

# Xenophilia

True strange stuff.

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## Friendly yoghurt-based bacteria may help reduce tooth decay and body odour

Tooth decay affects about 5 billion people worldwide. ... A chewing gum containing good bacteria that can destroy the bad bacteria that cause tooth decay could be in the shops soon. The gum is one of several products being developed by German chemical company [BASF](#) using the bacteria *Lactobacillus*, which is normally found in live yoghurt.



BASF discovered a new strain of *Lactobacillus* called L anti-caries, which binds to *Streptococcus mutans* (S Mutans), the bacteria responsible for tooth decay.

S Mutans sticks to the surface of teeth, where it produces an aggressive acid that breaks down the enamel. The friendly bugs in the gum will make the S Mutans clump together, preventing them from becoming attached to the tooth surface. Tests reveal that the gum can reduce bacteria in the mouth fifty times.

The company is also going to release a new line of toothpastes and mouthwashes using L anti-caries.

Other potential uses of *Lactobacillus* include the prevention of body odour. BASF are looking into producing a deodorant based on *L. aladonis*, which can inhibit odour-producing bacteria in the armpit. Similarly, tests have shown another strain, *L. ala-odoris* can reduce odour formation in feet. - [mum](#)

It is neat that [Dr. Andreas Reindl](#) (pictured above) discovered this rather than genetically engineering it. Is this natural strain the mysterious reason some people don't get cavities? What about the [repopulation problem](#) with S. mutans? Does this gum work long term? I've always thought there is purposeful foot dragging. Years ago in 1981 one article said they had a [vaccine that worked in primates](#). In 1993, 12 years later, they still hadn't tested this on humans?!

“Vaccines have been prepared from purified antigens of mutans streptococci. These vaccines confer protection in non-human primates, but have yet to be tested in a human clinical trial.”  
-Caries Res. [1993](#);27 Suppl 1:72-6.

When I talked to a Dental School teacher at UCSF about this, he said the problem with humans is that the S. mutans bacteria just comes back from food, kissing, toothbrushes, and so on. So, a daily gum sounds like it might work.

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