

Probiotics might help portly pooches shed pounds

January 26 2024, by Dennis Thompson



If your dog is looking like he needs to drop some weight, a new study

shows probiotics might do the trick.

Researchers have identified two strains of probiotics that helped obese canines shed pounds.

"The strains we carefully selected demonstrated remarkable success in reducing the [body fat](#) percentage in dogs," said principal researcher Younghoon Kim, a professor of agricultural biotechnology with Seoul National University in Korea.

Although about half of all canines are obese, the condition occurs more often in older dogs, the researchers said, so they scrutinized differences in the [gut microbiomes](#) of both young and old dogs. They found that old dogs experience a decline in the population of two species of lactic acid bacteria, Bifidobacterium and Enterococcus.

To see whether these bacteria play a role in canine obesity, researchers administered two specific strains—Enterococcus faecium IDCC 2102 and Bifidobacterium lactis IDCC 4301—to a group of beagles.

Researchers then put the beagles on a [high-fat diet](#) to see whether they'd pack on pounds despite the probiotics.

Despite their diet, the beagles experienced a drop in both weight and body fat, accompanied by an increase in their [energy metabolism](#).

The findings were [published](#) Jan. 25 in the journal *Microbiology Spectrum*.

"What set these strains apart was their ability to not only limit [dietary intake](#) or enhance excretion to reduce body weight, but more importantly, activate energy metabolism," Kim said in a journal news release.

The results "confirmed a shift in the body's metabolic orientation towards fat consumption rather than fat accumulation," Kim added.

The loss of body fat also provided other [health benefits](#) for the beagles, including lower inflammation levels and enhanced insulin production. Further, the increase in beneficial bacteria boosted the dogs' immune system acting in defense against harmful bacteria.

What's particularly encouraging is that these changes aren't fleeting, Kim said. The gut bacteria persist in the dogs' bodies, ensuring that their benefits will be sustained over time.

Kim called for more research on tailored probiotics for family pets.

"While types of probiotics suitable for human consumption or commercial livestock have been identified and established, the absence of standardized guidelines for [companion animals](#) is a glaring gap," Kim said.

More information: The American Kennel Club has more about [probiotics for dogs](#).

Anna Kang et al, Dietary supplementation with probiotics promotes weight loss by reshaping the gut microbiome and energy metabolism in obese dogs, *Microbiology Spectrum* (2024). [DOI: 10.1128/spectrum.02552-23](#)

2024 HealthDay. All rights reserved.

Citation: Probiotics might help portly pooches shed pounds (2024, January 26) retrieved 29 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2024-01-probiotics-portly-pooches-pounds.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.