

PULSE

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Message from the President



Dear IPA Members,

Now that the summer is drawing to a close there are a number of exciting International Probiotics Association activities to bring to your attention. Board Elections...Board of Director's Meeting...2nd IPA World Congress.

IPA is holding elections for nine board seats. Of these nine openings, six represent expiration of current board member's term of office. In addition three new board seats were created following amendment of IPA's by-laws earlier this year to increase the size of the board to from seventeen to twenty members. All member organizations should have received an e-mail invitation to apply for Board membership from Nancy Hamren, Nominating Committee Chairperson. I encourage those organizations with a strong interest in actively participating in, and contributing to, IPA's leadership and future direction to apply by the deadline of September 10, 2009. Following the nomination process, ballots will be sent to the membership. Results of the election will be announced prior to SupplySide West.

A Board of Director's meeting will be held at 5:30PM on Wednesday, November 11 in conjunction with the SupplySide West trade show. The meeting will be held in Danisco's hospitality suite in the Palazzo hotel. An agenda and directions to the suite will be provided in

advance of the meeting. I strongly encourage all members to attend. For clarity, all current Board members (even those whose term expires on December 31, 2009) should plan to attend.

Registration for the 2nd IPA World Congress is now open. With the theme "Probiotics: The Path from Bench to Bedside, Challenges and Achievements" this event is a must for those looking to learn, to network and to enjoy the company of others in this dynamic industry. Just this week I reviewed the program and congratulate the Scientific Committee and Ioannis for assembling a distinguished panel of speaker's covering a range of timely subjects. For those of you who attended the 1st IPA World Congress in Beverly Hills, the quality of the program is on par with last time. For those of you who did not attend the inaugural event, I hope you will join us this time around in Miami Beach. And don't forget, the event was sold out last time.... procrastinators had to be turned away. So register soon and assure yourself a spot!

Lastly, let me thank our wonderful membership for your support. IPA's activities can only succeed with your ongoing vibrant and active membership. I'd ask that you please encourage others in the industry that benefit from our organization but have not joined our ranks to consider membership.

Healthy Regards, Scott

EFSA: NO GUIDANCE ON PROBIOTICS FORTHCOMING

IPA presses for answers at health claims summit

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has no plans to provide formal scientific guidance on health claims for probiotics, the organization said at its June summit in Brussels. However, during a question-and-answer session attended by members of the International Probiotics Association (IPA) and other industry stakeholders, the EFSA did clarify some points on the current process for making health claims. The current process relies heavily on regulations set by the European Commission (EC), the executive branch of the European Union.

According to IPA Director General, Ioannis Misopoulos, M.Sc., who attended the summit, companies interested in obtaining a health claim for a probiotic product would do well to remember a few key points:

- The EFSA will cross-reference a given claim's wording with EC regulations on wording.
- The health claim's wording must clearly describe the relationship between the probiotic and health, must reflect scientific evidence, and must comply with criteria laid down in European Commission (EC) regulations.
- The EFSA will make no individual interpretation of EC regulations. The challenge here is that unlike the EFSA, the EC is not a scientific body. Therefore, the EC does not use a grading system to evaluate data. Getting approval for a health claim then becomes a matter of

persuading experts of the claim's validity without a standard against which to measure.

- To apply for a health claim under Articles 13.5 and 14 of the EC's regulations on nutrition and health claims, a developer or manufacturer must go through a European Union sponsor country. Although the product may have national approval in the sponsor country, that does not guarantee it will meet the more stringent criteria of the EFSA.
- For health claims affecting infants, such as those for infant formulas, EFSA only uses a guidance given by the EC and then forwards their assessment to the EC. The EC will make the final determination.

- The EFSA will not consider the probiotic's history of use by consumers when determining whether a health claim is valid.
- As long as the probiotic's benefit is clearly demonstrated, it is not necessary to provide a description of its mechanism of action.
- Risk factors must be clearly identified.

The EFSA added that it is developing a test to determine if an application for a health claim is complete and provides all the information the EFSA needs to make an accurate review. This test should be ready in the fall, at which time the EFSA will also publish a guide containing frequently asked questions about the process.

PROBIOTICS SHOW POTENTIAL FOR TREATING H1N1 FLU

Swine flu, now known as H1N1 flu, may no longer be front and center in headlines, but the scientific and medical community still have their concerns about it. In mid-August, the World Health Organization reported that so far there have been 177,457 cases of H1N1 worldwide, resulting in 1,462 deaths. The H1N1 flu causes a sudden fever of more than 38° C/100.4° F, a sudden cough, headache, chills, fatigue, muscle and joint pain, and other classic flu symptoms. However, unlike other strains of the flu, H1N1 is particularly dangerous because it has shown resistance to treatment with anti-viral drugs. Worsening symptoms can lead to bronchitis and pneumonia, and that's where H1N1 gets lethal.

One way to combat H1N1, then, would be to control the symptoms so that they don't progress into a severe clinical problem said the scientists from Boulder, Colorado. A comprehensive review paper describing controlling symptoms will appear in the Journal of the Ukrainian Academy of Medical Sciences, October 2009

Like any other flu, infection with H1N1 calls the body's immune system to arms. The immune system will release C-reactive protein (CRP) and certain other proteins called cytokines. These proteins



work in tandem to promote inflammation, and inflammation contributes to respiratory infections and complications.

So where do probiotics come in?

According to the researchers in Colorado, there is evidence that certain strains of probiotics may lower levels of CRP and the cytokines that promote inflammation. These strains are thought to do so by restoring and maintaining normal bacteria and microorganisms in the body that control the immune response.

