

- Digestion / Digestive system

Eating live microbes is good for overall health

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probiotics as part of one's diet has become a popular practice in recent years with many experts touting its benefits for having a balanced digestive system. And recent research has confirmed that ingesting live microbes is indeed good for human health, measured in various ways.



Yogurt, kimchi, pickles, kombucha ... Rich in probiotics (live microorganisms consisting of various bacteria), fermented foods are hugely popular at the moment.

According to research published in 2022, American adults' consumption of foods with live microbes has gradually increased over the last 18 years.

And rightly so, since these foods are good for our health, especially for the balance of the intestinal flora. A recent study published in *The Journal of Nutrition*, conducted by American and Irish researchers, confirms this.

"Our results suggest that foods with higher microbial concentrations are associated with modest health improvements across a range of outcomes," they note.

It's one of the first times that research outlines the many health benefits of eating live microbes. For example, an additional 100 grams of food containing probiotics is associated with lower systolic blood pressure, a lower body mass index and a reduction in inflammatory markers.

"Besides fermented dairy, epidemiologic evidence has shown that consumption of fermented soy or fermented vegetables is linked with a reduced risk of type 2 diabetes, blood pressure, and atopic dermatitis," the authors write.

Because they do not require the addition of chemical compounds or additives, probiotics are also popular for their ecological aspect, since fermentation is based on a natural process centred around living organisms and is not harmful to the planet.

Choosing probiotics can also help contribute to reducing food waste and the production of waste. In France, fermented foods are currently the subject of a vast research project. Called *Ferments of the Future*, it is led by the National Institute of Agronomic Research (INRAE) and the National Association of Food Industries (ANIA) and aims to, among other things, develop new fermented foods, including cereals, legumes, fruits and vegetables.

The aim is to help boost plantbased foods and make diets more sustainable. – ETX Studio