria in the gut, promoting a healthy microbiome



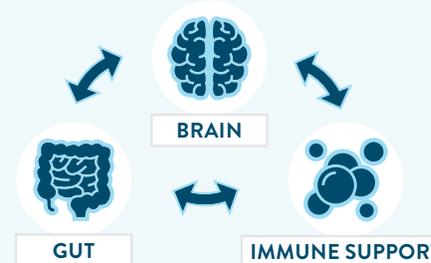
An immature digestive system

- Decreases ability to take in, digest, and absorb nutrients needed for growth
- Decreases ability to make and utilize vitamins
- Decreases ability to build a strong immune system and fight off diseases
- Increases risk of Necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC)- an uncommon, but serious, inflammation in the intestines of preterm infants



How do Probiotics work?

Probiotics are live good bacteria that help create a healthy gut which supports the health and development of other body systems. ⁸



BODY SYSTEM	IMPACT ON HEALTH
The Brain ^{9,10}	Sends signals to the brain that help with feeding tolerance
The Immune System ^{9,10}	Protects against inflammation Defends against bad bacteria Fosters growth and development ¹¹
The Gut	• Produces vitamins necessary for digestion and bone health • Helps with absorbing, digesting and using nutrients

Probiotics may be recommended for preterm infants that are:

- born at 32 weeks or younger
- less than 1.5kg (3lbs 5oz) in weight
- on antibiotics

Recent research shows that probiotic products that contain multiple types of healthy bacteria may be more beneficial than products containing a single type. ¹² Talk to your NICU staff about your baby's individual needs, including the benefits and risks of using probiotics for your baby

To learn more about the neonatal microbiome, visit: anhi.org/resources/knowledge-hub

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