Dear Alice,

If you freeze yogurt does it kill the active cultures, the good bacteria?

Answer

Dear Reader,

You?ll be happy to know that enjoying frozen yogurt is delicious AND may contain some healthy bacteria! While the research is not entirely conclusive, it seems that the active cultures you?re referring to (a.k.a. probiotics) do have the ability to survive the frozen treat?s freezing process.

However, not all frozen yogurts are created equal. So, how will you know which ones contain probiotics? Making these considerations will help you determine the probiotic content of your frozen yogurt:

- **Look for the Live & Active Cultures seal.** This voluntary labeling program was created by the National Yogurt Association to certify that products contain live active cultures. However, be aware that while regular yogurt needs to have 100 million cultures per gram to get this seal, frozen yogurt needs just one-tenth this amount.

- **Check the ingredients.** Are probiotics listed in the ingredients? A few common probiotic bacteria are species of Lactobacillus and Bifidobacterium, including Lactobacillus acidophilus and Bifidobacterium longum. Check to see if any of these are listed on the product.

- **Contact the manufacturer or store manager.** If you find a frozen yogurt that piques your taste buds, but doesn?t have the seal or its probiotic content isn't displayed on the list of ingredients, it doesn?t necessarily mean it's without live active cultures. Try reaching out to the manufacturer to ask how much and what types of bacteria are in their product.

- **Consider the varieties and add-ins.** Frozen yogurt?s probiotic content depends on the kind of yogurt it was made from, the manufacturing techniques used to process it, the other ingredients added, and the strains of probiotics included. And while it?s great that frozen yogurt may contain good bacteria, remember that extra sugar, add-ins, and toppings like sugary cereal, sprinkles, and chocolate chips or candy mean added calories to your treat.

Overall, regular yogurt beats out frozen yogurt when it comes to nutrient and probiotic content.
Regular (not frozen) yogurt is a great source of many nutrients, including calcium, vitamins B and D, magnesium, potassium, and protein – in addition to natural and added live active cultures. While some varieties of frozen yogurt may contain probiotics, many just don’t measure up to regular yogurt’s nutrient and vitamin content. That said, it’s still a good option for a lower-calorie treat. And by being an informed and vigilant shopper, you’ll be able to identify which frozen yogurt will give the most bang for your buck, or rather bacteria per bite.

Enjoy!

Alice!

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