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(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US):

PROTHERA, INC. [US/US]; 10439 Double R Boulevard, Reno, Nevada 89521 (US).

(72) Inventor; and

(75) Inventor/Applicant (for US only): **OLMSTEAD, Stephen F.** [US/US]; 6155 Plumas Street, Reno, Nevada 89519 (US).

(74) Agents: **GRAYBEAL JACKSON LLP** et al.; 400 -

108th Avenue NE, Suite 700, Bellevue, Washington 98004 (US).

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(54) Title: COMPOSITIONS AND METHODS COMPRISING PEDIOCOCCUS FOR REDUCING AT LEAST ONE SYMPTOM ASSOCIATED WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISEASE IN A PERSON DIAGNOSED WITH AN AUTISM SPECTRUM DISEASE

(57) Abstract: Compositions, methods, etc., comprising *Pediococcus* and at least one other probiotic microbial organism that reduce one or more symptoms of an autism spectrum disorder such as autism. The compositions can be used, for example, as dietary supplements, food additives, and pharmaceutical preparations.

**COMPOSITIONS AND METHODS COMPRISING *PEDIOCOCCUS* FOR
REDUCING AT LEAST ONE SYMPTOM ASSOCIATED WITH AUTISM
SPECTRUM DISEASE IN A PERSON DIAGNOSED WITH AN AUTISM
SPECTRUM DISEASE**

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] The present application claims the benefit of copending United States Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 61/250,220, filed October 9, 2009, which application is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

[0002] The present application incorporates by reference the following references, publications and patents in their entirety to the extent they assist in the general understanding of the novel subject matter discussed herein, but not for limitations within the claims:

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BACKGROUND

[0003] Autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) are generally regarded as diseases comprising abnormalities in brain structure and/or function. ASDs appear in early childhood and are characterized by core symptoms of impaired social relatedness, delayed language, and restricted patterns of behavior. In addition to core symptoms, children with autism frequently exhibit serious behavioral disturbances, such as self-injury, aggression, hyperactivity, and tantrums in response to routine environmental demands and stimuli. ASDs are also associated with an array of gastrointestinal, immune system, and metabolic abnormalities (Ashwood et al., 2006; D'Eufemia et al., 1996; Erickson et al., 2006; Horvath & Perman, 2002; Jyonouchi et al., 2005; Valicenti-McDermott, 2006; White, 2003).

[0004] ASDs affect as many as 1 child per 150, and estimates show that there could be up to 1.5 million autistic people in the United States today. Therefore, effective dietary and/or pharmaceutical interventions for ASD could have a major public health impact.

[0005] Thus, there has gone unmet a need for improved methods, compositions, etc., that reduce one or more symptoms associated with autism. The present systems and methods, etc., provide these and/or other advantages.

SUMMARY

[0006] In one aspect, the compositions, methods, systems, etc., herein are directed to providing probiotic compositions that are capable of reducing one or more, typically two or more, and more typically three or more symptoms of ASD in individuals having ASD. The compositions, formulations, methods, etc., can be used as dietary supplements or as food additives or as pharmaceutical agents or otherwise as desired to reduce symptoms of ASD. The methods, etc., herein include methods, kits, labels, systems, etc., directed to

labeling, marketing and otherwise providing the compositions to health care professionals and/or to consumers for use in reducing symptoms of Autism Spectrum Disorders.

[0007] The compositions may be used as dietary supplements, food and beverage additives, and as pharmaceutical agents for reducing the symptoms of autism in a human in need thereof.

[0008] It is not necessary that individuals with autism have an antecedent use of antibiotics, or that they have been diagnosed with a microbial infection or bacterial overgrowth, in order to benefit from the compositions, methods, systems, etc., herein.

[0009] The inclusion of at least one strain of *Pediococcus* in the composition is essential for this invention.

[00010] In one embodiment, the composition is comprised of a mixture of a first microbial organism comprising at least one strain of *Pediococcus* and at least one second microbial organism having a beneficial health effect in humans, wherein the second microbial organism is at least one of a bacterium or a fungus. Typically, at least one additional microbial organism is selected from the group comprising Lactobacillus, Bifidobacterium or Saccharomyces.

[00011] In a further embodiment, the compositions, etc., are provided in capsules or other suitable administration formats, and a single capsule provides a full serving or dose. Generally speaking, a serving is an individual, full quantity of food or drink. Nutritional supplements and the like are typically considered foods, and thus herein the term "serving" is the term used for a full portion of supplement, which can be, for example, 1 capsule, 1/4 teaspoon, or 6 tablets. Dose is a full quantity of medication to be taken at one time. As used herein, both indicate a full portion to be taken by or administered to a recipient at a single time.

[00012] In one example, each serving or dose comprises at least about 1 million and up to 150 billion Colony Forming Units (CFU) of the *Pediococcus* per 1 capsule serving and at least about 1 million CFU of the additional microorganism per 1 capsule serving. In another embodiment, the yield is about 150 billion CFU per gram of material. Other yields can also be used as desired.

[00013] In a further embodiment, the *Pediococcus* strain is one or more of *Pediococcus acidilactici*, *Pediococcus pentosaceus*, *Pediococcus damnosus*, *Pediococcus dextrinicus*, or *Pediococcus parvulus*.

[00014] In one preferred embodiment, *Pediococcus acidilactici* is used.

[00015] In one embodiment, the selected species of *Pediococcus* is combined with one or more further probiotics. The additional probiotic may be any microorganism that has a beneficial health effect in humans. Typically, the additional probiotic is one or more of: *Lactobacillus acidophilus*, *L. brevis*, *L. bulgaricus*, *L. casei*, *L. crispatus*, *L. curvatus*, *L. fermentum*, *L. gasseri*, *L. helveticus*, *L. johnsonii*, *L. paracasei*, *L. paraplantarum*, *L. pentosus*, *L. plantarum*, *L. reuteri*, *L. rhamnosus*, *L. salivarius*, *L. sakei*, *Lactococcus lactis*, *Leuconostoc lactis*, *Ln. pseudomesenteroides*, *Ln. mesenteroides*, *Bifidobacterium adolescentis*, *B. animalis*, *B. bifidum*, *B. breve*, *B. lactis*, *B. longum*, *B. infantis*, *Streptococcus thermophilus*, *Saccharomyces boulardii*, *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, *Bacillus subtilis*, *B. coagulans* (frequently mislabeled as *Lactobacillus sporogenes*), *B. licheniformis*, *B. cereus*, *Enterococcus faecium*, *Escherichia coli* Nessler 1917, *Propionibacterium acidipropionici*, *P. freudenreichii*, *P. jensenii*, and *P. thoenii*.

