

## WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A PROBIOTIC

### A guide for healthcare professionals

#### CHECK THE LABEL AND QUALITY

**Does the label state the full strain name of the microorganism(s) in the product?**

*NOTE: This should comprise three components: genus, species and strain identifier.*

- ✓ Genus (e.g. *Lactobacillus*), species (e.g. *casei*) and strain (e.g. *Shirota*) is stated in full on Yakult's packaging.

**Does the label state the number of live cells of the probiotic strain(s) in the product?**

- ✓ Yakult contains  $10^{10}$  *Lactobacillus casei* Shirota per 100 ml, when refrigerated.
- ✓ This is equivalent to 6.5 billion live cells per 65ml bottle.

**Contact the company. Are there quality control procedures in place?**

*NOTE: This is necessary to ensure the product contains the correct strains and number of live microbial cells as stated on the label.*

- ✓ Yakult is acknowledged by experts to be a quality probiotic.

#### CHECK THE SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE

**Contact the company or access their HCP website, to find the supporting research.**

*NOTE: (i) Regulatory restrictions mean companies can share research information with HCPs but not the general public; (ii) Not all probiotic research papers can be found on medical literature databases.*

- ✓ The research evidence for *Lactobacillus casei* Shirota can be found at [www.yakult.co.uk/hcp](http://www.yakult.co.uk/hcp) or by contacting [science@yakult.co.uk](mailto:science@yakult.co.uk)

#### CHECK FOR GI TRACT SURVIVAL

**For oral probiotics, are there human intervention trials showing survival of the probiotic strain(s) through the gut?**

*NOTE: In vitro or model studies are not proof of gut survival in vivo.*

- ✓ There are several research papers describing human studies showing the gut survival of *Lactobacillus casei* Shirota.

#### CHECK FOR EFFICACY OF THE STRAIN

**Check for trials and studies for the probiotic and the particular patient problem**

*(important for assessment of safety).*

- ✓ See expert advice in 'LcS Insight: HCP Study Day 2014' and 'Your Guide to Probiotics'.

For further support on what to look for in a probiotic or to access the research behind Yakult, then please visit [www.yakult.co.uk/hcp](http://www.yakult.co.uk/hcp) contact [science@yakult.co.uk](mailto:science@yakult.co.uk) or call 020 8842 7600