

PROBIOTICS: RATIONAL APPLICATIONS, PATIENTS' OPINION AND HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS' ROLE IN THEIR PROPER SELECTION AND USE

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Probiotics have gained worldwide use in great spectrum of indications. The aim of this study was to analyze the current market of probiotic-enhanced dietary supplements and fortified foods alongside patient's awareness of probiotic use. In addition, this work reviews contemporary knowledge on rational probiotic application in regard to recommendations from 1-4th Yale/Harvard workshop on probiotic use. Structured questionnaire was used to determine the attitude, knowledge level and habits of consumers in Niš, Serbia, in relation to products containing probiotics. A total of 363 individuals (age 18 - 80; 187 female and 160 male) responded to questionnaire which, in addition to the items of attitude, also assessed the health of consumers and acceptance and frequency of consumption of these products. In general, the attitude of respondents was positive and main named indications were different gastrointestinal disorders. Our results show that further information on rational use and potential positive health of probiotics. The healthcare professionals, especially physicians and pharmacists, should play the key role in patients' education.

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