



For More Information Contact:

Melissa Bradley, RD, LD

PH: 952-228-2554

E-mail: mbradley@hy-vee.com

5 Things Everyone Should Know About Prebiotics & Probiotics

Listen to your gut. It might be telling you to get more prebiotics and probiotics. During this media segment, Hy-Vee registered dietitian Melissa Bradley describes the difference between prebiotics and probiotics and why both of them are important for gut and overall health.

Melissa Bradley, RD, LD represents Hy-Vee as a nutrition expert promoting healthy eating throughout the community. Melissa Bradley, RD, LD is a member of the Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics.

Pro tip: Remember that probiotics rely on prebiotics for food.

1. Prebiotics

Non-digestible carbs that ferment in the colon.
May help with calcium absorption.

2. Probiotics

Live beneficial bacteria that populate the gut.

3. Working together

When prebiotics ferment in the colon, they feed probiotics—the good bacteria—and help balance the gut flora.

4. Supplements

May be beneficial for people who do not consume enough foods containing prebiotics and probiotics. Products like Regular Girl contain both prebiotics and probiotics.

5. Research

Research suggests probiotics may help with the prevention of diarrhea, Crohn's disease, urinary tract infections, and the recurrence of bladder cancer.

Maple Spiked Chocolate Hummus with Flaky Sea Salt

Serves 6

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Hy-Vee.com/Recipes-Ideas.

INGREDIENTS

15 oz canned chickpeas, drained (reserve liquid) and rinsed
¼ cup unsweetened cocoa or carob powder
3 Tbsp agave or maple Syrup
3 Tbsp tahini paste (optional)
1.5 tsp vanilla or rum extract
6 Scoops regular girl prebiotic fiber powder
3-4 Tbsp water (from canned chickpeas)
Pinch sea salt flakes

DIRECTIONS

Add all of the ingredients and a small pinch of salt in a food processor; process until smooth. If necessary add 3-4 tablespoons of water to adjust the consistency. This will depend on how dry the beans became after draining can. Serve in a bowl, drizzled with maple syrup and topped with cocoa powder and flaky salt.

Nutrition information (per serving): 115 calories, 2 g fat, 1 g saturated fat, 26 g carbohydrate, 10 g fiber, 7 g sugar, 5.5 g protein, 315 mg sodium.



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Anticipated questions with answers for the dietitian

1. What foods contain prebiotics and probiotics?

- Prebiotics come from foods such as asparagus, bananas, onions, garlic, apple skins, and beans.
- Probiotics come from foods and drinks with live cultures, such as yogurt, kimchi, kombucha, kefir, and fresh sauerkraut.

2. What is Regular Girl?

Regular Girl is a blend of 5 grams of prebiotic fiber and 8 billion active probiotics, which work together to promote balanced intestinal health. It contains 10 calories and 0 grams of sugar per serving, and can be mixed with smoothies, water, overnight oats, and cereals.

3. Is Regular Girl only for women?

Regular Girl was designed for women but contains prebiotics and probiotics that are considered beneficial for everyone.

Sources:

<https://www.eatright.org/food/vitamins-and-supplements/nutrient-rich-foods/prebiotics-and-probiotics-creating-a-healthier-you>

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/vitamins-and-supplements/health-benefits-of-taking-probiotics>

Whisner, CM et al. 2012. Galacto-oligosaccharides increase calcium absorption and gut bifidobacteria in girls: a double-blind cross-over trial. *British Journal of Nutrition*, March, 14:1-12.