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NEW RESEARCH SHOWS PROBIOTIC SUPPLEMENTATION CAN PREVENT MASTITIS IN BREASTFEEDING MOTHERS

- **Taking a probiotic supplement during late pregnancy and early breastfeeding reduces the incidence of mastitis by nearly 60%**
- **Mastitis is a common reason mothers stop breastfeeding; preventing mastitis with a probiotic supplement can support continued breastfeeding, positively contributing to a baby's life-long health**

Amsterdam, The Netherlands -- **(September 30, 2021)** -- New research published in the Journal *Microorganisms* shows probiotic supplementation during late pregnancy and in the early stages of breastfeeding reduces the risk of developing mastitis.[1] Mastitis is a painful condition due to inflammation of the breast that can affect up to a third of breastfeeding mothers.[2] Mothers with mastitis or inflammation of the breast can experience a combination of flu-like symptoms and breast pain, as well as skin rashes, fever, and breast engorgement.[3]

Breast milk offers a child the best nutritional start in life. It is nature's most powerful nutrition and tailormade for a baby's needs providing numerous short- and long-term benefits for both babies and mothers.[5–8] Mastitis is a key barrier to continued breastfeeding and can affect the wellbeing of both mothers and their babies.[2,4]

The PREMIUM study, that was supported by Nutricia, indicates that a probiotic nutritional intervention can help to prevent the most common breastfeeding complication that affects between 10-33% of breastfeeding moms. Probiotics or ''good bacteria'', are live microorganisms that, when administered in adequate amounts, confer a health benefit on the people consuming them.[9] As part of the trial, 328 healthy pregnant women from 4 different countries received either a daily probiotic supplementation with *L. salivarius* PS2 or a placebo from the 35th week of pregnancy until 12 weeks after delivery.[1] The results showed that mothers receiving the probiotic supplementation were 59% less likely to develop mastitis compared to those receiving a placebo. Although not statistically significant, in case of mastitis, this group also experienced less breast pain and used less antibiotics.

Professor Dr. med. Michael Abou-Dakn, St. Joseph Hospital Berlin, Germany shares his view of these findings: *"The prevention of mastitis could greatly contribute to increasing exclusive breastfeeding rates around the world. In addition to educating and counselling mothers about managing breast fullness and breast engorgement, adequate rest and good hand and breast pump hygiene, new strategies like the use of probiotics can also contribute to preventing mastitis.''*

The most common cause of mastitis is untreated breast engorgement due to which milk builds up in the breast creating an environment in which bacteria can grow.[2] Another cause may be an unbalanced breast microbiota.[10,12] Current practice for treating mastitis is the use of antibiotics[2] which can however alter the maternal microbiota, and has stimulated research into alternative options for the prevention of mastitis that can benefit the microbiota of both mother and child.

Professor Juan Miguel Rodriguez, *Universidad Complutense de Madrid comments: "This randomized, double-blind trial shows the efficacy of the probiotic strain L. salivarius PS2 in reducing the risk of mastitis. It reinforces that probiotic supplementation with this probiotic strain can be a promising complementary strategy to support or extend breastfeeding."*

Nutricia, part of world-leading food, nutrition & beverage company Danone, has researched breast milk and its benefits for life-long health for over 50 years. Dr Rocio Martin Jimenez, Global Medical and Scientific Affairs Director for Nutricia said: "*We know that breast milk is nature's original superfood that is specifically adapted and uniquely balanced for a baby, providing it with everything it needs for healthy growth and development. This study contributes to the growing evidence that probiotics can help prevent mastitis while supporting mothers during breastfeeding, thus benefitting the health of both mother and child.*[8,12]

The use of probiotics to help prevent mastitis would have a positive impact on mother-infant health while also reducing the burden of antibiotic use. However, further research – including large-scale studies– needs to be done to fully understand the role of probiotics.

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Nutricia supports healthy growth and development in early life and plays its part addressing some of the world's biggest health challenges from birth through to old age. The Nutricia portfolio includes a wide range of nutritional solutions for pre-term birth, faltering growth, food allergy, rare metabolic diseases, age-related conditions and chronic disease, such as frailty, cancer, stroke and early Alzheimer's disease.
As part of Danone, Nutricia embraces the company's "One Planet. One Health" frame of action reflecting that the health of people and the health of the planet are interconnected and therefore seeks to protect and nourish both.

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