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Effects of probiotics on non-alcoholic fatty liver disease – A meta-analysis study

Jeffrey M Humarang and **Higinio Mappala**
Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center, Philippines

Introduction: Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease is now considered as one of the most common causes of liver disease worldwide. It affects around one-third of adults, which estimated to affect about 1 billion individuals worldwide.

Aim: This study was done to correlate and associate different RCTs done in the use of probiotics in the management of Nonalcoholic Steatohepatitis (NASH). This study aims to evaluate the effects of Probiotics on NASH, specifically on AST, ALT, and TNF alpha.

Methodology: Several websites on gastroenterology were used as the search engines for the study. The search terms used were: Probiotics, nonalcoholic steatohepatitis and synbiotics. The researcher also did cross-reference of all the lists of references of each selected study manually. Data were analyzed using Review Manager 5.3. Continuous data were presented as odds ratio with 95% CI. Statistical heterogeneity was measured using the Chi square test and the I2. 29 randomized controlled studies were selected and five of them fulfilled our inclusion criteria and were analyzed in this study.

Results: The meta-analysis showed a more favorable outcome with decreased ALT, AST and TNF-alpha with experimental group (probiotics plus diet and exercise) compared to the control group (diet and exercise) with P value of <.00001.

Conclusion: As a conclusion, based on the results of the study, probiotics have positive effects on patients with NAFLD/NASH. Probiotics also has favorable effect to decrease AST, ALT, and TNF-alpha levels among patients with NASH. This meta-analysis further shows that probiotics may be an alternative therapeutic option for NASH.

jeffrey_impe@yahoo.com

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