



Yogurt: Good for your Gut!

Results of a recent study say that a new yogurt fights bacteria that cause stomach ulcers with “vaccine-like” effects. The new yogurt is part of a growing “functional food” market that generates billions in sales each year. The yogurt is now for sale in Japan, Korea, and Taiwan. The new study may allow the yogurt to be sold in Canada and the US, say researchers.

Scientists know that yogurt, a milk product containing live bacteria, is a healthy source of calcium and other nutrients. Some brands of yogurt are made with “probiotics” — a type of bacteria intended to improve health. “With this new yogurt, people can now enjoy the taste of yogurt while preventing ... the bacteria that cause stomach ulcers,” says the study coordinator.

A certain type of bacteria (*H. pylori* for short) causes many stomach ulcers. This type of ulcer can be treated with antibiotics. However, treatment is too expensive for millions of people in developing countries. As a result, scientists have been looking for cheaper ways of dealing with these bacteria.

In the new study, scientists created a vaccine. They think that yogurt containing the vaccine may stop the bacteria from sticking to the stomach lining. To test this idea, scientists tested 42 people who had the bacteria in their



stomachs. The volunteers consumed two cups daily of yogurt containing the vaccine for four weeks.

Although the yogurt appears less effective than regular treatments, it is a lot easier to

take than medicine and can be eaten as part of a regular diet. Also, the drug does not affect the yogurt’s taste and does not cause any side effects, note researchers. Still, the new yogurt may not be for everyone -- people who are allergic to milk or eggs should probably avoid it.

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