

Ask the Experts

Q: What is acidophilus? Do we need it?



A. Lactobacillus acidophilus, also known as simple 'acidophilus', are friendly lactic acid bacteria, which occur naturally in our bodies or can be consumed in certain dairy products or through dairy or non-dairy supplements.

They are often categorized in a class of organisms known as probiotics. Probiotics help improve the environment of the intestinal tract by producing acids and other compounds which inhibit the growth of undesirable bacteria. We can all benefit from taking Acidophilus supplements or eating dairy foods with live cultures as the positive effects on the body are endless. Its benefits include, counteracting lactose intolerance, helping prevent yeast infections when taking antibiotics, reducing bad breath and internal gas, and restoring bacteria balance in the intestine, particularly traveller's and antibiotic induced diarrhoea — to name but a few. (Gabrielle K. Tuscher, M.S., R.D., Dietician, Mix, NutriTuscher@yahoo.com.hk)

問：何為嗜乳酸桿菌？真的需要嗎？

答：嗜乳酸桿菌（簡稱嗜酸菌）是有益健康的乳酸菌，人體會自然製造，日常亦可從奶製品，以及乳類或非乳類營養食品吸收。嗜酸菌一般歸入“益生菌”的類別。益生菌所釋放的酸性物質及其他混合物可抑制有害細菌滋生，從而改善腸道環境。含嗜酸菌的營養食品或新鮮乳類食品對人體的好處是無窮盡的，包括抗衡乳糖不耐症、防止服用抗生素期間出現酵母感染、減少口氣及胃氣，以及回復腸道細菌平衡（尤其是外遊及抗生素引發的腹瀉）。(Mix M.S., R.D., 營養師 Gabrielle K. Tuscher, NutriTuscher@yahoo.com.hk)

Q: I always seem to run out of time and have no time to exercise. What can I do to be more effective with my time?



Without a plan, you will not move in any direction, let alone to the gym. On those days when you sit around debating how to spend the day, you are more likely to waste time and lose direction. Therefore, create a ritual with your exercise. Allocate specific days and even times every week for your chosen exercise. That way, you create a weekly habit that is clearly scheduled.

When the workout is fun, you are more likely to do it. So why not invite a friend to join your workout regiment? You will be less likely to 'flake out' in front of TV instead, and you get to spend time with your friend at the same time. (Pia Muggerud; Copia Coaching, pia@co-pia.com)

問：我的時間總是不夠用，根本沒有多餘時間做運動。怎樣才可以更有效地使用我的時間？

答：沒有計劃的話，甚麼事也做不成，更莫說到健身室運動。當你百無聊賴地跟自己爭論如何運用這一天的時間，你其實是在浪費寶貴的光陰，也逐漸失去方向。因此，你必須令運動成為習慣。每星期固定某幾天，甚至某段時間做你所選擇的運動。如此下來，你可以養成每周運動的習慣，而且有清楚的時間表。

另一方面，從運動中得到樂趣是令人持之以恆的重要因素。因此，何不找個朋友跟你一起做運動？如此可以大大減少你在電視機前打瞌睡的機會，更可以與朋友共聚情誼，何樂而不為？(Pia Muggerud; Copia Coaching, pia@co-pia.com)

Q: What can I do to prevent backaches?



Around 90 percent of us have experienced some form of back pain and this is not surprising as most of us spend our days slumped in chairs — a lifestyle that leads to weak and inflexible muscles.

Research has shown that people who are physically fit are more resistant to back pain or back injuries

and recover more quickly from injuries than those who are less physically fit. An exercise programme that consists of aerobic exercise strengthening and stretching will improve one's overall fitness level to get rid of back pain.

Aerobic exercise strengthens the large muscle groups and recommended exercises include brisk walking, cycling and cross training. High-impact exercise such as running or anything with too much jumping should be avoided. You should achieve your 'aerobic training zone' for at least 30 minutes, three times per week.

Strengthening exercises helps improve muscle tone, function and strength. Good strong core muscles stabilize the spine, allow proper spinal movement and make it easier to maintain the correct sitting and standing posture.

Stretching improves flexibility and allows full and normal spinal movement and reduces the possibility of soft tissue injuries. (Ric Tsang, Training Supervisor of P.T.S., Fit-Max, www.fitmax-hk.com)

問：如果患有背痛，可以做運動嗎？

答：現今背痛十分普遍，大部份人都經歷不同形式的背痛，數據顯示8佰萬香港人中就有5.6萬人曾患背痛。背痛普及歸根究底在於常的生活模式如長時間坐著或缺乏伸展和強化肌肉的運動引致肌肉力量薄弱和缺乏靈活性。

專家已指出運動是有效治療背痛的方法，研究指出增強體能以預防背痛和減輕受傷的機會；更能加強受傷復原的能力。增強體能應包括有氧運動、強化肌肉運動和伸展運動。

有氧運動：有氧運動運用大量的肌肉群來增加心率跳動，建議運動包括慢跑、單車、或綜合訓練等等；應避免高強度訓練如跑