[00016] In one embodiment, none of the probiotic organisms in the composition have been or are propagated or grown in media containing casein or gluten.

[00017] In a further embodiment, the composition such as a dietary supplement is a dried powder, a tablet, a hydroxypropyl methylcellulose capsule, or a gelatin capsule. Exemplary methods for encapsulation of probiotics can be found, e.g., in US Patent Appl. 2007/0122397.

[00018] In a further embodiment, the composition such as a dietary supplement is administered subsequent to the administration of a digestive enzyme formulation, for example from immediately after administration of the digestive enzyme formulation to within the same day as administration of the digestive enzyme formulation or in parallel with the administration of a digestive enzyme formulation.

[00019] In one embodiment, the composition is supplied along with an ingestible support material for human consumption. Exemplary ingestible support materials include a cereal based product, rice cake, soy cake, food bar product, cold formed food bar

product, custard, pudding, gelatin, rice milk, soy milk, mashed fruit product, candy, candy bar, and applesauce. Exemplary methods for encapsulation of probiotics can be found, e.g., in US Patent Appl 2007/0160589.

[00020] In one embodiment the product can be a kit or system wherein the compositions, capsules, etc., herein are contained in a pharmaceutically acceptable container and a written description, brochure, information sheet, catalog, or label explaining the product can reduce one or more symptoms of ASD and/or the product is free of casein and gluten and/or hypoallergenic. Further, the product can be marketed together with the written description, brochure, information sheet, catalog, or label explaining the product can reduce one or more symptoms of ASD and/or the product is free of casein and gluten. In an additional embodiment the product is marketed together with a written description, brochure, information sheet, catalog, or label explaining that the product is hypoallergenic.

[00021] Thus, in one aspect the current application can be directed to methods of reducing at least one symptom of an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) can comprise selecting an agent for the purpose of reducing at least one symptom of autism selected from twelve diagnostic criteria for autism according to the DSM-IV, 4th edition (2000), and administering a pharmaceutically acceptable composition can comprise a pharmaceutically effective amount of the agent to a person suspected of having autism for the purpose of reducing the at least one symptom, wherein the agent can comprise at least one probiotic *Pediococcus* strain and at least one second probiotic microbial organism in an amount and for a time adequate for statistically significant reduction of the at least one symptom, and wherein the second probiotic microbial organism can be at least one of a bacterium or a fungus.

[00022] In some embodiments, the agent can be delivered orally in a single serving capsule, the second probiotic microbial organism can be at least one of *Lactobacillus*, *Bifidobacterium* or *Saccharomyces*, and a dose or serving of the agent can comprise from about 1 million to 15 billion Colony Forming Units (CFU) of the *Pediococcus* and at least about 1 million CFU of the second probiotic microbial organism.

[00023] The dose or serving can comprise about 15 billion CFU of the *Pediococcus* per gram of pharmaceutically acceptable composition, and the *Pediococcus* strain can comprise at least one of *Pediococcus acidilactici*, *Pediococcus pentosaceus*, *Pediococcus damnosus*, *Pediococcus dextrinicus*, or *Pediococcus parvulus*. The second probiotic microbial organism can comprise at least one of *Lactobacillus acidophilus*, *Lactobacillus brevis*, *Lactobacillus bulgaricus*, *Lactobacillus casei*, *Lactobacillus crispatus*, *Lactobacillus curvatus*, *Lactobacillus fermentum*, *Lactobacillus gasseri*, *Lactobacillus helveticus*, *Lactobacillus johnsonii*, *Lactobacillus paracasei*, *Lactobacillus paraplantarum*, *Lactobacillus pentosus*, *Lactobacillus plantarum*, *Lactobacillus reuteri*, *Lactobacillus rhamnosus*, *Lactobacillus salivarius*, *Lactobacillus sakei*, *Bifidobacterium adolescentis*, *Bifidobacterium animalis*, *Bifidobacterium bifidum*, *Bifidobacterium breve*, *Bifidobacterium lactis*, *Bifidobacterium longum*, *Bifidobacterium infantis*, *Saccharomyces boulardii*, and *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*. The second probiotic microbial organism can also comprise at least one of *Lactococcus lactis*, *Leuconostoc lactis*, *Leuconostoc pseudomesenteroides*, *Leuconostoc mesenteroides*, *Streptococcus thermophilus*, *Bacillus subtilis*, *Bacillus coagulans*, *Bacillus licheniformis*, *Bacillus cereus*, *Enterococcus faecium*, *Escherichia coli* Nessler 1917, *Propionibacterium acidipropionici*, *Propionibacterium freudenreichii*, *Propionibacterium jensenii*, and *Propionibacterium thoenii*.

[00024] In still other embodiments, none of the probiotic microorganisms in the pharmaceutically acceptable composition have been propagated or grown in media containing casein and/or casein. The pharmaceutically acceptable composition can be configured and labeled as a dietary supplement, and the pharmaceutically acceptable composition can be a dried powder, a tablet, or within a gelatin capsule, which can be administered subsequent to administration of a digestive enzyme formulation to the person. The pharmaceutically acceptable composition can be provided within an ingestible support material for human consumption such as a cereal based product, rice cake, soy cake, food bar product, cold formed food bar product, custard, pudding, gelatin, rice milk, soy milk, mashed fruit product, candy, candy bar, and applesauce. The methods further can comprise reducing at least 3 or more symptoms of the ASD;

reducing at least 6 or more symptoms of the ASD. The person receiving the administration can display at least six of the twelve symptoms in three categories of (1) impairments in social interaction, (2) impairments in communication, and (3) a restricted repertoire of activities and interests, and wherein the reducing of symptoms can comprise reducing at least one symptom in each of the three categories of symptoms. The method can also comprise reducing at least two symptoms from category (1), and at least one symptom from each of categories (2) and (3), or reducing at least two symptoms from each of categories (1), (2) and (3).

