

This is the healthiest part of the apple, according to study

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Credit: Charles Rondeau/public domain

Love munching on apples? You could be missing out on the best part of the fruit, according to a new report.

Researchers from Graz University of Technology in Austria recently conducted a study, published in the *Frontiers of Microbiology* journal, to

explore how the food's bacteria, much of which promotes gut health, affects the human body.

To do so, they assessed the bacterial content of the different components of an [apple](#), including the stem, peel, fruit pulp, seeds, and calyx. They examined both organic and conventional store-bought apples.

After analyzing the results, they found a typical 240g organic or conventional apple contains around 100 million bacteria, and much of it is located in the fruit's core, particularly the seeds. Only 10 million [bacterial cells](#) live in the flesh.

"To the heroes among you who eat the whole apple: besides extra fiber, flavonoids and flavor, you're also quaffing 10 times as many bacteria per [fruit](#) as your core-discarding counterparts," the authors said in a statement.

But [organic apples](#) have an edge over the conventional ones, because they "harbor a more diverse and balanced bacterial community—which could make them healthier and tastier than conventional apples, as well as better for the environment," the team said.



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For example, *Escherichia shigella*, which includes known pathogens, was found in most of the conventional apples but not the organic ones. Lactobacilli, which is a type of probiotic, was found in most organic apples but not conventional ones. And methylobacterium, known to enhance the biosynthesis of strawberry flavor compounds, was more prominent in organic apples.

The scientists now hope to continue their investigations to better understand the [bacteria](#) makeup of other fruits.

"The microbiome and antioxidant profiles of fresh produce may one day become standard nutritional information, displayed alongside

macronutrients, vitamins and minerals to guide consumers," the scientists concluded. "Here, a key step will be to confirm to what extent diversity in the food [microbiome](#) translates to gut microbial diversity and improved health outcomes."

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