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**THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF FERMENTED FOOD: A NARRATIVE REVIEW**
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**Abstract**
Fermented foods form a significant proportion of human diets from across the world. Increasing evidence promotes the health benefits of fermented foods on human health. The microorganisms present in these foods improve many health conditions. They include various fungi and probiotic bacterial species that are intentionally added as starter cultures or are naturally present in certain foods. Through fermentation, microbes metabolise food components including carbohydrates and proteins, to produce molecules that benefit the human host within and beyond the intestines. Among these are molecules that suppress the overgrowth of commensal and pathogenic microbes. Chronic dysbiosis is linked to inflammatory bowel diseases and has been reported in subjects with major depression and metabolic risk factors. Regular intake of fermented foods can improve these conditions and alleviate various risk factors of certain chronic diseases. Incorporating fermented foods as part of a healthy diet for chronic disease prevention offers a promising prospect. This study reviews the different types of fermented foods and the underlying microbes in modifying disease and health conditions. An overview of the disease-modulating effects is also summarised, which covers health conditions related to intestinal health, metabolic syndrome (MetS), cardiovascular health and neurological health. 

**Author Keywords**
Fermented food; gastrointestinal; health; lactic acid bacteria (LAB); probiotics

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