Risk Assessment of *Lactococcus lactis* W58 Used as "Other Substances"

Siamak Yazdankhah1*, Danica Grahek-Ogden1, Karl Eckner2, Georg Kapperud3, Jørgen Lassen1, Judith Narvhus1, Truls Nesbakken4, Lucy Robertson4, Jan Thomas Rosnes5, Olaug Taran Skjerdal2, Eystein Skjerve4, Line Vold3 and Yngvild Wasteson4

1Norwegian Scientific Committee for Food Safety (VKM), Norway.  
2Norwegian Scientific Committee for Food Safety (VKM), Norwegian Veterinary Institute (VI), Norway.  
3Norwegian Scientific Committee for Food Safety (VKM), Norwegian Institute of Public Health (FHI), Norway.  
4Norwegian Scientific Committee for Food Safety (VKM), Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU), Norway.  
5Norwegian Scientific Committee for Food Safety (VKM), NOFIMA, Norway.

**Authors’ contributions**

This work was carried out in collaboration between all authors. The opinion has been assessed and approved by the Panel on Biological Hazards of the Norwegian Scientific Committee for Food Safety. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

**Article Information**

DOI: 10.9734/EJNFS/2018/44966

**Grey Literature**

Received 11th October 2018  
Accepted 15th October 2018  
Published 29th October 2018

**ABSTRACT**

The Norwegian Scientific Committee for Food Safety (Vitenskapskomiteen for mattrygghet, VKM) has, at the request of the Norwegian Food Safety Authority (Mattilsynet; NFSA), assessed the risk of "other substances" in food supplements sold in Norway. These risk assessments will provide NFSA with the scientific basis while regulating the addition of “other substances” to food supplements and other foods.

"Other substances" are described in the food supplement directive 2002/46/EC as substances other than vitamins or minerals that have a nutritional and/or physiological effect. It is added mainly to food supplements, but also to other foods. VKM has not in this series of risk assessments of "other substances" evaluated any claimed beneficial effects from these substances, only possible adverse effects.
The present report is a risk assessment of *Lactococcus lactis* W58, and it is based on previous risk assessments and articles retrieved from a literature search.

The risk of *L. lactis* W58 was assessed for the general population. However, in previous assessments of “probiotics” published by VKM, concerns have been identified for specific groups. Therefore, the risk was assessed for the age group with immature gastro-intestinal microbiota (age group 0-36 months), population with mature gastro-intestinal microbiota (>3 years) and vulnerable groups independent of age. VKM has also assessed the risk of *L. lactis* W58 in food supplements independent of the dose and have assessed exposure in general terms.

Other sources of *L. lactis* W58, such as foods, have not been included in the present risk assessment.

VKM concludes that it is unlikely that *L. lactis* W58 causes adverse health effects in the general healthy population with mature gastro-intestinal tract.

However, no data on long-term adverse effects on infants and young children were identified. As evidence is accruing that the early microbial composition of the neonatal gut is important for the development of the gut microbiota and the immune system of the growing child, it is not possible to exclude that a daily supply of a single particular bacterial strain over a prolonged period of time to an immature gastro-intestinal tract may have long-term, although still unknown, adverse effects on that development.

**Keywords:** Adverse health effect; negative health effect; Norwegian Food Safety Authority; Norwegian Scientific Committee for Food Safety; other substances; risk assessment; VKM; *Lactococcus lactis* W58; food supplement.

Available: [https://vkm.no/download/18.13735ab315cffeccbb513923b/1499440007990/b84cc1e199.pdf](https://vkm.no/download/18.13735ab315cffeccbb513923b/1499440007990/b84cc1e199.pdf)

**ISBN:** 978-82-8259-218-5

**NOTE:**

This work was carried out in collaboration between all authors. The opinion has been assessed and approved by the Panel on Biological Hazards of VKM. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

**Competence of VKM experts:** Persons working for VKM, either as appointed members of the Committee or as external experts, do this by virtue of their scientific expertise, not as representatives for their employers or third party interests. The Civil Services Act instructions on legal competence apply for all work prepared by VKM.


**COMPETING INTERESTS**

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

© 2018 Yazdankhah et al.; This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.