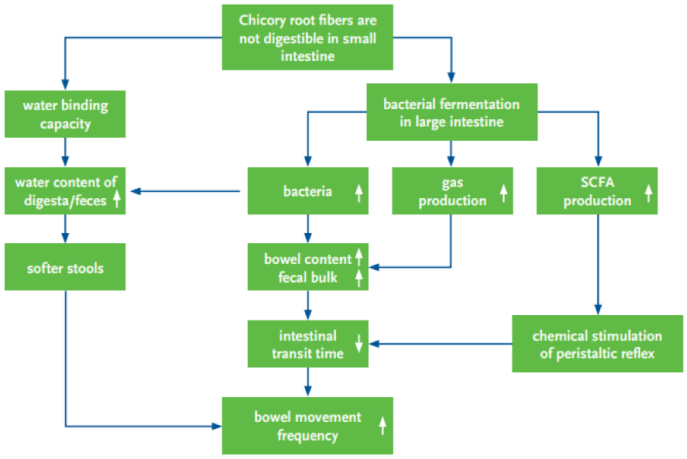
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Nourishing our little ones with BENEOâ??s clean label chicory root fibres: Christian Philippsen

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Encouraging children to eat healthily from a young age is paramount in maintaining good health as they grow. Promoting gut health is an effective measure in keeping children healthy as the small and large intestines help our bodies absorb the nutrients it needs to run smoothly. Fibre is important, as a lack of dietary fibre is linked to health issues such as obesity, high blood pressure, heart diseases and digestive problems. Increasing the dietary intake from an early age is therefore vital, especially with obesity rates among children accelerating in Asia Pacific.



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About BENEO's chicory fibres - Orafti Inulin and Oligofructose

The chicory plant stores extra energy in its roots in the form of inulin and other carbohydrates which can be extracted and isolated for use. BENEO's Orafti Inulin and Oligofructose, derived from the chicory root through a gentle hot water extraction method, are used by food manufacturers to replace sugar and fats with high fibre content. As such, consuming foods with Orafti Inulin and Oligofructose can introduce an array of health benefits to children.

Promoting a healthy digestive system

Both Orafti Inulin and Oligofructose are prebiotic fibres that feed the good bacteria already existing in the gut such as bifidobacteria and lactobacilli. These dietary fibres are not digested in the small intestine and therefore reach the large intestine almost intact.

Numerous intervention studies have shown that Orafti® Inulin and Oligofructose support the growth of these beneficial intestinal bacteria. In turn, the development of certain potentially harmful bacteria is inhibited, hence protecting children from digestion issues.

As highlighted in the diagram, Orafti Inulin and Oligofructose also promote frequent bowel movement and softer stools. These fibres can therefore help alleviate chronic constipation, which is a common gastrointestinal complaint among children.

Keeping away the doctors with chicory root fibres

The intestine is a significant regulator of our immune system, hosting two-thirds of all immune cells of the body. Improving gut health is therefore essential to boosting the immune systems of children.

A recent study revealed that there was a decrease in the number of fever episodes and sinusitis that required a physician's consultation among children who consume chicory root fibres. The regular intake of the chicory root fibre was found to support the gut microbiota of the children due to the growth of beneficial intestinal bacteria such as bifidobacteria and lactobacilli.

Increasing calcium absorption

BENEO's chicory root fibres are also effective in strengthening children's bones from an early age. In the normal human body, only about 30 percent of ingested calcium is usually fully absorbed. The oligofructose-enriched Inulin Orafti Synergy1 has been found to be particularly efficient in enhancing the bioavailability of calcium in the diet – an important prerequisite for lifelong bone health. The fermentation by prebiotic bacteria increases the absorption surface for calcium in the large intestine.

Orafti Inulin and Oligofructose – Natural ingredients for the future

BENEO's Orafti Inulin and Orafti Oligofructose stand out in the market as the only existing prebiotics derived from natural plants. These chicory root fibres appeal to food manufacturers as they can be easily incorporated into foods that kids enjoy such as chocolates, cereals and dairy products.

Thanks to their chemical structure, these BENEO fibres have sugar-like technical properties and are therefore perfectly suitable as natural sugar reducers. Due to their natural and mild taste profile, they are also often used in combination with high intensity sweeteners to create a more balanced and sugar-like palate without any off-taste. Thus, despite its healthier and natural properties, manufacturers can still maintain the taste of food products with Orafti Inulin and Orafti Oligofructose. After all, the taste of the food consumed is paramount to all consumers.

Building the foundation of a healthy future

Parents are always on the lookout for ways to increase their childrens' fibre intake to supplement the limited vegetables and fruits that they consume. Manufacturers can cater to this opportunity by incorporating Orafti Inulin and Orafti Oligofructose to produce food catered to children that are rich in fibre and yet appeal to their developing taste buds.