1. **Who should use Probiotic-8?** Probiotic-8 is indicated for anyone who wants to enhance their overall health and well-being. Probiotic-8 supports digestive and immune health and is particularly beneficial for those suffering from gastrointestinal problems like constipation, diarrhea, bloating, cramping and gas. Probiotic-8 is ideal for patients who have recently taken antibiotics and for those who are lactose intolerant.

2. **Who should not use Probiotic-8?** Nutritional supplements have an excellent safety track record. However, certain individuals should seek the advice of their doctor before beginning any nutritional supplement program particularly diabetics, pregnant or lactating women.

3. **What are the benefits of using Probiotic-8?** Probiotic-8 helps replenish the beneficial bacteria in the digestive tract and promotes a healthy intestinal flora. Probiotic-8 promotes intestinal health and supports immune system function.

Probiotic-8 supports your body’s natural digestive function. Regular use of probiotics shortens transit time which increases regularity and promotes stool volume and weight. Probiotics can resolve diarrhea (caused by bacteria or viral infection and antibiotic use) by balancing the intestinal flora. By “predigesting” some of the lactose in dairy products and metabolizing it to lactic acid, probiotics can also help relieve the gastrointestinal symptoms associated with lactose intolerance.

Probiotic-8 strengthens your natural defenses by providing a regular source of good bacteria. When the microflora of your intestinal tract is in good balance, your body’s immune health is strengthened and supported. Over 70% of body’s immune system is located in the digestive tract where specialized cells play an important role as first line of defense against invading bacteria. Beneficial bacteria occupy the lining of the intestinal tract and create a physical barrier to pathogens. Regular consumption of probiotics like Probiotic-8 strengthens this lining.

4. **What makes VitaMedica’s Probiotic-8 supplement unique?** Probiotic-8 is formulated with a broad range of beneficial bacteria including 4 strains of *Lactobacilli*, 3 strains of *Bifidobacteria* and *Streptococcus thermophilus*. Just two capsules a day provide 8 billion colony forming units (CFUs) to replenish the microflora in the intestinal tract. Our enteric coated capsules ensure that the good bacteria survive the harsh journey through the stomach. The addition of the prebiotic FOS provides the friendly bacteria with a ready source of nutrients to thrive and repopulate the GI tract. This symbiotic formula supports digestive and immune health.

5. **Probiotic-8 is formulated with 4 strains of Lactobacillus. Why is Lactobacillus important for digestive & immune health?** The *Lactobacillus* group is one of the two most common groups of beneficial bacteria found in the human digestive tract. *Lactobacilli* reside primarily in the small intestine where nutrients are absorbed.

*Lactobacillus* group are typically present in natural yogurt and fermented dairy products. *Lactobacilli* are referred to as lactic acid bacteria because they feed on the sugar in the milk known as lactose. The lactose is transformed into lactic acid. The production of lactic acid reduces pH and results in the milk curdling and turning tart. In the digestive tract, a lower pH prevents the growth of bad bacteria.

Individuals who are lactose intolerant lack an enzyme called lactase which helps to break down the naturally occurring sugars in dairy products. This group of bacteria convert lactose to lactase and as a result can help reduce the bloating, gas and other discomfort associated with lactose intolerance.

*Lactobacilli* are able to live in highly acidic environments of pH 4-5 or lower. This pH is well below the pH other lactic acid bacteria can live in and because of this *Lactobacilli* are able to survive the harsh conditions of the stomach and pass through to the small intestine.
Lactobacillus bacteria have the potential to reduce intestinal infections. Metabolic end products excreted by these micro-organisms lower the pH in the gut, making an inhospitable environment for pathogens. Many lactobacilli species also excrete natural antibiotics, which can have a broad spectrum of activity. Other mechanisms include improved immune stimulation, competition for nutrients and blocking of pathogens to adhere to the intestinal mucosa.

6. Probiotic-8 is formulated with Lactobacillus acidophilus (La-14). What role does this beneficial bacteria play in digestive & immune health? Lactobacillus acidophilus or L. acidophilus is probably the best known member or species of the Lactobacillus family (genus). Yogurt, miso, tempeh, kefir and acidophilus milk contain this beneficial bacterium. L. acidophilus occurs naturally in the GI tract, mouth and vagina. The acid produced by L. acidophilus in the vagina may help to control the growth of the fungus Candida albicans thus helping to prevent vaginal yeast infections. Lactobacillus acidophilus promotes the synthesis of vitamin K, produces lactase, and anti-microbial substances such as acidolin, acidophilin, lactocidin and bacteriocin.