[00025] A digestive enzyme composition can be administered to the patient for a period of 1 day to 4 weeks prior to initiation of treatment with the pharmaceutically acceptable composition herein. The digestive enzyme composition can be administered to the patient for a period of 3 days to 1 week prior to initiation of treatment with the pharmaceutically acceptable composition herein. The pharmaceutically acceptable composition can be administered concomitantly with or subsequent to administration to the patient of an antibiotic agent or antifungal agent, which can be vancomycin. The pharmaceutically acceptable composition herein can be administered in conjunction with a gluten-free and/or casein-free diet, and can be administered in conjunction with administration to the patient of pharmaceutically effective amount of at least one of a casomorphin inhibitor, a gluteomorphin inhibitor, an enkephalin inhibitor, and/or an endorphin inhibitor, which inhibitor can be dipeptidylpeptidase IV or a dipeptidylpeptidase IV inducer.

[00026] The pharmaceutically acceptable composition can comprise about the following amounts of ingredients per serving or dose, where CFU means a Colony Forming Unit:

Pediococcus acidilactici 5 billion CFU
Bifidobacterium breve 5 billion CFU
Bifidobacterium infantis 5 billion CFU
Lactobacillus paracasei 5 billion CFU
Lactobacillus salivarius 5 billion CFU
Bifidobacterium lactis billion CFU
Bifidobacterium longum billion CFU
Streptococcus thermophilus billion CFU
Lactobacillus bulgaricus billion CFU
Lactobacillus casei 5 billion CFU
Lactobacillus plantarum 5 billion CFU
Lactobacillus acidophilus billion CFU

Bifidobacterium bifidum 5 billion CFU
Lactobacillus rhamnosus billion CFU

[00027] The pharmaceutically acceptable composition further can comprise at least one prebiotic agent that promotes the growth of probiotic microorganisms in the gastrointestinal tract. The prebiotic agent can comprise at least one of a fructooligosaccharide, galactooligosaccharide, lactulose, beta-glucan, inulin, pectin and resistant starch.

[00028] The autism spectrum disorder can be one or more of autism, childhood autism, Asperger's syndrome, Regressive autism, Rett syndrome, Childhood disintegrative disorder (CDD), Pathological demand avoidance syndrome (PDA).

[00029] In other aspects, the subject matter herein includes pharmaceutically acceptable compositions such as those described in the methods above as well as kits containing such compositions and for use in such methods. For example, such kits can comprise a vessel containing a composition as described herein and a label comprising instructions for pharmaceutical use of the composition to inhibit an autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The label can be an FDA approved label. In still other aspects, this application is directed to isolated and purified compositions as described herein for use in the manufacture of a medicament for inhibiting, preventing, or treating an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in a human patient, as well as methods of manufacturing such medicaments, which can comprise combining a pharmaceutically effective amount of the composition and a pharmaceutically acceptable adjuvant, excipient, buffer or diluent.

[00030] These and other aspects, features and embodiments are set forth within this application, including the following Detailed Description. Unless expressly stated otherwise, all embodiments, aspects, features, etc., can be mixed and matched, combined and permuted in any desired manner.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[00031] In one aspect, the compositions, capsules, methods, etc., herein comprise compositions for reducing the at least one and typically at least 3 or more symptoms of ASD, typically thereby effecting a statistically significant improvement in at least one of

the symptoms included in the twelve diagnostic criteria for ASD according to the DSM-IV or Diagnosis and Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders, 4th edition, published by the American Psychiatric Association (Michael B. First, M.D., Editor, "Section 299.00 Autistic Disorder," Diagnostic and Statistical Manual--Text Revision, American Psychiatric Association, DSM IV-TR.TM., 2000).

[00032] These diagnostic criteria fall into three categories--impairments in social interaction, impairments in communication, and a restricted repertoire of activities and interests. A diagnosis of autism requires that a child display at least six of these twelve symptoms, with a minimum number in each category, namely, a total of six (or more) items from (1), (2), and (3), with at least two from (1), and one each from (2) and (3):

1. Qualitative impairment in social interaction, as manifested by at least two of the following: a. marked impairment in the use of multiple nonverbal behaviors such as eye-to-eye gaze, facial expression, body postures, and gestures to regulate social interaction, b. failure to develop peer relationships appropriate to developmental level, c. lack of spontaneous seeking to share enjoyment, interests, or achievements with other people (e.g., by a lack of showing, bringing, or pointing out objects of interest). d. lack of social or emotional reciprocity
2. Qualitative impairments in communication as manifested by at least one of the following: a. delay in, or total lack of, the development of spoken language (not accompanied by an attempt to compensate through alternative modes of communication such as gesture or mime), b. in individuals with adequate speech, marked impairment in the ability to initiate or sustain a conversation with others, c. stereotyped and repetitive use of language or idiosyncratic language, d. lack of varied, spontaneous make-believe play or social imitative play appropriate to developmental level
3. Restricted repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behavior, interests and activities, as manifested by at least one of the following: a. encompassing preoccupation with one or more stereotyped and restricted patterns of interest that is abnormal either in intensity or focus, b. apparently inflexible adherence to specific, nonfunctional routines or rituals, c. stereotyped and repetitive motor

mannerisms (e.g., hand or finger flapping or twisting, or complex whole-body movements), d. persistent preoccupation with parts of objects.

Individuals presenting with these diagnostic criteria may benefit from the present invention.

[00033] The reducing of symptoms can comprise reducing at least one or two symptoms in all of the three categories, for example at least two from (1), and one each from (2) and (3).

Exemplary Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)

[00034] "Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified" (PDD-NOS) is a pervasive developmental disorder (PDD)/autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in which patients have some characteristics of disorders on the autistic spectrum, but do not fit the diagnostic criteria of any of the other autistic disorders thereon. While PDD-NOS shares similarities with classic autism, it tends to be milder. These patients have difficulties socializing, show repetitive behaviors, and are oversensitive to certain stimuli. In their interaction with others they might struggle to maintain eye contact, appear unemotional, or appear to be unable to speak. They may also have difficulty transitioning from one activity to another. PDD-NOS is referenced as the ICD-10 code F84.9. (International Classification of Diseases = ICD).

