



HOW TO INTRODUCE FERMENTS SAFELY

Start with one ferment at a time

Every ferment will contain a variety of probiotic strains. These strains will vary from root vegetable ferments, such as beetroot kvass, to ferments made from 'above the ground vegetables' such as sauerkraut. The probiotic strains will vary greatly between dairy ferments and vegetable ferments. Within dairy ferments, there is a significant difference between the spread of probiotics in various dairy ferments. For example, milk kefir has a significantly broader number of strains when compared to yogurt. Milk kefir also contains beneficial yeasts, that yogurt does not. Each ferment can affect you differently with the different probiotic strains. This is why I suggest **introducing one ferment at a time. Increase the quantity of the ferment you are having twice per week**, say on a Wednesday and Saturday, to ensure you tolerating the ferment well and coping with the cumulative effect I talk of later in this pdf. Once you have successfully introduced and mastered one ferment, broaden your beneficial microbes and introduce another ferment. It is beneficial to have a range of ferments included in your daily nutrition. Diversity is key but we have to work towards it slowly particularly if you are unwell.

Get acquainted with your ferments slowly...

Please **introduce your ferments slowly**, particularly if you have health issues. Probiotic foods are incredibly powerful and each probiotic food has a different spectrum of beneficial microbes. When you introduce ferments, you will be killing off some opportunistic microbes. **They release toxins when in your body and release toxins when they die off, that your body has to process.** Some people refer to this as the 'die off effect'. This die off effect is often seen as an exacerbation of the original symptom picture so you may need to start incredibly slowly with each ferment. For some people, with serious health concerns, this may mean just one drop of a fermented probiotic liquid being added to a meal or one teaspoon of coconut yoghurt for example. Please keep us updated in the Fermenting for Families Facebook group so we can help and advise where necessary.



HOW TO INTRODUCE FERMENTS SAFELY CONT'D

Remember the cumulative effect of probiotics

It is important to remember there is a cumulative effect to probiotics. You may find you feel fine on day one of consuming the ferment, maybe not notice anything too different on day two, and then feel quite woeful on day-three. Die-off effect may present as muscle ache, tiredness, headaches or feeling like you are coming down with something, however nothing eventuates. If this occurs, best to remove any probiotic foods and any probiotic supplements you are taking for three to four days and let your body catch up. Reintroduce at half the previous amount you were having.

Having Prebiotics with your probiotics

Probiotics are beneficial bacteria, and prebiotics are food for these bacteria. To keep these beneficial bacteria alive and to where they need to be in the digestive tract you need to feed them. Great Prebiotic foods include: green banana flour, legumes, beans, and peas, oats, bananas, berries, Jerusalem artichokes (not the same as regular artichokes), asparagus, dandelion greens, garlic, leeks, onions, cabbage, coconut flour, arrowroot flour to name a few.

A good example of combining the pre & probiotics is having a berry smoothie with yoghurt, or arrowroot flour pancakes with yoghurt on top. Sauerkraut is great because cabbage is prebiotic - so you have the two in the one jar - win win.



DIE OFF REACTIONS

If you are new to the world of fermented foods you could experience die-off symptoms. The way to tell if something is a die off reaction is that it happens in response to ingesting fermented foods or probiotic capsules. Most often it's something that will become apparent within the next 20 minutes to couple of hours, but it can take longer. So if you've introduced a new fermented food and within a short period time you have brain fog, headache, feel very fatigued, or find yourself running to the bathroom to have a bowel movement, you can consider that a die off reaction.

Fermented foods and therapeutic strength probiotics can produce this so-called "die-off" reaction. As the probiotic bacteria make it to your digestive system, they start destroying pathogenic bacteria, viruses, and fungi. When these pathogens die they release toxins and these are the toxins that give you your symptoms, so whatever is typical for you may temporarily get worse until it clears from your system.

If you feel overwhelmed by a die off reaction, try this: **take a capsule of 100% pure activated charcoal.** Activated charcoal is a blood purifier often used for first aid. When you take it in response to a die off reaction it basically binds to the toxins that have been released and are circulating in your blood. It holds on to them until they can be safely released through your bowel (you may notice black streaks in your stool). A word of caution when taking activated charcoal: you don't want to take it all the time to try and prevent feeling a die off reaction because in addition to binding to toxic metals, it also binds to necessary minerals. This isn't a problem when you only take activated charcoal when you need it, because it tends to be just a dozen times or so.

Something else that's very helpful with the die off reaction is taking a detox bath. Some toxicity will leave your body through your pores and go into the bath water, while at the same time you'll take in some nutrients from whatever you've added to the bath. That takes some burden off your liver and kidneys to detoxify the substances that were released. To control die off reactions, introduce fermented foods slowly and start from low dose of probiotics supplements, gradually working up to the therapeutic level. A therapeutic dose of probiotics for an adult is 20 to 25 billion colony forming units (CFU's) per day. A child's dose will be some fraction of that depending on their age and size. Once you're at the therapeutic level you'll continue that amount for at least 6 months. It sounds unpleasant, but a die off reaction is good news because it means the probiotic is working. Start with as small of an amount as you tolerate – no need to rush, you've got the rest of your life to work up to the full dose.