

PRESS RELEASE

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Symposium: “Bacteria are important building blocks of human life”

Scientists confirm positive effect of healthy bacteria



Human skin is constantly exposed to a wide variety of potentially pathogenic microorganisms. Yet skin infections remain comparatively rare, “indicating the presence of a highly developed, innate defence system”, stated Prof. Dr. Jürgen Harder, head of the University of Kiel’s Department of Dermatology, at the symposium “Beneficial Microbes” in Berlin. A key role in this natural defence system was played by our bodies’ own antibiotics (antimicrobial peptides). New treatment options in dermatology could result from further research into and decoding of these peptides, Harder said.

The biennial symposium, which brings together medical, pharmacological, and microbiological experts, is held by Organobalance, a Berlin-based biotechnology company. In this year’s event, managing director Prof. Dr. Christine Lang emphasised the positive role played by bacteria. Too often, the media, advertising, and the general public focused only on harmful bacteria and the diseases they caused. The significance and impact of healthy bacteria as natural counterweights did not receive sufficient attention. Dr. Bernd Wegener, a member of the board of directors of Organobalance Medical AG, asserted that “bacteria are not our enemies, but important building blocks of human life.”

Prof. Dr. Ulrich Schlagenhauf, head of the Parodontology Department of Würzburg University, used the example of periodontitis to show how having a positive body microflora will have a beneficial impact on dental health. Serious periodontitis was demonstrably not simply a result of insufficient dental hygiene or plaque, but also of wrong or one-sided diets involving few natural or unprocessed products. “Periodontitis is a lifestyle disease.”

In this context, Prof. Dr. Detlev Ganten, Chairman of the Board of the Charité Foundation, presented the “health formula” he had unveiled a few weeks previously in his latest book. Treating or preventing the currently prevalent lifestyle diseases had to involve an understanding of relationships in the body. This included the balance of beneficial and harmful bacteria, which self-evidently were a natural part of the organism of men and animals.

On the eve of the symposium, Prof. Dr. Georg Peters of the Institute of Medical Microbiology at the University of Munster had already explained that even though a pathogen such as *Staphylococcus aureus* is the cause of pneumonia, endocarditis, or osteomyelitis, human skin and mucous membrane are its natural habitat. Between man and pathogen, a close and complex biological relationship existed, with other parameters – such as innate and adaptive immunity – also playing a role. Bacteria were not by necessity solely responsible for the outbreak of a disease.



About Organobalance:

ORGANOBALANCE GmbH was established in 2001 and, as a research and development company, is a technology leader in the area of what are referred to as probiotic bacteria. The company develops organisms for industrial biotechnology and its own bio-based products. Some 30 employees work at facilities in Berlin and Flensburg for businesses such as BASF and General Mills and other well-known customers from the food, cosmetics, feed, agriculture, and pharmaceuticals industries. Since 2010, the company has held regular international scientific symposiums on the issue of bacteria and health under the title "Microbiome and Health".

For further information:

ORGANOBALANCE GmbH

Dr. Klaus Pellengahr

Gustav-Meyer-Allee 25

13355 Berlin

Phone (030) 46307 200

Fax (030) 46307 210

www.organobalance.de

www.gesunde-bakterien.de