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Breaking the Taboo on Vaginal Infections

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Breaking the Taboo on Vaginal Infections

Aims

- To understand what the vaginal microbiome is
- To understand factors affecting the vaginal microbiome
- To understand the potential role of probiotics in vaginal health
- To understand practical dietary and lifestyle tools to support vaginal health

What is the Vaginal Microbiome?

- The vaginal microbiome refers to all the microbes living within the vagina
- It's largely dominated by Lactobacillus bacteria
- The vaginal microbiome is naturally protective, which helps maintain the delicate environment

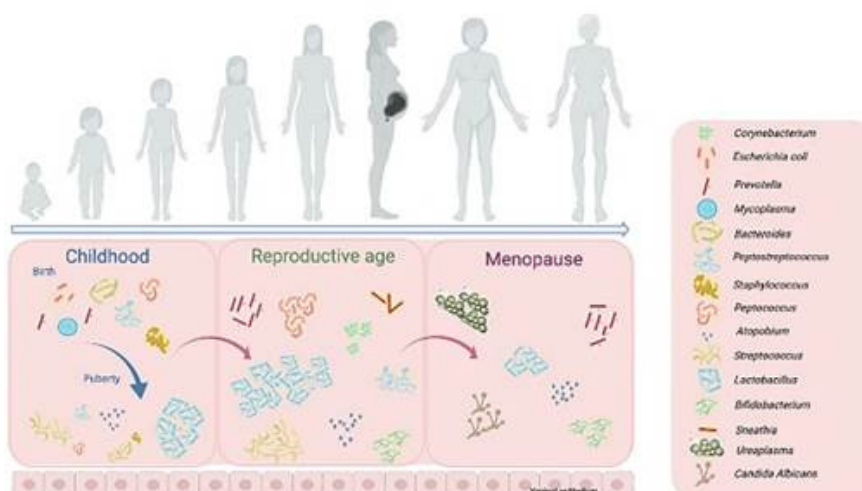
Lactobacillus Bacteria

- Lactobacillus bacteria make up 90% of the vaginal microbiome
- They're responsible for looking after the vaginal environment. This includes:
 - Producing lactic acid to support the natural pH (which is below 4.5)
 - Supporting the growth of beneficial organisms
 - Defending against potential pathogens

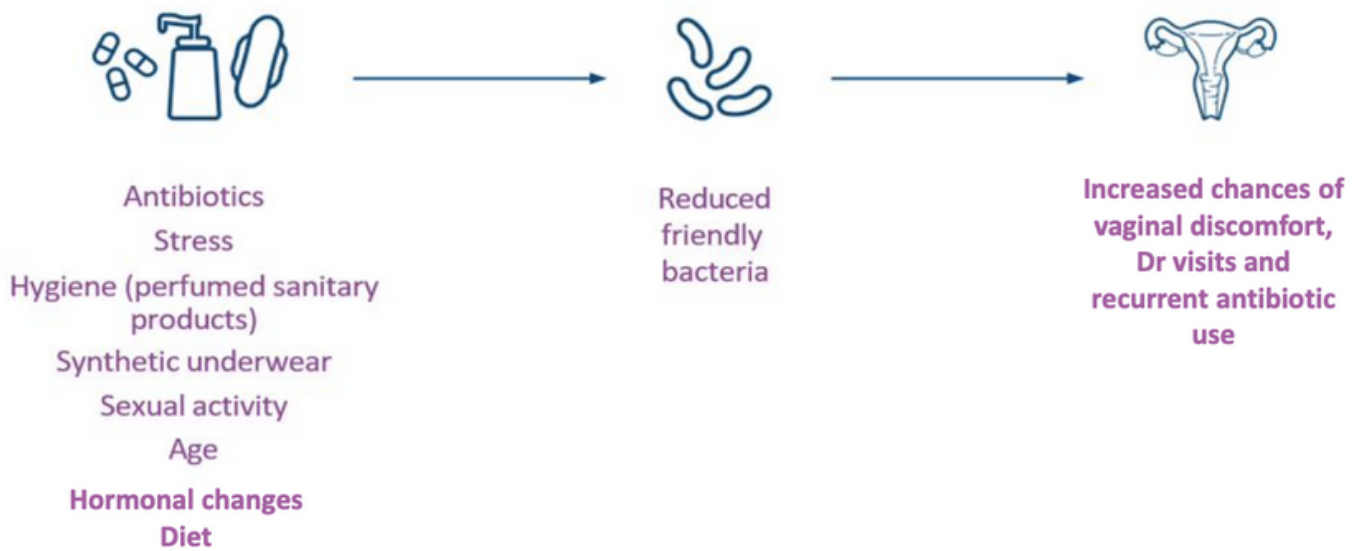
The Vaginal Microbiome During Menopause

- Hormonal fluctuations can influence the vaginal microbiome
- Puberty, pregnancy and menopause can all have an impact

Auriemma RS, et al.



