

# PROBIOTICS: SEE THE DIFFERENCE

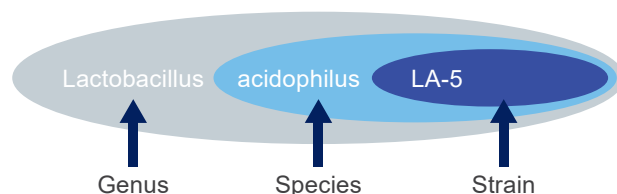
## Screening and Identification: Genus, Species and Strains

Probiotic research suggests a range of potential health benefits. However, the effects described can only be attributed to the strain or strains tested, not to the species or the whole group of lactic acid bacteria (LAB) or other probiotics.

The consensus of strain specificity is based on research showing that various strains within the same species may display different effects. To establish a probiotic strain, it is therefore essential to conduct extensive research to document the characteristics, safety and efficacy of the specific probiotic strain.

A probiotic strain is identified by the genus, species and strain (alphanumeric designation). In the scientific community, there is an agreed nomenclature for microorganisms - for example, *Bifidobacterium longum*, BB536.

Genus	Species	Strain
<i>Bifidobacterium</i>	<i>longum</i>	BB536
<i>Bifidobacterium</i>	<i>lactis</i>	BB-12
<i>Lactobacillus</i>	<i>acidophilus</i>	LA-5



Some probiotic products are sold on the “species level”, meaning that the microorganisms identified on the product label are listed as “genus + species” - for example, *Lactobacillus acidophilus*.

## Three Essential Properties to Consider When Choosing Probiotics

**Viability** - Probiotics are **live** microorganisms by definition, and they should be alive at the time of consumption. Check if the product label indicates the live bacteria count (known as colony-forming units, or CFUs) “**through the end of shelf life**” (or provides an expiry date) rather than “at time of manufacture” to reflect viability at consumption.

**Survivability** - Probiotics should be resistant to bile and stomach acids in the gastrointestinal (GI) tract in sufficient numbers to have beneficial effects. Survival may depend on the species and strain of the bacteria. Thus, genus, species and strain designation must be identified.

**Colonization** - After GI transit, probiotics bacteria should be able to adhere to mucosal cells in the intestine and proceed to colonize in the gut. Colonization of human gut flora is most likely to be successful with strains derived from human sources.

Probiotics need to be ingested in a specific dosage high enough to cause a health effect. Documented efficacy of specific strains at a specific dosage are not sufficient evidence to support health effects at a lower dosage.

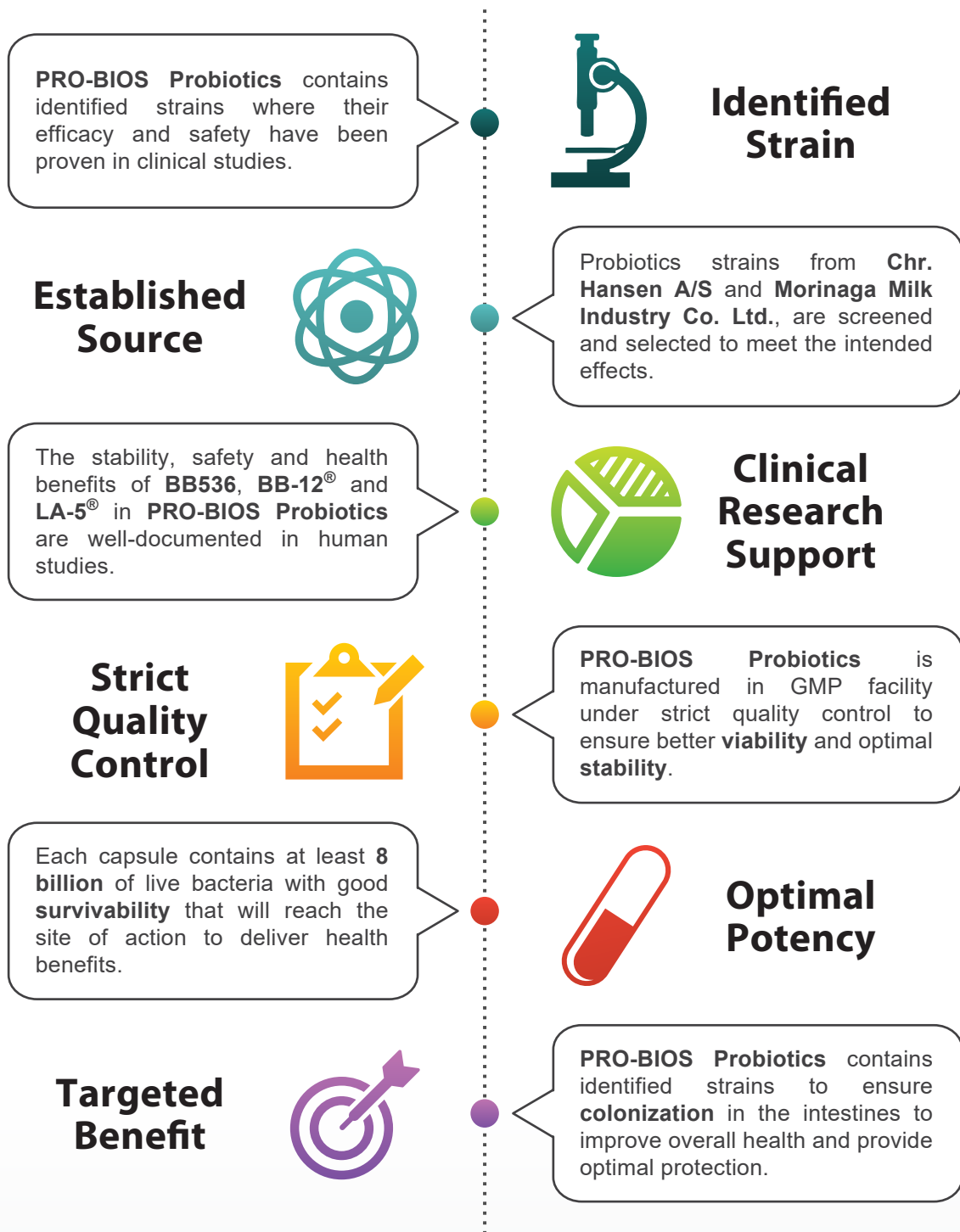
## Not All Probiotic Products are the Same

Different probiotic strains have been studied for different effects. Documentation of health effects must be conducted on the specific strains being sold in the product. Results and review articles from studies cannot be used as evidence to support the health effects of untested strains.

If a probiotic has **not** been clinically tested in humans for a specific health effect while also demonstrating safety in its use, then it should not be allowed to be called a “probiotic”. Despite this recommendation, many products that do **not** meet the criteria of this definition are currently sold as “probiotics” in the market.

As you counsel your customers on ways to maintain their good health, consider the role that probiotics can play in digestive health and immune support - then help them choose a brand that is supported by clinical studies with proven efficacy and safety so that your customers can feel confident that they are getting exactly what they pay for - a probiotic that works!

# Unique features of VITASEN® PRO-BIOS® Probiotics



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*Bifidobacterium longum*, **BB536** is a patented strain from Morinaga Milk Industry Co. Ltd., Japan.  
*Bifidobacterium lactis*, **BB-12®** and *Lactobacillus acidophilus*, **LA-5®** are patented strains from Chr. Hansen A/S, Denmark.