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Probiotics in the treatment of vulvovaginal candidiasis and bacterial vaginosis

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The human vaginal microbiota plays an important role in the maintenance of a woman's health, as well as of her partner and newborns. When this predominantly *Lactobacillus* community is disrupted or decreased in abundance, Vaginitis may occur. Of the millions of cases of vaginitis each year, most are caused by bacterial vaginosis (BV), followed by vulvovaginal candidiasis (VVC). The dominance of lactobacilli in healthy vaginal microbiota and its depletion in BV and VVC has given rise to the concept of oral or vaginal use of probiotic *Lactobacillus* strains for treatment and prevention of vaginitis. Probiotics, defined as live microorganisms that, when administered in adequate amounts, confer a health benefit on the host are considered a valid and novel alternative for the prevention and treatment of female urogenital tract infections. Probiotics are well known for their ability to lower intravaginal pH, thus establishing a barrier effect against many pathogens. Some strains are also able to create additional and more focused antagonistic activities mediated by specific molecules such as hydrogen peroxide and bacteriocins. In any case, despite some undeniable positive evidence, other intervention studies have at least partially failed to highlight a statistically significant alleviation of BV and VVC symptoms. This is most likely attributable to the lack of a specific inhibitory activity of the strains used towards the bacteria commonly causing BV such as *G. vaginalis* and *E. coli* and VVC such as *C. albicans*. Herein we present in vitro and clinical data to assess the effectiveness of specific probiotic strains in slow release vaginal tablet for the topical treatment of BV and VVC and the prevention of recurrences.

Biography

Franco Vicariotto, Medicine Doctor specialist in Obstetrics and Gynecology and is now senior consultant of San PIO X Hospital of Milan. He has been deputy head of division of Obstetrics and Gynecology of Niguarda Hospital of Milan for almost 20 years where he had conducted important researches in the field of Infectious Diseases in Obstetrics and Gynecology. He is one of the founders and Vice-president of the scientific society ESIDOG Italia (European Society for Infectious Diseases in Obstetrics and Gynaecology) and the member of the National board of S.I.C. (Italian society of Contraception). He is author of many publications and recognized moderator-spokesman in specialized conferences in Italy and abroad.

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