

TOTAL HEALTH NEWSLETTER



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Probiotics: *An Emerging Approach in Treating Vaginitis*

Vaginitis, characterized by inflammation of the vaginal tissue, affects millions of women globally, leading to discomfort, itching, and abnormal discharge. Candidal vulvovaginitis (CVV), commonly known as a yeast infection, and bacterial vaginosis (BV) are predominant forms, comprising almost 80% of all cases of vaginitis. While conventional treatments typically involve antifungal or antibiotic medications, recent research suggests a new approach – probiotics.

Probiotics, live microorganisms conferring health benefits when administered adequately, offer a promising avenue in managing vaginitis. By replenishing the depleted lactobacilli population, probiotic supplementation restores the acidic environment of the vagina. Lactobacilli, crucial for maintaining vaginal health, produce lactic acid, which helps sustain an acidic pH environment, preventing the overgrowth of harmful bacteria and fungi. Common plant-based food sources of lactobacilli include soy yogurt, soy-based kefir, fermented soy products, and fermented vegetables. These plant-based fermented foods not only provide beneficial lactobacilli strains but also offer diverse flavors and textures to enhance dietary variety.

Several studies (2, 3) have demonstrated the efficacy of probiotics, both orally and vaginally, in significantly reducing recurrence rates of candidal vulvovaginitis and bacterial vaginosis at one month post-treatment. Patients in the probiotic group exhibited a significantly higher rate of normal flora restoration compared to the control group. Moreover, a few studies (1) have suggested higher bacterial vaginosis cure rates with probiotics than with antibiotics. Importantly, no additional adverse events were reported. However, at six months post-treatment, there was no significant difference in recurrence rates and normal flora restoration between the probiotic and control groups (2, 3), indicating the need for ongoing support to ensure colonization in the vagina.

Prebiotics play a crucial role in supporting the effectiveness of probiotics by serving as fuel for beneficial bacteria to thrive, not only in the gut but also in other areas of the body, including the vagina. Numerous studies have shown that prebiotics indirectly support the colonization and survival of probiotic lactobacilli strains, thus helping maintain a healthy vaginal microbiome. By providing a favorable

environment for lactobacilli growth, prebiotics contribute to the production of lactic acid, crucial for maintaining an acidic pH in the vagina and inhibiting the overgrowth of harmful pathogens associated with bacterial vaginosis and vulvovaginal candidiasis.

Prebiotics are readily available in various plant-based foods, facilitating easy incorporation into the diet. Some examples of prebiotic-rich plant-based foods include soybeans, garlic, onions, asparagus, and bananas.

Probiotics offer a promising adjunctive therapy in managing vaginitis. By restoring the balance of vaginal flora and maintaining an acidic pH environment, probiotics alleviate symptoms and reduce recurrence rates. When combined with plant-based prebiotics found in certain foods, this approach may further enhance the effectiveness of probiotic treatment, providing holistic support for women's vaginal health and overall well-being.

References:

1. Afifrad, R., Darb Emamie, A., Golmoradi Zadeh, R., Asadollahi, P., Ghanavati, R., & Darbandi, A. (2022). Effects of Pro/Prebiotics Alone over Pro/Prebiotics Combined with Conventional Antibiotic Therapy to Treat Bacterial Vaginosis: A Systematic Review. *International journal of clinical practice*, 2022, 4774783. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2022/4774783>
2. Jeng, H. S., Yan, T. R., & Chen, J. Y. (2020). Treating vaginitis with probiotics in non-pregnant females: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Experimental and therapeutic medicine*, 20(4), 3749–3765. <https://doi.org/10.3892/etm.2020.9090>
3. van de Wijgert, J., & Verwijs, M. C. (2020). Lactobacilli-containing vaginal probiotics to cure or prevent bacterial or fungal vaginal dysbiosis: a systematic review and recommendations for future trial designs. *BJOG : an international journal of obstetrics and gynaecology*, 127(2), 287–299. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1471-0528.15870>



Creamy Vegan Mushroom Soup with Almonds

Ingredients:

- 15g almonds
- 20g onion, diced
- 40g mixed mushrooms (such as cremini, shiitake, or oyster mushrooms), chopped
- 100ml unsweetened almond milk
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- Salt to taste
- Fresh parsley or chives for garnish (optional)

Instructions:

1. Toast almonds in a skillet. Set aside.
2. Sauté onion and garlic in olive oil until translucent.
3. Add mushrooms and cook until softened.
4. Blend toasted almonds into a powder.
5. Add almond milk, thyme, and almond powder to the saucepan.
6. Simmer for 10 minutes.
7. Optional: Add soy sauce or tamari for flavor.
8. Blend the soup until smooth and creamy.
9. Reheat if needed.
10. Serve hot, garnished with parsley or chives.

