

IBS Treatment Center Newsletter

1229 Madison Street, Suite 1220, Seattle, Washington 98104 (206) 264-1111 www.IBSTreatmentCenter.com

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Main Article

[Why Probiotics are Not All the Same \(Part 3 of 3\)](#)

Extras

[I Want Your Feedback for My Next Book](#)

Events Calendar

[GIG and IBS Support Group](#)

[Seattle's Gluten Free Food Festival](#)

[GIG Needs Your Help!](#)

[King 5 Healthy Living Expo](#)

[2007 Celiac Disease Awareness Walk](#)

I was diagnosed with IBS when I was in my late twenties. I have had bouts with diarrhea and constipation for 30 years! I would try to laugh it off, but it really affects everything you do and you start to wonder why you aren't normal, like everyone else. I didn't want to take drugs to treat my symptoms. I wanted to find out what was making my bowel and colon irritable.

I picked up a copy of Dr. Wangen's book at the bookstore. I was so excited to read that there were tests available to see if I might have food allergies and/or parasites, yeast, etc. Wow, was I surprised to learn that I am sensitive to bananas and eggs! I have been eating a banana daily for years! Eggs, usually a couple of times a week, not considering that they are in a lot of other foods.

It took about 2 weeks and I started to feel I was having normal bowel movements! I tested the theory and had eggs for breakfast and suffered with cramping, diarrhea and gas for 2 days. Thanks Dr. Wangen and staff, for your help and for making me feel comfortable when I come in! Thank you for diagnosing my B-12 deficiency and working out a treatment plan.

Nancy A.

Why Probiotics Are Not All The Same (Part 3 of 3)

Probiotics are supplements that contain beneficial bacteria such as Lactobacillus acidophilus or Bifidobacterium. One of the biggest challenges in using probiotics is selecting a quality product. The quality of the product has a dramatic impact on whether or not it will solve your digestive problem. There are four major issues that determine the effectiveness of probiotics: bacterial viability, quantity, strain, and contaminants.

Viability

The first issue is the viability of the bacteria. Basically, are they still alive? Unfortunately, in many cases there are little if any viable bacteria in many products on the market. If they aren't alive, then they aren't going to do you any good. To try to avoid this problem, at the very minimum select a product that is refrigerated. Hopefully it was refrigerated in transit and in storage as well. Even if it is freeze-dried, which helps, it should also be refrigerated to help maintain viability.

Quantity

A good probiotic product will guarantee that you get at least 4 million live bacteria, and hopefully 8 million, which is even better. Many products only have 1 billion or so organisms, or don't even tell you how many they have. These probably aren't worth taking, even if they are viable.

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The digestive tract contains *trillions* of bacteria. So a billion may sound like a lot, but it may not have much impact if you are particularly deficient in good bacteria. In fact, even a high quality product with 8 billion bacteria may not have much impact on improving your situation. You may need to supplement with hundreds of billions of bacteria over a period of one to two weeks. There are very few supplements capable of providing you this much good bacteria.

Strain

Beneficial bacteria come in many different strains and different species. For example, there are different Lactobacilli bacteria, as well as different strains of *Lactobacillus acidophilus*. The companies that sell these products often make claims about the effectiveness of their particular specie or strain of bacteria. The key issues are the ability of the bacteria to survive digestion, adhere to the intestinal wall, fight off opposing bacteria, flourish in the intestine, and promote good digestion. A quality probiotic will do all of these things.

Contaminants

Another important issue in the production of probiotic products is the intentional or accidental inclusion of additives or contaminants into the supplement. Some probiotics add a number of various species and strains of bacteria to their product with the idea that more is better. Others, due to poor quality control, contain types of bacteria that were never meant to be included in the product and can actually make your problem worse. And many probiotic products contain unnecessary additives or food allergens such as dairy or soy. Dairy is especially common, because it is often used to grow the good bacteria. This is particularly problematic for people who have a dairy allergy or intolerance. They need to be aware of this issue and seek out a dairy free probiotic.

As you can see, there are several issues to consider when selecting and using probiotics. Although probiotics can be very helpful for digestive problems, due to some of the complications described in this article they can also be capable of causing digestive problems. At the IBS Treatment Center we have seen first hand the significant difference in effectiveness between various products. We have also been able to test our patients to determine whether or not the probiotic actually took hold and flourished in their digestive tract (For more information on this topic see previous articles on probiotics, available at www.IBStreatmentCenter.com).

