Is Yogurt the New Vaccine?

Researchers are working on an innovative oral vaccine that would allow the medicine to possibly be given in the form of a yogurt smoothie.

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Probiotics—healthy bacteria found in diary products such as yogurt and cheese—could revolutionize the way we get vaccinated thanks to a new oral vaccine from researchers at Northwestern University in Illinois. The vaccine could feasibly be administered in the form of a yogurt smoothie, a much tastier alternative to injection with a needle.

Aside from the fact that oral vaccines are completely painless, researchers believe delivering the vaccine directly to the stomach will effectively employ the power of the small intestine's immune system.

"If you can activate the immune system in your gut, you get a much more powerful immune response than by injecting it," said Mansour Mohamadzadeh, PhD, the study's lead author. He added, "The pathogenic bacteria will be eliminated faster."

The study tested an oral anthrax vaccine in mice, but researchers hope probiotics could be used as vaccines for a number of infectious diseases.

Read *RH*'s "Digest This!" to learn more about probiotics.

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http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/vaccine-yogurt-probiotics-16384-3609