Probiotic Helps Children's Stomach Pain



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A new study shows the probiotics significantly reduced the severity and frequency of bouts of abdominal pain in children with irritable bowel syndrome.

Probiotics are "friendly bacteria" that are similar to organisms naturally found in the digestive tract. Certain types of probiotics have been linked to a number of health benefits in adults, such as soothing irritable bowel syndrome. But they have not been widely studied in children.

Researchers say recurrent abdominal pain affects 10% to 15% of school-aged children. Irritable bowel syndrome is often the cause, and there are few treatment options available for children with this disorder.

Probiotic Helps Kids' IBS

In the study, researchers looked at whether treatment with Probiotic relieved symptoms of abdominal pain in 141 children with irritable bowel syndrome or functional abdominal pain, a condition where the medical workup does not identify a cause of the pain.

The children received either Probiotic or a placebo for eight weeks and were then followed for another eight weeks.

The results showed that the probiotic significantly reduced the severity and frequency of abdominal pain symptoms, and this effect lasted for weeks after they stopped taking it.

For example, at week 12 of the study, 48 children taking probiotic were considered successfully treated, compared with 37 children in the placebo group.

In addition, the probiotic also improved the children's results on an intestinal permeability test, which measures the effectiveness of the body's natural gut barrier. An increase in intestinal permeability is a common problem in children with irritable bowel syndrome.