

Kefir • Fermented Milk • Kelly Baltuska, DC



Steps to making Kefir:

1. Place the kefir grains in a quart jar and fill it $\frac{3}{4}$ full with milk. (Approximately 3-4 tablespoons of grains per jar or 1 Tbsp. Of kefir to every 1 cup of milk)
2. Cover the jar with coffee filter or paper towel and secure with a rubber band to let it breathe and keep bugs out.
3. Leave the jar in a warm dark place (68-80°F) in your home. Stir or agitate the jar a few times a day if desired but not required.
4. Kefir normally takes at least 18 to 24 hours to form. The longer the fermentation after 24 hours, the more sour the taste.
5. Once the milk has thickened and there is a clear layer of liquid in the jar, the kefir has formed. Strain and remove the kefir grains with a plastic fine mesh strainer.
6. Pour freshly made Kefir into a new jar and seal tightly with a lid. Enjoy right away and/or store surplus in the refrigerator, which will be safe to use for up to 30 days.
7. The kefir grains can then be placed in fresh milk and the process repeated.

Tips/Warnings/Do's and Don'ts:

- Direct light will destroy many precious nutrients in the Kefir. Keep the jars in a dark place. Mine are in the cupboard. I've read that all metals should be avoided when handling/storing kefir.
- If the temperature in the house is cooler, it will slow the fermentation process. If the temperature is warmer, it will speed the fermentation process. Extreme heat will kill the kefir grains. Be careful not to place the kefir or kefir grains in a jar that is still hot from the dishwasher.
- If you are going on vacation or simply want to stop fermenting milk for a period of time, store your grains in a sealed jar with milk in the refrigerator. Use a larger milk to kefir ratio so that there will be plenty of lactose for the bacteria to dine on. This will keep the grains alive while slowing the fermentation process. The kefir may still be used when ready to resume the process.
- Trust your feral instincts and don't consume foods that smell or taste rancid.
- To avoid a difficult or uncomfortable transition into better health, gradually introduce kefir into your diet. Example: 4oz/day for first 2 days, 6oz/day for next 2 days, 8oz/day for next 2 days etc.
- Enjoy kefir as is, or add honey or stevia to sweeten it. My morning breakfast routine is banana, mixed berries, kefir, and ground flax seeds or chia seeds blended together in the magic bullet.
- Hundreds of other recipes can be found online. My family's favorites are: kefir popsicles, avocado dip, pancakes, and smoothies. The pancakes are DELICIOUS; unfortunately, the heat does destroy the bacteria and decreases the health benefits.
- Healthy kefir grains will grow up to 25% in size/quantity with each cycle/batch. They can quickly overwhelm you so keep talking about the great health benefits to friends and family to see who may be interested in taking some off of your hands when this happens. Some people eat the extra grains or feed them to their pets.

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Other resources:

www.baltuska.com -my practice website: an awesome place for Chiropractic care.

www.nationalkefirassociation.com -its official

www.culturesforhealth.com -books, products, recipes, how-to

www.bodyecology.com articles, testimonials, recipes

www.mercola.com -great health tips for preventative healthcare

www.youtube.com -perfect short how to videos

What exactly is this stuff?

Kefir has a very mysterious history. I have read that the kefir grains cannot be recreated and must be acquired and grown from someone who is already enjoying their benefits. Some companies sell “starter cultures”, but these lose potency after a few batches and must be replaced. The grains may have originated in the Caucus Mountains, where nomadic shepherders would store their refreshing milk in leather pouches on their belts. After a long days work they would reach for their drink, it will have transformed into what they described as a deliciously effervescent, bubbly drink. The name Kefir comes from the Turkish word “keif” – meaning “good feeling” – for the sense of well being experienced after drinking it.

The fermentation is triggered by Kefir “grains”, consisting of various species of symbiotic bacteria and yeast. There are no true grains in the process, the term was applied because of the appearance and has stuck ever since. Bacteria (mostly lactobacteria and streptococci) ferment lactose, the sugar found in milk; yeasts perform alcohol fermentation, producing negligible amounts of alcohol. The resulting drink has a pleasantly tangy taste. Easy to digest, Kefir cleanses the intestines while boosting your immune response to illness.

Kefir is an excellent source of protein, calcium, fiber and A, B, C, and D vitamins. Plus, it’s gluten-free, 99% lactose-free. It can and should be enjoyed any and all the time. For best results, it is recommended to drink first thing in the morning on an empty stomach. Massive over consumption may cause slight dehydration and constipation.

The following information is from one of the many newsletters sent by Dr. Kelly Baltuska, DC. If you would like to receive them, go to www.Baltuska.com to sign up.

“Let your food be your medicine, and your medicine be your food.”

-Hippocrates.

Proper gastrointestinal health is paramount in optimizing the immune system. There are many exciting discoveries being made about how our gut communicates with our brain. As it turns out, we are and have always been teaming up with beneficial bacteria to properly defend ourselves from the foreign pathogens and to properly digest and assimilate nutrients. If we count the cells of our body and compare it numerically to the cells of bacteria living on and within us, we are 90% bacteria. Scientists are excitedly analyzing and documenting the human micro-bio genome and finding out that the different types and varying ratios of bacteria in the human population are just as unique and diverse as the genetic genome.

There are many things that effect, for better or for worse, your gut micro flora bacteria. Prescription antibiotics are often given to wipe out harmful bacteria in our bodies. Unfortunately, these drugs do not

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differentiate between good or bad bacteria. They wipe out ALL of them, leaving you dangerously vulnerable. Chlorine in our tap water acts as an antibiotic in a similar way. Birth control and over the counter NSAIDs, diets low in fiber also contribute to unhealthy gut flora.

