

[IMAGE]

A Little Bacteria May Be Good for You

According to the National Institutes of Health, respiratory infections (such as the common cold) and gastrointestinal problems are two of the leading causes of workplace absence. Shift workers appear to be more susceptible to these types of illnesses than other workers. Finding ways to improve the health of shift workers can not only increase productivity in the workplace, but save billions of dollars each year in terms of time missed from work and other costs.

In this randomized, controlled trial, 262 shift workers at a packaging company were assigned to take a drink containing *Lactobacillus reuteri*, a type of probiotic known to boost immune system function, or a placebo drink every day for 80 days. A total of 181 workers completed the study.

More than 26 percent of the workers taking the placebo drink took sick leave during the course of the study, compared to just 11 percent of workers taking the probiotic drink. The probiotic appeared even more effective in employees who worked the night shift; no night-shift workers taking the probiotic drink called in sick during the study, compared to 33 percent of those given the placebo.

While *Lactobacillus reuteri* occurs naturally in the body, it is also available as a dietary supplement, either alone or in combination with other friendly bacteria. If you frequently suffer from colds and other ailments, talk to your doctor of chiropractic about how you can incorporate *L. reuteri* and other foods that help your immune system function better into your diet. For more information, visit www.chiroweb.com/find/archives/nutrition.

Tubelius P, Stan V, Zachrisson A. Increasing work-place healthiness with the probiotic *lactobacillus reuteri*: a randomised, double-blind placebo-controlled study. *Environmental Health*, November 2005;4(25).

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