Vaginal Dysbiosis

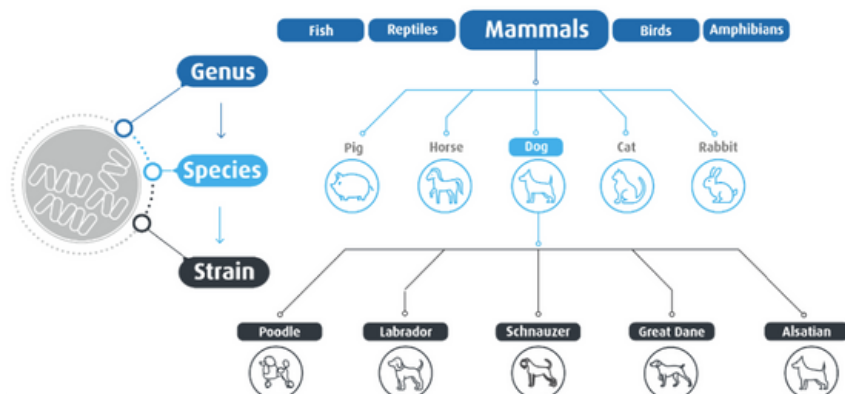
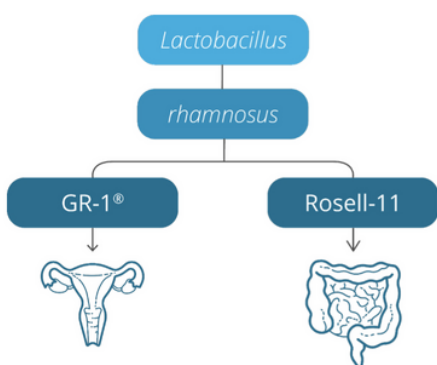


Friendly Bacteria During Menopause

- Friendly bacteria found within the vaginal microbiome can support women by:
 - Supporting the natural pH
 - Supporting defence mechanisms
 - Lowering inflammation

What are Probiotics?

- Probiotics: Live microorganisms which, when administered in adequate amounts, confer a health benefit on the host
- When looking for a probiotic, focus on strains NOT species
- Probiotic strains work in different ways. Always choose a strain that has research for the health condition you're trying to manage and is specific to vaginal health



Strains for the Vaginal Tract

- *Lactobacillus rhamnosus* GR-1® and *Lactobacillus reuteri* RC-14® are the worlds most researched strains for the intimate area
- When taken orally, these probiotic strains have been identified to reach the vaginal tract, where they increase Lactobacilli in the vaginal tract
- Optibac for Women contains both of these strains plus *Lactobacillus paracasei* F-19®

Dietary and Lifestyle Recommendations

- Practice good hygiene
- Avoid feminine hygiene products
- Wear breathable fabrics, such as cotton
- Drink plenty of water
- Consume a fibre rich diet, by eating plenty of wholegrain and aiming for your 5-a-day
- Minimise added sugar
- Manage stress levels
- Choose suitable friendly bacteria supplements



Harley Street at Home: Menopause would like to thank Optibac Probiotics for sponsoring this session.

Optibac Probiotics is a UK based business which specialises entirely in live cultures. Optibac pride themselves in strains that have been scientifically researched and clinically trialled. Their expertise allows them to select specific strains based on scientific research, giving their customers a natural product that's right for them. Each strain undergoes rigorous testing to ensure it is stable at room temperature, survives stomach acidity, reaches the gut alive, and adheres to the gut wall lining. Optibac Probiotics have formulas suitable for every life stage including menopause. With 15 different supplements in the range, all free from additives, preservatives and colourings, and products that are suitable for vegetarians or vegans also.