

IBS-D Plant Product vs Probiotic Decision Card

This card helps you decide whether you are looking at a probiotic lane or a separate plant-derived product lane.

Probiotic lane

- intervention depends on a named strain or exact mixture
- evidence usually asks symptom and outcome questions at the strain level
- class-wide recommendations stay cautious because studies are heterogeneous
- product labels should identify the strain clearly

Plant-derived product lane

- intervention depends on the exact formulation, not on a probiotic strain
- examples may include mucosal barrier or antisecretory products
- evidence may be narrower, more formulation-specific, and less replicated
- "natural" does not mean it belongs in the probiotic category

Use the probiotic lane when

- you are comparing strains or mixtures for IBS-D support
- you want symptom-specific probiotic evidence

Use the plant-derived lane when

- the product is not built around live microbial strains
- the claim centers stool consistency, barrier support, or a plant-derived active formulation

Reassess the bigger problem when

- no product class is helping
- every trial worsens symptoms
- red-flag symptoms are showing up