[00035] "Asperger's syndrome" is an autism spectrum disorder characterized by significant difficulties in social interaction, along with restricted and repetitive patterns of behavior and interests. It differs from other autism spectrum disorders by its relative preservation of linguistic and cognitive development.

[00036] "Regressive autism" is a form of autism in which the infant or child displays normal development up to a certain age (before age 3) at which s/he regresses or loses acquired abilities, e.g., speech, social interaction, etc. This is in contrast to infants who never hit their milestones and develop normally.

[00037] "Rett syndrome" is a genetic neurodevelopmental disorder of the grey matter of the brain that almost exclusively affects girls. It shares many features of autism. The clinical features include small hands and feet and a deceleration of the rate of head

growth (including microcephaly in some). Repetitive hand movements, such as wringing and/or repeatedly putting hands into the mouth, are also noted. Gastrointestinal disorders are highly prevalent and up to 80% of patients have seizures.

[00038] "Childhood disintegrative disorder" (CDD), also called Heller's syndrome or disintegrative psychosis, is a rare condition characterized by late onset (>3 years of age) of developmental delays in language, social function, and motor skills. CDD has some similarity to autism, and is sometimes considered a low-functioning form of it, but an apparent period of fairly normal development is often noted before a regression in skills or a series of regressions in skills.

[00039] "Pathological demand avoidance syndrome" (PDA) is a diagnostic term more prevalent in the UK. In contrast to most individuals with autism spectrum disorders, individuals with PDA possess superficial social skills and seem to have a theory of mind. They often engage in manipulative, domineering behavior. The defining criteria are:

- Passive early history in the first year, resisting ordinary demands and missing milestones
- Continuing to resist demands, resorting to tantrums, distraction techniques
- Surface sociability, but apparent lack of sense of social identity, pride or shame
- Lability of mood and impulsivity
- Comfortable in role play and pretending
- Language delay, seemingly the result of passivity
- Obsessive behavior
- Neurological signs (awkwardness, similar to autism spectrum disorders).

[00040] Although not considered an ASD for all purposes, PDA is considered an ASD for purposes of this application.

Probiotic Compositions

[00041] Probiotics include microorganisms that produce lactic acid as a major metabolic fermentation product. "Probiotics" is used in accord with its usual meaning, for example as selected, viable microbial dietary supplements that, when introduced in sufficient quantities, beneficially affect the human organism through their effects in the intestinal tract (Dimer C, Gibson GR (1998) An overview of probiotics, prebiotics and synbiotics in the functional food concept: perspectives and future strategies. *Int Dairy J* 8: 473–479;

Zimmer CJ, Gibson GR (1998) An overview of probiotics, prebiotics and synbiotics in the functional food concept: perspectives and future strategies. *Int Dairy J* **8**:473–479; Sanders ME (1998) Overview of functional foods: emphasis on probiotic bacteria. *Int Dairy J* **8**: 341–347; Vaughan EE, Mollet B, de Vos WM (1999) Functionality of probiotics and intestinal lactobacilli: light in the intestinal tract tunnel. *Curr Opin Biotechnol* **10**: 505–510; Zubillaga M, Weil R, Postaire E, Goldman C, Caro R, Boccio J (2001) Effect of probiotics and functional foods and their use in different diseases. *Nutr Res* **21**: 569–579; Holzapfel WH, Schillinger U (2002) Introduction to preand probiotics. *Food Res Int* **35**: 109–116. Also FAO/WHO has adopted the definition of probiotics as “Live microorganisms which when administered in adequate amounts confer a health benefit on the host”. FAO/WHO (2002) *Guidelines for the evaluation of probiotics in food*. London, Ontario, Canada, April 30 and May 1, 2002. See: <ftp://ftp.fao.org/es/esn/food/wgreport2.pdf>.

[00042] These beneficial bacteria may be found for example in milk or in milk processing factories, living or decaying plants, and also in the intestines of man and animals (Holzapfel et al., 2001; Barros et al., 2001; O’Sullivan, 2001). Currently, possibly the best-studied probiotics are the lactic acid bacteria, particularly *Lactobacillus* spp. and *Bifidobacterium* spp. However, other organisms used as probiotics in humans include *Escherichia coli*, *Streptococcus* spp., *Enterococcus* spp., *Bacteroides* spp., *Bacillus* spp., *Propionibacterium* spp. and various fungi.

[00043] Probiotics have been examined for their effectiveness in the prevention and treatment of a diverse spectrum of gastrointestinal disorders such as antibiotic-associated diarrhea (including *Clostridium difficile*–associated intestinal disease), infectious bacterial and viral diarrhea (including diarrhea caused by rotavirus, *Shigella*, *Salmonella*, enterotoxigenic *E. coli*, *Vibrio cholerae* and human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency disorder, enteral feeding diarrhea, *Helicobacter pylori* gastroenteritis, sucrase maltase deficiency, inflammatory bowel disease, irritable bowel syndrome, small bowel bacterial overgrowth and lactose intolerance. Probiotics have been found to inhibit intestinal bacterial enzymes involved in the synthesis of colonic carcinogens. There are many mechanisms by which probiotics enhance intestinal health, including stimulation of

immunity, competition for limited nutrients, inhibition of epithelial and mucosal adherence, inhibition of epithelial invasion and production of antimicrobial substances. Among other benefits, probiotic organisms are thought to restore and maintain immune system function and gastrointestinal barrier function (Salminen, 2001; Dunne et al., 2001; Parvez et al., 2006; Rolfe, 2000; Zareie, 2006).

[00044] *Lactobacillus* is a genus of Gram-positive facultative anaerobic bacteria. The genus *Lactobacillus* currently comprises over 100 species and encompasses a wide variety of organisms. They are common and usually benign. In humans they are present in the vagina and the gastrointestinal tract, where they are symbiotic and make up a small portion of the gut flora.

