

## **Trials show the value of a unique prebiotic for people aged 65 and over - Reading University shows mum really does know best...**

Submitted by: Murray PR

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New published trials could empower older people to counter a decline in their immune systems and boost their health.

A double blind placebo-controlled study, conducted at Reading University's Food Biosciences unit and published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, investigated the role of a natural non-digestible carbohydrate similar to that found in breastmilk, for people aged 65 and over.

It showed Bimuno (<http://www.bimuno.com>) a specific prebiotic, positively affected the bacterial balance towards a more health promoting one but also had a significant positive effect on immunity measurements that otherwise decline in people aged 65 and over.

Prebiotics are already used in infant milk formulas, and these new findings now prove the prebiotic Bimuno has a link to immune function and gut health in elderly people. Typically, the natural balance of bifidobacteria declines with age. This in turn can leave older people more susceptible to gastrointestinal disorders, colds and flu.

Unlike probiotics which are live bacteria, the prebiotic Bimuno is a carbohydrate which is not destroyed, digested or absorbed in the stomach or small intestine. It therefore reaches the colon intact to selectively target and feed the body's immunity boosting bacteria, while reducing harmful bacteria.

During the trial volunteers aged between 64 and 79 were divided into two groups with one starting with a sachet of the prebiotic daily and the other a placebo, both provided in powder sachets. After 10 weeks the groups switched over to the other treatment for a further 10 weeks. The effect of the two treatments was then compared.

Measurements were made of bacteria including bifidobacteria, lactobacilli, and E.coli. Bimuno significantly increased the numbers of beneficial bacteria, particularly bifidobacteria and also significantly increased the activity of those cells involved in immune defence, specifically natural killer cells and phagocytic cells.

Lead researcher, Dr Jelena Vulevic, said: "This study proves that Bimuno not only reverses the decline in elderly people's health promoting bifidobacteria, but more significantly, shows that Bimuno has a direct effect on the body's immune defence cells thus enhancing immune function in elderly people".

Bimuno is the result of eight years of intensive research conducted in collaboration with the University of Reading's Food Microbial Sciences Unit. It is available to buy at Boots, priced at £6.99 for 30 sachets, which is a month's supply. For more information, visit [www.bimuno.com](http://www.bimuno.com) or call 01908 577 850.

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