The Creamy Vegan Mushroom Soup with Almonds is a nutritious and delicious option that offers multiple health benefits. Packed with vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants from mushrooms, almonds, and onions, this soup supports immune health and provides heart-healthy fats. It's a satisfying, low-calorie choice for weight management and is suitable for dairy-free and vegan diets. Additionally, the soup's antioxidant content helps protect against oxidative stress. Enjoy this flavorful soup while nourishing your body with its wholesome ingredients.

OUR *Prayer Room* AND *Worship* SERVICE

Caring for the whole person—body, mind and spirit — is an integral part of our hospital's approach to health care. Hong Kong Adventist Hospital takes every effort to look after your spiritual and emotional needs.

We have a prayer room which is located on the ground floor opposite to the entrance. It is opened to people of all faiths.

Our clinically trained chaplains are available 24-hours a day, seven days a week to offer guidance and counseling. For those who request, prayers are offered for the patients and their families.

Regardless of religious affiliation or the lack thereof, our chaplains are ready to offer spiritual and emotional support during your stay at the hospital.

A short inspiring morning message is offered every weekday from 8:40am to 9:00am in La Rue Building 7B. All patients are welcome to attend.

Please feel free to call upon our chaplains for emotional and spiritual support or to just have a listening ear.

May God bless you.

From the Chaplain's Office





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The Science behind an Insult

What is the worst thing anyone has ever said to you? We tend to hold on to negative words. It is not easy to forget an insult. Often times, children remember a harsh word that a parent spoke to them. Bickering spouses will be quick to remind of each of hurtful things said in the past. What is the science behind an insult? Nigel Barber, a renowned psychologist, argues that the purpose of a put-down is to reduce someone else in the imaginary status hierarchy. So it is hardly surprising that insults will often refer to a person's social status in terms of ancestry, lack of prestige, parentage, sexual orientation, or socio-economic status.

Unfortunately, we live at a time where insults are no longer confined to a playground, or a bar fight. Insults are now given freely, and anonymously, behind the privacy, and protection of a computer screen. Social media platforms, like X (formerly known as Twitter), Facebook, Instagram, and others, are full of trolls that spew hate and dissension. When we dissect the power of an insult, we can easily see, that an insult is like a fire that needs oxygen to keep raging, but in the case of an insult, it needs attention in order for it to be effective. The attention, and importance we give an insult, is proportionate to the effect it has in us. This needs to be fully understood, since an insult that

is not handle properly, can have a detrimental effect in our health. An insult can bring powerful emotions of shame, guilt and despair. An insult is an emotional injury.

One of the best possible ways to deal with insults, is to not let another person's opinion of you, alter your reality. When we give too much attention and prioritize the words of the person hurdling the insult, we validate their words. An insult can only affect you, if you give it importance and attention. When someone insults us, we ought to consider three things: whether the insult is true, who it came from, and why. Then, it is very important for you to consider that retuning the insult does not make you a better person, it is a must, that you retain your calm and composure. When you are able to think properly, you are able to respond in an appropriate manner. Always remember, an insult is a projection of what is in the other person's heart, a gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. (Proverbs 15:2)

Reference

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-human-beast/201611/the-psychology-insults>



Lifestyle Management Center (LMC) is a crucial component of Hong Kong Adventist Hospital, articulating its mission, aiming to provide health education to both our patients and the general public regarding the benefits of 'Total Health'.

Through services and programs such as the Lifestyle Medicine Clinic, comprehensive lifestyle assessment, health screenings, delicious vegan cooking demonstration, fitness club and interactive educational programs, participants can begin to restore their own health through lifestyle modification.

Our success depends largely on your participation and support. Let us strive together to promote better holistic health in our society.

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Healthy Lifestyle Fund

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