[00045] *Bifidobacterium* is a genus of Gram-positive anaerobic bacteria, currently comprised of 31 characterized species, 11 of which have been detected in human feces (Tannock, 1999). Bifidobacteria are irregular or branched rod-shaped bacteria that are commonly found in the intestines of humans and most animals and insects. They were first isolated and described over one hundred years ago and were quickly associated with a healthy gastrointestinal tract due to their prevalence in breast fed infants as compared with bottle fed infants (Tissier, 1906). While *B. infantis*, *B. brevis*, and *B. longum* are the largest group of bacteria in the intestine of infants, Bifidobacteria are said to be only the 3rd or 4th largest group in adults (and comprise only 3-6% of adult fecal flora). Bifidobacteria inhibit the growth of *Candida albicans*, *E. coli*, and other pathogenic bacteria. *B. infantis* has been shown to dramatically reduce the symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) (Whorwell et al., 2006). *B. longum* is often the dominant species detected in humans and is a leading member of the probiotic bacteria, due to numerous studies that have provided a growing body of evidence for its potential health benefits. These include prevention of antibiotic-associated diarrhea (Black et al., 1991); cholesterol reduction (Dambekodi & Gilliland, 1998); alleviation of lactose intolerance symptoms (Jiang et al., 1996); immune stimulation (Takahashi et al., 1998); and cancer prevention (Reddy & Rivenson, 1993).

[00046] *Saccharomyces boulardii* is a transient yeast probiotic long used for various types of diarrhea. It is a hardy, acid-resistant, temperature tolerant microorganism that is

not affected by antibiotics. *Saccharomyces boulardii* has been shown to suppress toxigenic *Clostridium difficile* overgrowth after vancomycin treatment in hamsters (Elmer & McFarland, 1987) and to prevent recurrences of *C. difficile*-associated colitis in humans (Surawicz et al., 1989). Recently, *S. boulardii* was shown to prevent the recurrence of Crohn's disease (Guslandi et al., 2000).

[00047] *Pediococcus* is a genus of lactic acid bacterium that is widely used in the food industry. *Pediococcus* can be described as “the only acidophilic, homofermentative, lactic acid bacteria that divide alternatively in two perpendicular directions to form tetrads” (Simpson and Taguchi, 1995). Phylogenetically, *Pediococcus* and *Lactobacillus* form a super-cluster that can be divided into two sub-clusters. All species of *Pediococcus* fall within the *Lactobacillus casei* – *Pediococcus* sub-cluster. Morphologically, *Pediococci* (cocci; 0.6-1.0 mm in diameter) and lactobacilli (rods) are distinct. Although eight species of *Pediococcus* were listed in the 1986 edition of the Bergey's manual, more recent information indicates that only five species currently belong to the genus: *Pediococcus acidilactici*, *Pediococcus damnosus*, *Pediococcus dextrinicus*, *Pediococcus parvulus*, and *Pediococcus pentosaceus*.

[00048] *P. pentosaceus* are acid tolerant and possess a fermentative metabolism with lactic acid as the major metabolic end product (Axelsson, 1998; Garvie, 1986). This organism is used as an acid producing starter culture in sausage fermentations, cucumber and green bean fermentations, soya milk fermentations, and silage (Simpson and Taguchi, 1995), and is a typical component of the adventitious or non-starter microflora of most cheese varieties during ripening (Beresford et al., 2001). Strains of *P. pentosaceus* have been reported to contain between three and five resident plasmids (Graham and McKay, 1985). Plasmid-linked traits include the ability to ferment raffinose, melibiose, and sucrose, as well as the production of antimicrobial peptides, which are also referred to as peptide bacteriocins (Daeschel and Klaenhammer, 1985; Gonzalez and Kunka, 1986).

[00049] Based on their primary structure, molecular mass, heat stability and molecular organization, bacteriocins produced by lactic acid bacteria can be subdivided into four classes (Klaenhammer 1993): class I, the lantibiotics (Jack et al. 1995, 1998; Sahl et al.

1995; Konings and Hilbers 1996); class II, the non-lantibiotic peptides (Nes *et al.* 1996), which are divided into the subgroups IIa or pediocin-like bacteriocins with strong antilisterial activity, IIb bacteriocins whose activity depends on the complementary action of two peptides, and IIc *sec*-dependent secreted bacteriocins; class III, large, heatlabile protein bacteriocins; and class IV, bacteriocins claimed to consist of an undefined mixture of protein(s), lipid(s) and carbohydrate(s).

[00050] The class IIa bacteriocins, often designated pediocin-like bacteriocins, are among the most important group of antimicrobial peptides produced by lactic acid bacteria (Drider *et al.*, 2006). The peptide bacteriocins have properties that are of particular interest from a probiotic perspective. The bacteriocin PA-1/AcH, produced in high levels by some *P. acidilactici* strains (Marugg *et al.*, 1992; Mora *et al.*, 2000; Millette *et al.*, 2007; Rodriguez *et al.*, 2002) is active against a broad spectrum of Gram positive bacteria, including *Listeria monocytogenes*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Clostridium perfringens* and *Clostridium botulinum* (Bhunja *et al.*, 1988, 1991; Motlagh *et al.*, 1994; Okereke & Montville, 1991; Pucci *et al.*, 1988). A strain of *Pediococcus acidilactici* denoted UVA1 was co-isolated from infant feces together with a *Bifidobacterium thermophilum* strain, and has strong antilisterial activity (Mathys *et al.*, 2007).

[00051] *Pediococcus* has been used as a probiotic in the livestock and pet industries (US Patent Appl. 20060008511 and 20070020328). A mixture of *P. acidilactici* and *Saccharomyces boulardii* known as MitoMax[®] (Imagilin Technology, Frederick, MD, USA) was shown to enhance the resistance of chickens against coccidiosis (Lee *et al.*, 2007).

