

Postbiotic Category Checklist

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Use this page when a label or article says postbiotic and you want to know whether the claim is category-clear or just category-noisy.

What a postbiotic must include

- A preparation containing inanimate microorganisms and/or their components
- A specific host-facing benefit, not just a mechanism story
- Enough detail to understand what preparation was actually studied

What does not automatically count

- Purified microbial metabolites by themselves
- Any fermented food just because it is fermented
- Any product with non-living microbes but no demonstrated benefit

Quick category filter

1. Is it a live microbe? If yes, you are in probiotic territory.
2. Is it a substrate that microbes use? If yes, you are in prebiotic territory.
3. Is it a purified metabolite such as butyrate? If yes, it is not a postbiotic on its own.
4. Is it a preparation with inanimate microbes or components plus evidence? If yes, it may fit the postbiotic category.

Bottom line

Postbiotic is a useful term only when it stays specific.

If the label keeps the preparation vague, the evidence question is still open.