7. Probiotic-8 is formulated with Lactobacillus casei (La-11). What role does this beneficial bacteria play in digestive & immune health? Lactobacillus casei or L. casei is one of the most widely studied probiotics. L. casei is naturally found in the mouth and intestines of humans and helps protect the body from disease and illness by limiting the growth of various types of harmful bacteria that can cause infection. L. casei is resistant to gastric acid and bile making it able to survive the journey through the GI tract. Like other strains of Lactobacillus, L. casei helps lower pH levels in the digestive system and impedes the growth of harmful bacteria. This strain is beneficial by reducing lactose intolerance, alleviating constipation and controlling diarrhea. It is also helpful against antibiotic associated diarrhea. L. casei’s advantageous effects include modulation of the immune system and an anti-inflammatory effect on the gut.

8. Probiotic-8 is formulated with Lactobacillus rhamnosus (Lr-32). What role does this beneficial bacteria play in digestive & immune health? Lactobacillus rhamnosus or L. rhamnosus is remarkably tolerant of the harsh acids found in the stomach and digestive tract. L. rhamnosus is particularly beneficial to the immune system by combating intestinal and urinary tract pathogens. L. rhamnosus stimulates the production of antibodies and assists in the process of phagocytosis, a means by which the body removes dangerous invasive bacteria.

9. Probiotic-8 is formulated with Lactobacillus salivarius (Ls-33). What role does this beneficial bacteria play in digestive & immune health? Lactobacillus salivarius or L. salivarius resides in the mouth and small intestine. This microflora produces enzymes that kill microbes. A low supplementation dose is required to obtain the benefits of this strain. L. salivarius thrive in the right environment – when glucose is introduced – especially in the form of fructooligosaccharides or FOS.

10. Probiotic-8 is formulated with 3 strains of Bifidobacterium. Why is Bifidobacterium important for digestive & immune health? Bifidobacterium is one of the two major groups of beneficial bacteria found in the human digestive tract. Bifidobacteria reside mostly in the large intestine (colon) where water is primarily absorbed.

Over 30 species of Bifidobacteria are currently known including B. breve, B. longum, B. dentium, B. lactis and B. infantis. These beneficial bacteria make up the largest group of bacteria in the intestines of babies but as we age their numbers decrease dramatically.

Bifidobacterium are natural colonizers of the digestive tract and are important in promoting gut health by increasing vitamin and protein synthesis, inhibiting the development of bad bacteria, stimulating the immune response and aiding in the digestion and absorption of foods.

Antibiotics are particularly detrimental to the survival of all strains of Bifidobacterium as compared with other strains of good bacteria.
The greatest numbers of *Bifidobacterium* live in the lower part of the colon and their success depends on their ability to metabolize complex carbohydrates. This food source is non-digestible carbohydrates such insoluble fiber. Also known as prebiotics, these special carbohydrates are crucial to the survival of these friendly bacteria. Given that most of us do not meet the daily requirement for fiber intake (25 to 40 grams), it should come as no surprise the prevalence of digestive problems.

*Bifidobacterium* aid in digestion because they help to break down partially-digested food in the form of sugars (polysaccharides) in the colon. As a byproduct of their metabolism, this beneficial microbiota creates an acid versus alkali balance or pH factor in the GI tract. Many pathogens prefer a lower acid environment and a more acidic pH makes it more difficult for harmful bacteria to replicate.

11. **Probiotic-8 is formulated with *Bifidobacterium bifidum* (Bb-02) and *Bifidobacterium longum* (Bl-05). What role do these two beneficial bacteria strains play in digestive & immune health?** *Bifidobacterium bifidum* or *B. bifidum* and *Bifidobacterium longum* or *B. longum* inhabit the colon and vagina. Both species control the bad bacteria from replicating, bolster the immune system and aid in the digestive process.

*B. longum* is one of the most well-known of the *Bifidobacterium* family. *B. longum* ferments sugars into lactic acid thereby lowering the pH level in the intestine. In addition to increasing the acidity of the GI tract, this beneficial microbiota produces organic compounds (hydrogen peroxide, acetic acid) that make it difficult for harmful bacteria to replicate. This probiotic has been shown to be beneficial in preventing diarrhea associated with antibiotic use. *B. longum* helps in the production and absorption of the B-complex family of vitamins.

12. **Probiotic-8 is formulated with *Bifidobacterium lactis* (Bl-04). What role does this beneficial bacteria play in digestive & immune health?** *Bifidobacterium lactis* and *Bifidobacterium animalis* are so closely related that they are now put into one family. *B. lactis* is most commonly found in the intestines of humans. *B. lactis* is one of the most beneficial probiotics that is most commonly added to dairy products such as yogurt. A study published in the *Journal of Nutrition* found that *B. lactis* reduced the risk of individuals contracting diarrhea from a change in water sources and environmental changes due to traveling. *B. lactis* may also help relief constipation when consumed over a period of a few weeks.