The foods we eat and dietary choices we make can make or break our gut micro flora. Refined carbohydrates, sugar and processed foods, fructose in fruits, all encourage, feed, and perpetuate the harmful bacteria in our guts. One of the more common harmful bacteria is named Candida Albicans. When this type flourishes within us, it presents itself and masquerades as many different nasty symptoms including: fatigue, hyperactivity, acne, irritability, poor sleep quality, abdominal pain, joint pain, constipation, diarrhea, flatulence, reflux, heartburn, postnasal drip, cough, recurrent urinary tract infections, menstrual irregularities, sinus congestion, sugar and alcohol cravings, inability to lose weight, and much more.

Conversely, there are foods and dietary choices that we can make to encourage, feed, and perpetuate helpful and beneficial bacteria within our gut. Fermented foods like pickles, sauerkraut, kefir, kombucha, and fermented vegetables actually have thousands of colonies of healthy bacteria on them, and we simply eat them to gain benefits that can include: increased energy levels, more comfortable digestion, better immune system, clarity of mind, improved sleep quality, and much more. There are also supplements in a pill form that can easily provide these benefits.

Many different types of medical professionals are utilizing the knowledge and treatment of the human gut micro flora to treat and manage many different conditions including: ADHD, sleeping problems, fibromyalgia, asthma, allergies, constipation, diarrhea, IBS, autism, poor immune systems, depression, sinus congestion, and many others.

There are other foods and supplements that we can eat that act as “weed-killers” for harmful bacteria. These have been shown to have bacteriostatic and/or bactericidal properties. Good examples include: onions, honey, cabbage and other cruciferous vegetables, sauerkraut, kim chi, and many herbs like: thyme, mint, basil, cinnamon, rosemary, cumin, chili peppers, caraway seed, coriander, dill, nutmeg, ginger, mustard, and parsley. Try to include some of these in your diet to help kill off the bad guys living in your gut.

If your diet has been poor for a long time, it is likely that you do have an abundance of Candida Albicans in your gut without much healthy bacteria. When you begin changing your diet to promote a better balance of healthy bacteria, it is wise to gradually introduce the changes because you can get much worse before you get better with too much of an aggressive and abrupt change. The large amount of harmful bacteria will release many toxins as they die off which can cause many unwanted symptoms. Just as it is the case with all other healthy habits, a gradual change that is practiced and repeated perpetually will have a greater impact in the long run.

What is it good for?

The following list includes some of the many benefits and uses that Kefir has been known for. This information is not a guaranteed health claim. It may include anything from an “old wives tale” to specific published case studies.

1. Strongest natural remedy against any allergy
2. Strongest natural antibiotic without side effects
3. Treats liver disease
4. Treats gallbladder, dissolves gall bladder stones
5. Clears the body of salts, heavy metals, radionuclides, and alcoholic products
6. Cleans the body of chemical antibiotics
7. Treats kidney stones

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8. Good bacteria in kefir are able to fight off pathogenic microorganisms
9. Lowers level of LDL cholesterol
10. Cleans the gastrointestinal tract
11. Treats Irritable Bowel Syndrome
12. Treats gastritis
13. Treats pancreatitis
14. Treats ulcers
15. Prevents and treats colon cancer
16. Improves digestion
17. Improves the body functions
18. Improves the human immune system
19. Cures Candida
20. Cures hypertension
21. Stops growth of cancer cells
22. Speeds up healing process
23. Treats psoriasis
24. Treats eczema
25. Treats inflammatory diseases
26. Reduces size of tumors
27. Treats heart disease
28. Reverses calcination of blood vessels
29. Clears the blood vessels
30. Boosts the bodies energy
31. Natural “feel good” food
32. Treats lung infections
33. Normalizes metabolism thereby can be used for weight loss
34. Cures acne
35. Has anti-oxidants and anti-aging properties
36. Nourishes hair
37. Treats the gum disease parodontosis
38. Lessens side effects of medicines
39. Replenishes body of good bacteria after antibiotic
40. Balances the microflora of the body’s digestive system
41. Regulates blood pressure
42. Lowers blood sugar
43. Lowers blood lipid levels or cholesterol and fatty acids
44. Treats diarrhea
45. Treats constipation
46. Promotes bowel movement
47. Anti-stress properties (with all those natural B vitamins it cultures)
48. Treats sleeping disorders
49. Treats depression
50. Treats attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
51. Improves the brains neurological functions like reflexes, memory retention, attention, the five senses

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52. Reduces flatulence
53. Lactic acid fermentation enhances the digestibility of milk-based foods. People who cannot otherwise digest milk, can enjoy the vital calcium rich Kefir.
54. Treats yeast infection
55. Eliminates vaginal odors
56. Cures wrinkles
57. Treats arthritis
58. Treats colitis
59. Treats gout
60. Cures migraines
61. Treats rheumatism
62. Treats other stomach disorders
63. Detoxifies the body
64. Improves protein quality of milk, and enhances absorption and digestion
65. Good bacteria manufacture B vitamins such as B3, B6 and folic acid.
66. Aids in treating tuberculosis
67. Treats stomach cramps
68. Treats chronic intestine infections
69. Treats liver infections
70. Treats asthma
71. Treats bronchitis
72. Treats sclerosis
73. Treats anemia
74. Treats hepatitis
75. Healing effects on catarrh, digestive nodes, astral nodes, bilious complaints
76. Treats leaky gut syndrome
77. Prevents metastasis