PARENTS: PROBIOTICS CAN EASE THE SNIFFLES

Cold season is fast approaching and if you have small children, you know that sniffles are inevitable. But take heart: Probiotics may help. Researchers in China, Finland, and the U.S. recently found that probiotics reduced fever, coughing, runny nose, and the duration of colds in children who received supplements in their milk during winter and spring.

In the study, 326 children between three and five years old were separated into three groups. One group, the single-strain group, received a supplement of *L. acidophilus* NCFM twice a day for six months. The second group, the combination group, received a supplement of *L. acidophilus* NCFM and *B. animalis* subsp lactis Bi-07. The third group, the control group, received placebo (fake supplements).

At study's end, the researchers found that children in the single-strain group had 53% fewer fevers, 41% fewer coughs, and 25% fewer colds than those in the control group. The results were even more profound in the combination group, which had nearly 73% fewer fevers, 62% fewer coughs, and roughly 60% fewer colds than the control group.

Compared to children in the control group, antibiotic use was 68% lower in children in the single-strain group and 84% lower in the combination group. Absent days were reduced nearly 32% in the single-strain group and nearly 28% in the combination group compared with the control group, as well.

This study was published in the August 2009 issue of *Pediatrics*.



PROBIOTICS BOOST WEIGHT LOSS AFTER SURGERY

Probiotics enhance weight loss in people who undergo a specific kind of gastric bypass surgery, say researchers at Stanford University in Palo Alto, Calif. In a study of 44 people who received Roux-en-Y gastric bypass surgery in 2006 and 2007, researchers found that those who were given the probiotic *Lactobacilli* lost weight faster. Bonus: Taking *Lactobacilli* also helped prevent vitamin B-12 deficiency, a potential side effect of the surgery.

Participants in the study were divided into two groups. Both groups received standard post-operative care and nutritional counseling, had access to weight-loss support groups, and were allowed to eat yogurt, which is a natural source of probiotics. Those in the probiotic group were given a pill containing *Lactobacilli* every day.

After three months, participants who took the supplement had a 47.6% weight loss, compared with a weight loss of 38.5% in those who didn't take the supplement. Those in the probiotic group had higher levels of vitamin B-12 in their blood (1,214 picograms per milliliter) than those in the control group (811 picograms per milliliter).

This study was published in the July 2009 issue of the *Journal of Gastrointestinal Surgery*.

Probiotics in the News

Probiotics create a lot of media buzz. To arm yourself with reliable information about probiotics, check out the following links:

"Expert Q & A: Can supplements block benefits of probiotics?" at CNN.com, August 14, 2009.
<http://www.cnn.com/2009/HEALTH/expert.q.a/08/14/probiotics.supplements.jampolis/index.html>

"Eat Better: The benefits of probiotics and prebiotics...there are many" in *The Orlando Sentinel*, August 13, 2009
<http://www.orlandosentinel.com/health/orl-probiotics-081309,0,893220.story>

"Are Probiotics Friendly?" in *The Chicago Tribune*, July 28, 2009
<http://www.chicagotribune.com/health/chi-tc-health-probiotics-donejun26,0,1570994.story>

ATTENTION, LADIES: PROBIOTICS AND BACTERIAL VAGINOSIS

If you're a woman of child-bearing age, chances are that at some point, you'll develop a common vaginal infection called bacterial vaginosis (BV). Not to be confused with a yeast infection, which is an overgrowth of yeast, BV occurs when the vagina's normal balance of bacteria is upset and certain harmful bacteria run amok. Symptoms include burning, itching, and discharge, and treatment usually consists of antibiotics. However, probiotics can enhance treatment with certain antibiotics, say researchers at the Cochrane Collaboration, an international group that produces and disseminates systematic reviews of health care interventions.

Researchers at the Cochrane Collaboration reviewed 24 trials that had a total of 4,422 participants. In the trials, the antibiotics clindamycin and metronidazole cured more than 90% of BV infections in two to three weeks (although there was a high rate of relapse).

Upon analyzing the data from all of the trials, the researchers found that taking pills of the probiotic *Lactobacillus* in addition to metronidazole increased metronidazole's effectiveness. What's more, taking *Lactobacillus* intravaginally (inside the vagina) was just as effective as taking metronidazole.

There is a caveat however: There was a high drop-out rate among participants who used *Lactobacillus*, so the researchers call for further evaluation to determine why.

This research was published in a July 2009 Cochrane Systematic Review.

News from the IPA Office

IPA Gets Accepted at the Codex Alimentarius and Relocates to Switzerland

At the end of the summer, IPA has gotten an observer status at the Codex Alimentarius after 2 years wait, which will allow the organization to attend its meetings and represent the probiotic side. Since this was highly anticipated, IPA has relocated to Zurich, Switzerland to be closer to the global regulatory platforms and better monitor the changes occurring.

IPA meets with Health Canada

At the end of March, IPA met with officials from Health Canada's Natural Health Products Directorate (NHPD) and discussed the new probiotic monograph which was subsequently published in the next month and dictates the information that the raw ingredient manufacturers need to present when they make Master Files. The meeting was a success since both parties voiced their concerns and agreed to work together in the future for the common good of the industry and consumer. On behalf of the industry at the end of April, IPA presented NHPD with the antibiotic resistance testing for probiotic products known as ACE-ART a work that was put together by IDF/ISO to help NHPD standardize part of the information process it asks from raw ingredient manufacturers under the monograph. It was well received and currently waiting for comments. For more information please contact Ioannis Misopoulos.

DON'T MISS THE SECOND BIENNIAL IPA WORLD CONGRESS SCHEDULED FOR APRIL 16TH -17TH AT THE HILTON MIAMI.

Registration is now open at www.ipaworldcongress.com