13. **Probiotic-8 is formulated with *Streptococcus thermophilus* (St-21). What role does this beneficial bacteria play in digestive & immune health?** Due to its structure, *Streptococcus thermophilus* or *S. thermophilus* can withstand elevated temperatures, making it important in the use of dairy fermentation which requires high temperatures. For this reason, *S. thermophilus* is used as a starter strain for dairy foods including yogurt and Mozzarella cheese. The cell structure of *S. thermophilus* lacks surface proteins. Harmful bacteria use these surface proteins to attach to mucosal tissues and hide from the body’s defensive actions. Without these surface proteins, *S. thermophilus* inhibits the growth of pathogens.

14. **What are Colony Forming Units?** Colony Forming Units or CFUs, is a measure of how many bacteria are able to divide and form colonies. At the time of manufacture, each Probiotic-8 capsule contains 11 billion CFUs. CFU is an indication that the bacterium is live, capable of dividing and forming colonies.

15. **What is FOS?** FOS is short hand for fructooligosaccharides, a type of prebiotic. Prebiotics are special type of non-digestible carbohydrate that beneficial microorganisms use as energy. With a ready available food source, beneficial bacteria can replicate in the intestinal tract. While probiotics directly repopulate the intestinal tract with the beneficial bacteria, prebiotics provide an environment which is hospitable to the good bacteria.

Like probiotics, certain prebiotics, when used in adequate amounts, have been shown to provide health benefits including improved digestive function and intestinal environment, positive modulation of immunity and metabolism, improved lipid metabolism and improved absorption of dietary minerals. Not surprisingly, prebiotics complement probiotic functions.
The most widely accepted prebiotics are inulin - a type of fructooligosaccharides (FOS) derived from chicory – and oligofructose because human studies indicate their ingestion directly increases levels of *Bifidobacteria* in the colon. This substance is readily available in other foods such as bananas, tomatoes, barley, asparagus, artichokes and garlic.

One of the challenges of delivering a quality product is the ability of the probiotic to survive passage through the stomach. If the probiotic survives the stomach and bile acids, it then must adhere to intestinal cells and colonize within the human intestine. The probiotic also must be antagonistic toward pathogenic bacteria.

16. **What is the recommended dosing for Probiotic-8?** After an antibiotic regimen, take two to three capsules daily between meals or on an empty stomach. For everyday use, take one to two capsules daily between meals or on an empty stomach. When first taking this supplement, you may experience slight GI upset. This is normal and should disappear within a few days. Taking this supplement on an empty stomach also helps to alleviate this problem. Taking probiotics in between meals may be preferred because of the increased pH of the empty stomach.

17. **I’ve heard that you can get bloating when probiotics are first taken. Why does this occur?** Those who experience gas and bloating when taking high potency probiotics may be experiencing other bacterial die off. It happens when large quantities of toxins are dumped into the body as bacteria die and commonly occurs in the early stages of taking a probiotic supplement. It’s also possible the effect of beneficial bacteria feeding on carbohydrates and other food particles in the intestines may cause an increase of discharged gas.

18. **Does Probiotic-8 need to be refrigerated?** No. Each Probiotic-8 capsule has an enteric coating which helps to protect the beneficial bacteria until they reach the digestive tract and does not require refrigeration. However, heat, water and air can reduce the potency of any probiotic supplement. To maintain the shelf-life of the product, we recommend storing the supplement in the refrigerator. You should also keep the supplement dry as water activates the beneficial bacteria.

19. **What other VitaMedica supplements are beneficial to support overall health & wellness?** Maintaining overall health and wellness is a reflection of a health-promoting diet which is rich in fruits, vegetables and high-quality protein and fat sources. VitaMedica’s nutraceuticals are designed to fill-in the gaps where diet leaves off. Our natural Acne Management solutions such as Healthy Skin Formula and Clear Skin Formula contain nutrients to banish blemishes from the inside out and promote a clear complexion. Our Super EPA/DHA Fish Oil provides an excellent source of these important Omega-3 polyunsaturated fats. Anti-Aging Formula, our most popular product, includes our high-quality Multi-Vitamin & Mineral Program plus our Phyto-5 Phytonutrient Complex and Flax Seed Oil in 30 convenient daily packs. For more information, refer to the [Shop Products](#) section of our website.