Fermented Foods Optimize Your Health

Our ancient ancestors' utilized fermentation as a means of food preservation , creating probiotic enriched foods that were eaten on a regular basis. Many ancient medicine men and physicians began utilizing fermented foods to treat certain ailments. These probiotic enriched foods are one of the most important attributes of a healthy diet and lifestyle.

In the early 20th century, Nobel Prize winning scientist Ilya Ilyich Mechinikov attributed the remarkable health of a group of Bulgarian people to their daily consumption of probiotic enriched foods. He named the unique bacterial species that made up much of their fermented products Lactobacillus bulgaricus. He theorized that probiotic bacteria could have a much greater impact on human health than the much feared pathogenic strains of bacteria.

Every culture around the world has their own unique fermented foods. The Europeans use cabbage, beets, and cucumbers to make foods like sauerkraut, kvass, and pickles. The Koreans make a spiced, fermented cabbage they call kimchi. Asians ferment soy to form products such as tempeh, miso, and natto. They also created a fermented drink known as Kombucha. Many different cultures also made their own fermented sourdough style breads.

Traditional Fermented Foods

Sauerkraut is made by fermenting cabbage, oftentimes in vinegar. Raw cabbage naturally contains probiotics and enzymes that are exponentially multiplied during the fermentation period. Fresh (not canned) sauerkraut is a fantastic source of living enzymes and active lactobacillus and pediococcus strains of probiotics.

Kimchii is most commonly made with Chinese cabbages. There are also other variations of kimchii using cucumbers, eggplants, leeks, radishes, and other seasonal veggies. Often these are prepared with a combination of fermented veggies, giving it among other things, unique antioxidants, live enzymes, and the special organism lactobacillus kimchii.

Fermented soy comes in three major forms: miso, tempeh, and natto. Miso and tempeh often incorporate brown rice and barley fermentation with two unique probiotic yeast species. These yeasts enhance the bioavailability of the amino acids and produce high amounts of B vitamins. The bacillus subtilis bacterium is used to produce natto, which is rich in proteolytic enzymes and vitamin K2.

Fermented Dairy as a Staple of a Healthy Diet

Almost every region has their own fermented raw dairy products. The Bulgarians eat yogurt, the Indians eat Lassi, the Africans have Amasi, and the Eastern Russia/Slovakia areas have kefir, to name a few. Each of these dairy products are fermented with lactic acid based bacteria such as Lactobacillus, Lactococcus, and Leuconostoc, among others.

These raw, fermented dairy products share many of the same bacterial strains. In particular, they share the lactic acid based lactobacillus family of bulgaricus, kefir, parakefir, brevis, casei, etc. Raw, fermented dairy also provides a variety of healthy yeast saccharomyces species. These include saccharomyces unisporus, turicensis, cerevisiae, and exiguous. Finally, these dairy products contain one of the most potent probiotic strains, bacillus coagulans. The combination of these probiotic organisms' works in synergy to repair and protect the gut and destroy even the harshest of opportunistic organisms, such as the Candida yeast species.

Many individuals struggle to digest the milk sugar lactose and

the protein casein. Fermented raw milk products such as those listed above have not only metabolized lactose but provide large doses of the enzyme lactase to assist in digestion. Most individuals who are naturally lactose intolerant do very well with fermented raw milk products.

Milk coming from cows that produce Beta Casein A1 can be problematic even after undergoing fermentation. It is best to purchase fermented, raw dairy from 100% green-fed animals that are completely free of Beta Casein A1. These acceptable animals would include goats and cows that have been selectively bread to no longer produce Beta Casein A1.

Further Reading:

- *How to Kill Candida and Balance Your Inner Ecosystem*

Sources:

- http://www.probiotics-help.com/probiotic-foods.html
- http://theconsciouslife.com/top-probiotic-foods.htm
- http://www.naturalnews.com/027763_friendly_bacteria_probiotics.html