

Probiotics promising for diarrhoea post antibiotics

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CONSUMPTION of probiotics is associated with reduced risk of antibiotic-associated diarrhoea, a meta-analysis shows.

Data from 63 trials of almost 12,000 patients found probiotic users had a 42% lower risk of diarrhoea compared to patients receiving placebo or no intervention.

The researchers calculated that 13 people treated with antibiotics would need to take probiotics to prevent one case of diarrhoea.

Dr David Topping (PhD), a CSIRO research scientist, said there were plausible mechanisms to support the finding.

However the study provided no information on the number of organisms being consumed or the specific antibiotics that the patients were treated with.

“So I think one needs a tightly controlled, well-designed study using probiotics of known strength, but it is promising,” he said. 

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