

Recommending oral probiotics doesn't cut antibiotic use

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(HealthDay)—Advising patients with asthma to take probiotics does not

reduce antibiotic use, according to a study published in the September/October issue of the *Annals of Family Medicine*.

Timothy D.H. Smith, M.B.B.Ch., from the National Health Service East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group in the United Kingdom, and colleagues conducted a [randomized trial](#) involving patients aged 5 years and older with asthma in a U.K. primary care setting. A total of 1,302 participants were randomized to a control group (650 patients) or an intervention group (652 patients); the intervention was a postal leaflet with advice to take daily probiotics compared with a standard winter advice leaflet.

The researchers observed no significant difference in the primary outcome measure of the proportion of patients prescribed antibiotics for [respiratory tract infections](#), with 27.7 and 26.9 percent of the patients in the intervention and control groups, respectively, receiving antibiotics (odds ratio, 1.04; 95 percent confidence interval, 0.82 to 1.34). Probiotic uptake was low, but outcomes were similar for those who accessed probiotics (adjusted odds ratio, 1.08; 95 percent confidence interval, 0.69 to 1.69, compared with controls). There was no evidence of an effect on respiratory tract infections or [asthma exacerbations](#).

"In this pragmatic community-based trial in people with asthma, we found no evidence that advising use of winter probiotics reduces antibiotic prescribing," the authors write.

Lab4 probiotics were provided for free by Cultech Ltd.

More information: [Abstract](#)
[Full Text](#)

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