

THE ROLE OF PROBIOTICS IN PETS' IMMUNE SYSTEM

The immune system is a complex network that helps the body fight against infections and other diseases, keeping us and our pets healthy. One of the main points of entry for potential pathogens is the digestive system, as it's home to 70% of all immune cells in the body.

In the gut there are also hundreds of different species of bacteria and other microorganisms, mostly beneficial, but there are some which can be potentially pathogenic. For this reason, supporting the health of our pet's digestive system is one of the first steps to maintain a strong immune system.

The power of probiotics

Maintaining a diverse and balanced population of gut bacteria is essential for good health. Multiple factors can impact the gut and, therefore, the immune systems, like genetics, life stage, nutrition and external stressors.

Probiotics are live microorganisms that can help to maintain the optimal balance of the bacteria in your pet's digestive system.

When can pets benefit from probiotics?

Probiotics are a complementary product to pet's daily feeding, that can be provided in a regular basis to ensure a healthy gut. Nevertheless, there are specific moments when probiotics are specially recommended:

- Long trips: moving to a new home, travelling... these are times when pets might be under additional stress and struggle to adapt to a new situation.
- Change of habits: a change in the daily routine, loud noises or new visitors at home can produce soft stools in pets, affecting their well-being.
- Eating problems: if a pet has a fussy appetite or is teething and struggling to eat dry food, an imbalanced nutrition can result in the need to help the gut keep microorganisms balanced.
- Medical treatment: it's common that pets taking antibiotic treatment suffer from digestive disturbances and loss of appetite.
- Health condition: some health conditions alter the immune system, so it's important to give them external support.

PURINA® PRO PLAN® FortiFlora®. The Power to Protect

In Purina we acknowledge the importance of the gut's health and its link to the immune system and for the last 9 years we've been providing pet owners a resource to maintain their cat and dog's intestine healthy. The action of this supplement is based on providing more of the live good bacteria, helping to rebalance your pet's gut, promoting intestinal health and supporting the immune system during periods of stress.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=udfTkcYCrc4&list=PL-0_XZ17-bgSGK22ORGi_SpLu3dtaimM&index=11&t=0s

The active component in Fortiflora is SF68, a strain of *Enterococcus faecium*, which has been shown to:

- Help maintain a balanced and healthy population of bacteria in the gut
- Promote a strong immune system
- Improve poor fecal quality associated with microbiota imbalance, stress, antibiotic therapy or diet change
- Improve fecal quality and decrease fecal variability in puppies and kittens
- Improve flatulence in dogs¹

¹ Waldron M, Kerr W, Czarnecki-Maulden G and Davis (2012). Supplementation with *Enterococcus faecium* reduces flatulence in dogs. 16th European Society of Veterinary Comparative Nutrition (ESVCN) Congress. September 2012.