[00052] *P. pentosaceus* and *P. acidilactici* are generally recognized as safe for human consumption (GRAS) (Ishibashi & Yamazaki, 2001). Speelmans *et al.* (US Patent Appl. 2006/0165661; WO 2004/110466) described the use of pediocin-producing *Pediococci* for use against infections by multi-resistant pathogens in humans (US Patent application 20060165661). One commercially available probiotic mixture, known as Synbiotic 2000 MediFarm, Sweden, consists of a mixture of four probiotics from the *Lactobacillus* genera: *Pediococcus pentosaceus* 5-33:3, *Leuconostoc mesenteroides* 32-77:1, *Lactobacillus paracasei* subsp *paracasei* 19 and *Lactobacillus plantarum* 2362, along

with four prebiotic substances: beta-glucan, inulin, pectin and digestion-resistant starch. This composition was reported to confer health benefits in individuals with arteriosclerosis, Crohn's disease and chronic liver disease (Kruszewska et al., 2002; Ljungh et al., 2002). However, this composition has not been described for reduction of symptoms of ASD.

[00053] Although not necessary to an understanding of the compositions, methods, etc., herein the beneficial effects of *Pediococcus* in reducing symptoms of autism may result not only from the production of bacteriocins, but also from the production of co-expressed cognate immunity proteins, which protect the producing organism from its own bacteriocin (Fimland et al., 2005). Without being bound by theory, these properties may allow these the *Pediococcus* compositions herein to confer a more normal neuro-gastrointestinal physiology in individuals with ASD compared to healthy persons.

[00054] The compositions described herein are useful in improving one or more of these 12 symptoms of ASD. Individuals that have been diagnosed with ASD according to the above criteria may benefit from the compositions included herein. It is not necessary that such individuals be diagnosed with a microbial or fungal infection, or an abnormal gastrointestinal flora, in order to benefit from this invention.

[00055] The compositions discussed herein may be administered, for example, as dietary supplements, food and beverage additives, food and beverage ingredients, and pharmaceutical agents. Any suitable administration route can be used, typically alimentary/orally.

[00056] The compositions discussed herein can include or be used in combination with compositions comprising digestive enzymes. For example, the compositions can be used in combination with a formulated combination of digestive enzymes known as EnzymAid™ (Kirkman Labs, Oregon) and a wide variety of other formulations. Typically, the digestive enzymes will be administered as a separate tablet or capsule or powder. A digestive enzyme formulation may if desired be given to a patient for a proscribed period of time prior to the initiation of treatment, for example for a period of 1-3 days to 1-4 weeks prior to initiation of treatment with the compositions described herein. Examples of digestive enzyme formulations that are suitable for use in the

present invention include, but are not limited to, the products from ProThera Inc. and Klair Labs, Inc., known as VitalZymes™ Complete; VitalZymes™ Forte; VitalZymes™ Chewables; and SerenAid®, and any of the ingredients therein (see: www.protherainc.com).

[00057] The compositions described herein may be used subsequent to treatment with antibiotic or antifungal agents, or concomitantly with such treatments. Since *Pediococcus* are intrinsically resistant to vancomycin (Riebel & Washington, 1990), the compositions, etc., herein can be used in autistic patients that are undergoing treatment with antibiotics such as vancomycin. However, the precedent, concomitant or subsequent use of vancomycin or any other antibiotic agent, or of any antifungal agent, is not a prerequisite.

[00058] The compositions discussed herein may be used in conjunction with a gluten-free and casein-free diet. In addition, the compositions, etc., herein may be used in conjunction with a casomorphin inhibitor, a gluteomorphin inhibitor, an enkephalin inhibitor, and/or an endorphin inhibitor. Thus, the methods and compositions of the present invention can be used in conjunction with any of the methods and compositions in Houston (US 6,447,772) and/or Wilkinson (US 6,251,391) including the SerenAid® brand enzyme product from ProThera, Inc., www.protherainc.com. The pharmaceutically acceptable composition comprising the pharmaceutically effective amount of the agent can also administered in conjunction with administration to the patient of a pharmaceutically effective amount of dipeptidylpeptidase IV or a dipeptidylpeptidase IV inducer, which dipeptidylpeptidase IV can be the casomorphin inhibitor, a gluteomorphin inhibitor, an enkephalin inhibitor, and/or an endorphin inhibitor.

[00059] The compositions herein are preferably comprised of the following ingredients (% by relative CFU content).

<i>Pediococcus acidilactici</i>	1% to 99%
<i>Pediococcus pentosaceus</i>	1% to 99%
<i>Pediococcus damnosus</i>	1% to 99%
<i>Pediococcus dextrinicus</i>	1% to 99%
<i>Pediococcus parvulus</i>	1% to 99%

<i>Bifidobacterium lactis</i>	1% to 99%
<i>Bifidobacterium animalis</i>	0% to 99%
<i>Bifidobacterium adolescentis</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Bifidobacterium bifidum</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Bifidobacterium breve</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Bifidobacterium infantis</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Bifidobacterium longum</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Lactobacillus acidophilus</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Lactobacillus brevis</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Lactobacillus bulgaricus</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Lactobacillus casei</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Lactobacillus crispatus</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Lactobacillus curvatus</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Lactobacillus fermentum</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Lactobacillus gasseri</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Lactobacillus helveticus</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Lactobacillus johnsonii</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Lactobacillus paracasei</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Lactobacillus paraplantarum</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Lactobacillus pentosus</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Lactobacillus plantarum</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Lactobacillus reuteri</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Lactobacillus rhamnosus</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Lactobacillus sakei</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Lactobacillus salivarius</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Lactococcus lactis</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Leuconostoc lactis</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Leuconostoc pseudomesenteroides</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Leuconostoc mesenteroides</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Saccharomyces boulardii</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Saccharomyces cerevisiae</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Streptococcus thermophilus</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Bacillus subtilis</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Bacillus coagulans</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Bacillus licheniformis</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Bacillus cereus</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Enterococcus faecium</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Escherichia coli</i> Nessle 1917	0% to 98%
<i>Propionibacterium acidipropionic</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Propionibacterium freudenreichii</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Propionibacterium jensenii</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Propionibacterium thoenii</i>	0% to 98%
<i>Enterococcus faecium</i>	0% to 98%

[00060] The above ingredients can also be present, for example, at ranges of more than 10%, 20%, 30%, 40%, 50%, 60%, 70%, 80%, 90%, or less than 90%, 80%, 70%, 60%, 50%, 40%, 30%, 20%, 10%.

