

# Why yoghurt is good for you

by Lynette Louw

**Yoghurt is a cultured or fermented milk product with a very unique flavour. Yoghurt contains an ingredient called probiotics. These organisms are also known as live bacterial cultures. Probiotics are very healthy for you, as it strengthens your immune system. It is also very good for the stomach and can prevent diarrhoea.**

Probiotics can help to prevent liver damage caused by too much alcohol use. It can also help to prevent food allergies and eczema in babies and adults.

There are different kinds of yoghurt. There is natural yoghurt and natural bio-yoghurt, which contain live cultures and are especially good for stomach problems and thrush. Low-fat fruit yoghurt contains sugar and artificial flavourings, as well as fruit.

Dessert-style fruit yoghurt contains a lot of fat, sugar and cream, but it does have a lot of healthy fruit in. Natural Greek-style yoghurt is very healthy, but contains a lot of fat. All of the types of yoghurt contain a lot of calcium, but natural yoghurt has the highest percentage of calcium. Some scientists also claim that natural yoghurt can help to fight bad breath!

The texture and acidity levels in yoghurt depend on how it is made. One can use full-cream, low-fat or skimmed milk or milk powder to make yoghurt. You can also use evaporated milk to make yoghurt. Milk should first be pasteurised in order to kill harmful organisms.

Keep your yoghurt in a cool place, preferably in a fridge where it will stay fresh for up to seven days. Fruit yoghurt can be frozen for up to three months, while natural yoghurt cannot be frozen.

Yoghurt is delicious eaten as a breakfast on its own or with breakfast cereal. It can also be used in food. Plain yoghurt can be used instead of sour cream and can also be used as a dip with chips.

Yoghurt is a very important part of a healthy diet. Besides all the benefits already mentioned, it is also a choice food for people who want to lose weight. It can improve "good" cholesterol levels. You can make your own yoghurt at home using the following recipe:

- Heat one litre of fresh low-fat milk or milk made from clean water and low-fat milk powder
- Bring the milk to boiling point and then cool it to around 37°C (lukewarm)
- Add half a carton (around 250 ml) of fresh, plain Bulgarian yoghurt
- Stir well to mix and store overnight in a clean flask in the fridge to keep the yoghurt at the right temperature.

The next morning you will have a litre of your own home-made yoghurt. Keep it in the fridge. **UM**