The products we use in our office and that meet all of the expectations listed in this article are described in detail on our website and are available for purchase. You can learn more about them at www.qualityprobiotics.com.



I Want Your Input for My Next Book

I have begun writing my next book, "Understanding Celiac Disease and Other Forms of Gluten Intolerance: How To Tell if Wheat is Making You Sick."

This book will be about the various forms of gluten intolerance and the various ways of testing for this common problem. I'd like your story or input on what you would like to see in this book. For example:

-*What kinds of questions would you like answered?*

-*What issues or concepts have been important to your understanding of gluten intolerance?*

-*What still confuses you?*

-*What did your doctor forget or neglect to tell you?*

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-What have you learned that you would like to share with others?

Would you like to share the entire story of your adventure suffering from gluten intolerance, getting diagnosed (whether by a doctor or yourself) and finally starting to feel better? If so, please send it. It can be anonymous (I'll change the name) or we can use your first name. Please send your suggestions and stories to info@ibstreatmentcenter.com. I will send a free autographed copy to those whose stories I use.

This book will focus on understanding and diagnosing all forms of gluten intolerance, including celiac disease, non-celiac gluten intolerance, gluten allergies, and wheat allergies. I don't plan on addressing the topics of living with gluten intolerance and eating gluten-free because there are already many fine books on these issues.

If all goes well, the book should be out sometime next summer. I'll be sure to let you know.

Thank you for your help. I greatly appreciate it.

Dr. Stephen Wangen



Calendar:

February 6th:

GIG and IBS Support Group

Our chapter of the Gluten Intolerance Group is meeting on a new night! Along with the IBS Support Group, GIG will meet on the **first Tuesday of each month at the IBS Treatment Center.** [Click here for details.](#)

Come to our support group and get the latest on Gluten Intolerance and IBS! Make friends who know what you've been through and share what you've learned too!

Most meetings attended by Dr. Stephen Wangen, founder of the IBS Treatment Center and author of *The Irritable Bowel Syndrome Solution*.

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Seattle's Gluten-Free Food Festival with International GF Beers

March 17, 2007 from 3 pm to 7 pm
Bell Harbor International Conference Center located at Pier 66, Seattle

Event tickets: \$30/Adult; \$20 for kids 12 and under

Enjoy a Gourmet Gluten-Free Menu that includes new twists on old favorites: pizza, Ruben wraps featuring La Tortilla GF Teff tortillas, etc...

A drink bar will feature international GF beers and local microbrewers. A special drink bar for kids will offer juice and sodas.

Event includes raffles, GF dessert auction, exhibits, lots of friends and more. Local regular microbrew beers will also be available.

Proceeds from this event are used for patient education and support programs of the Gluten Intolerance Group of North America®.

GIG needs your HELP!

GIG needs your help to make this the biggest and best food festival in Seattle for those on a gluten-free diet.

Help from home:

- ✓ Donate special gluten-free desserts for the Dessert Auction
- ✓ Collect other auction items. Let's see if we can have a special auction just for kids.
- ✓ Send us the names and contact information of the GF-friendly restaurants and places to shop in your area

Help on the committee:

- ✓ Most business of the committee can be done by phone or email...we need help coordinating the event activities

Help at the event:

- ✓ Sell raffle tickets
- ✓ Help with the auction, games and other activities
- ✓ Be a host/hostess

GIG really needs your help. If you can offer any assistance, please contact Nancy or Cynthia at the GIG office: 253-833-6655 or email: gig@guten.net

King 5 Healthy Living Expo
Qwest Field Event Center, Seattle, WA
Mar 17 - 18, 2007 (10am-5pm)

Come visit the IBS Treatment Center's Booth. The Expo promises lots of information on all kinds of health topics!



**Third Annual
Celiac Disease Awareness Walk**
Saturday, May 19, 2007
Registration at 8am, walk begins at 9am
Food Fair from 9am to noon
Green Lake Park Community Center
7201 E. Green Lake Drive North, Seattle
-Sample Gluten free products
-Learn more about Celiac Disease
and dermatitis herpetiformis
-Help raise funds for Celiac Disease
education, advocacy, research and
support groups!

\$25 Suggested donation includes t-shirt
and food fair admission, \$10 for kids 10
years and younger, \$5 for food fair only

*For more information, visit
www.gluten.net, call 253-833-6655 or
email info@gluten.net*

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