[00061] In one embodiment, the compositions comprise about the following amounts of ingredients per 1 capsule serving size, where CFU means a Colony Forming Unit:

<i>Pediococcus acidilactici</i>	1.5 billion CFU (6.0%)
<i>Bifidobacterium breve</i>	0.5 billion CFU (2.0%)
<i>Bifidobacterium infantis</i>	0.5 billion CFU (2.0%)
<i>Lactobacillus paracasei</i>	0.5 billion CFU (2.0%)
<i>Lactobacillus salivarius</i>	0.5 billion CFU (2.0%)
<i>Bifidobacterium lactis</i>	1.0 billion CFU (4.0%)
<i>Bifidobacterium longum</i>	1.0 billion CFU (4.0%)
<i>Streptococcus thermophilus</i>	1.0 billion CFU (4.0%)
<i>Lactobacillus bulgaricus</i>	1.0 billion CFU (4.0%)
<i>Lactobacillus casei</i>	2.5 billion CFU (10.0%)
<i>Lactobacillus plantarum</i>	2.5 billion CFU (10.0%)
<i>Lactobacillus acidophilus</i>	3.0 billion CFU (12.0%)
<i>Bifidobacterium bifidum</i>	3.5 billion CFU (14.0%)
<i>Lactobacillus rhamnosus</i>	6.0 billion CFU (24.0%)

[00062] It will be understood that a variety of different mixtures of *Lactobacillus*, *Bifidobacterium*, *Streptococcus*, *Lactococcus*, and other probiotic organisms can be combined with *Pediococcus* in various % compositions and doses that produce efficacious results; the invention is not limited to the exact formulation described above.

[00063] In addition, the compositions, methods, etc., herein can be formulated, made or used to include prebiotic agents that promote the growth of probiotic organisms in the gastrointestinal tract. Suitable prebiotic agents include, but are not limited to, fructooligosaccharides, galactooligosaccharides, lactulose, beta-glucan, inulin, pectin and resistant starch (see, e.g., MacFarlane et al., 2006; Paul et al., US 6,241,983).

[00064] All terms used herein are used in accordance with their ordinary meanings unless the context or definition clearly indicates otherwise. Also unless expressly indicated otherwise, in the specification the use of "or" includes "and" and vice-versa. Non-limiting terms are not to be construed as limiting unless expressly stated, or the context clearly indicates, otherwise (for example, "including," "having," and

"comprising" typically indicate "including without limitation"). Singular forms, including in the claims, such as "a," "an," and "the" include the plural reference unless expressly stated, or the context clearly indicates, otherwise.

[00065] The scope of the present devices, systems and methods, etc., includes both means plus function and step plus function concepts. However, the claims are not to be interpreted as indicating a "means plus function" relationship unless the word "means" is specifically recited in a claim, and are to be interpreted as indicating a "means plus function" relationship where the word "means" is specifically recited in a claim. Similarly, the claims are not to be interpreted as indicating a "step plus function" relationship unless the word "step" is specifically recited in a claim, and are to be interpreted as indicating a "step plus function" relationship where the word "step" is specifically recited in a claim.

[00066] From the foregoing, it will be appreciated that, although specific embodiments have been discussed herein for purposes of illustration, various modifications may be made without deviating from the spirit and scope of the discussion herein. Accordingly, the systems and methods, etc., include such modifications as well as all permutations and combinations of the subject matter set forth herein and are not limited except as by the appended claims or other claim having adequate support in the discussion and figures herein.

What is claimed is:

1. A method of reducing at least one symptom of an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) comprising selecting an agent for the purpose of reducing at least one symptom of autism selected from twelve diagnostic criteria for autism according to the DSM-IV, 4th edition (2000), and administering a pharmaceutically acceptable composition comprising a pharmaceutically effective amount of the agent to a person suspected of having autism for the purpose of reducing the at least one symptom, wherein the agent comprises at least one probiotic *Pediococcus* strain and at least one second probiotic microbial organism in an amount and for a time adequate for statistically significant reduction of the at least one symptom, and wherein the second probiotic microbial organism is at least one of a bacterium or a fungus.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein the second probiotic microbial organism is at least one of *Lactobacillus*, *Bifidobacterium* or *Saccharomyces*.
3. The method of claim 1 or 2 wherein the agent is delivered orally in a single serving capsule.
4. The method of any one of claims 1 to 3 wherein a dose or serving of the agent comprises from about 1 million to 150 billion Colony Forming Units (CFU) of the *Pediococcus* and at least about 1 million CFU of the second probiotic microbial organism.
5. The method of claim 4 wherein the dose or serving comprises about 150 billion CFU of the *Pediococcus* per gram of pharmaceutically acceptable composition.
6. The method of any one of claims 1 to 5 wherein the *Pediococcus* strain comprises at least one of *Pediococcus acidilactici*, *Pediococcus pentosaceus*, *Pediococcus damnosus*, *Pediococcus dextrinicus*, or *Pediococcus parvulus*.

7. The method of any one of claims 1 to 6 wherein the *Pediococcus* strain comprises *Pediococcus acidilactici*.

8. The method of any one of claims 1 to 7 wherein the second probiotic microbial organism comprises at least one of *Lactobacillus acidophilus*, *Lactobacillus brevis*, *Lactobacillus bulgaricus*, *Lactobacillus casei*, *Lactobacillus crispatus*, *Lactobacillus curvatus*, *Lactobacillus fermentum*, *Lactobacillus gasseri*, *Lactobacillus helveticus*, *Lactobacillus johnsonii*, *Lactobacillus paracasei*, *Lactobacillus paraplantarum*, *Lactobacillus pentosus*, *Lactobacillus plantarum*, *Lactobacillus reuteri*, *Lactobacillus rhamnosus*, *Lactobacillus salivarius*, *Lactobacillus sakei*, *Bifidobacterium adolescentis*, *Bifidobacterium animalis*, *Bifidobacterium bifidum*, *Bifidobacterium breve*, *Bifidobacterium lactis*, *Bifidobacterium longum*, *Bifidobacterium infantis*, *Saccharomyces boulardii*, and *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*.

9. The method of claim 1 or 3 to 7 wherein the second probiotic microbial organism comprises at least one of *Lactococcus lactis*, *Leuconostoc lactis*, *Leuconostoc pseudomesenteroides*, *Leuconostoc mesenteroides*, *Streptococcus thermophilus*, *Bacillus subtilis*, *Bacillus coagulans*, *Bacillus licheniformis*, *Bacillus cereus*, *Enterococcus faecium*, *Escherichia coli* Nessel 1917, *Propionibacterium acidipropionici*, *Propionibacterium freudenreichii*, *Propionibacterium jensenii*, and *Propionibacterium thoenii*.

10. The method of any one of claims 1 to 9 wherein none of the probiotic microorganisms in the pharmaceutically acceptable composition have been propagated or grown in media containing casein.

11. The method of any one of claims 1 to 9 wherein none of the probiotic microorganisms in the pharmaceutically acceptable composition have been propagated or grown in media containing gluten.

12. The method of any one of claims 1 to 9 wherein none of the probiotic microorganisms in the pharmaceutically acceptable composition have been propagated or grown in media containing casein or gluten.

13. The method of any one of claims 1 to 12 wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable composition is configured and labeled as a dietary supplement.

14. The method of any one of claims 1 to 13 wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable composition is a dried powder, a tablet, or within a gelatin capsule.

15. The method of any one of claims 1 to 14 wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable composition is administered subsequent to administration of a digestive enzyme formulation to the person.

16. The method of any one of claims 1 to 15 wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable composition is provided within an ingestible support material for human consumption.

17. The method of claim 14 wherein the ingestible support material is one of a cereal based product, rice cake, soy cake, food bar product, cold formed food bar product, custard, pudding, gelatin, rice milk, soy milk, mashed fruit product, candy, candy bar, and applesauce.

18. The method of any one of claims 1 to 17 wherein the method further comprises reducing at least 3 or more symptoms of the ASD.

19. The method of any one of claims 1 to 18 wherein the method further comprises reducing at least 6 or more symptoms of the ASD.

20. The method of any one of claims 1 to 19 wherein the person receiving the administration displays at least six of the twelve symptoms in three categories of (1) impairments in social interaction, (2) impairments in communication, and (3) a restricted repertoire of activities and interests, and wherein the reducing of symptoms comprises reducing at least one symptom in each of the three categories of symptoms.

21. The method of claim 20 wherein the method further comprises reducing at least two symptoms from category (1), and at least one symptom from each of categories (2) and (3).

22. The method of claim 20 wherein the method further comprises reducing at least two symptoms from each of categories (1), (2) and (3).

23. The method of any one of claims 1 to 22 wherein a digestive enzyme composition is administered to the patient for a period of 1 day to 4 weeks prior to initiation of treatment with the pharmaceutically acceptable composition comprising the pharmaceutically effective amount of the agent.

24. The method of claim 23 wherein the digestive enzyme composition is administered to the patient for a period of 3 days to 1 week prior to initiation of treatment with the pharmaceutically acceptable composition comprising the pharmaceutically effective amount of the agent.

25. The method of any one of claims 1 to 24 wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable composition comprising the pharmaceutically effective amount of the agent is administered subsequent to administration to the patient of an antibiotic agent or antifungal agent.

26. The method of claim 25 wherein the antibiotic agent or antifungal agent is vancomycin.

27. The method of any one of claims 1 to 24 wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable composition comprising the pharmaceutically effective amount of the agent is administered concomitantly with administration to the patient of an antibiotic agent or antifungal agent.

28. The method of claim 27 wherein the antibiotic agent or antifungal agent is vancomycin.

29. The method of any one of claims 1 to 28 wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable composition comprising the pharmaceutically effective amount of the agent is administered in conjunction with a gluten-free and casein-free diet.

30. The method of any one of claims 1 to 29 wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable composition comprising the pharmaceutically effective amount of the agent is administered in conjunction with administration to the patient of pharmaceutically effective amount of at least one of a casomorphin inhibitor, a gluteomorphin inhibitor, an enkephalin inhibitor, and/or an endorphin inhibitor.

31. The method of claim 30 wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable composition comprising the pharmaceutically effective amount of the agent is administered in conjunction with administration to the patient of a pharmaceutically effective amount of dipeptidylpeptidase IV or a dipeptidylpeptidase IV inducer.

32. The method of any one of claims 1 to 31 wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable composition comprises about the following amounts of ingredients per serving or dose, where CFU means a Colony Forming Unit:

<i>Pediococcus acidilactici</i>	1.5 billion CFU
<i>Bifidobacterium breve</i>	0.5 billion CFU
<i>Bifidobacterium infantis</i>	0.5 billion CFU

<i>Lactobacillus paracasei</i>	0.5 billion CFU
<i>Lactobacillus salivarius</i>	0.5 billion CFU
<i>Bifidobacterium lactis</i>	1.0 billion CFU
<i>Bifidobacterium longum</i>	1.0 billion CFU
<i>Streptococcus thermophilus</i>	1.0 billion CFU
<i>Lactobacillus bulgaricus</i>	1.0 billion CFU
<i>Lactobacillus casei</i>	2.5 billion CFU
<i>Lactobacillus plantarum</i>	2.5 billion CFU
<i>Lactobacillus acidophilus</i>	3.0 billion CFU
<i>Bifidobacterium bifidum</i>	3.5 billion CFU
<i>Lactobacillus rhamnosus</i>	6.0 billion CFU

33. The method of any one of claims 1 to 32 wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable composition further comprises at least one prebiotic agent that promotes the growth of probiotic microorganisms in the gastrointestinal tract.

34. The method of claim 33 wherein the prebiotic agent comprises at least one of a fructooligosaccharide, galactooligosaccharide, lactulose, beta-glucan, inulin, pectin and resistant starch.

35. The method of any one of claims 1 to 34 wherein the autism spectrum disorder is autism.

36. The method of any one of claims 1 to 34 wherein the autism spectrum disorder is Asperger's syndrome.

37. The method of any one of claims 1 to 34 wherein the autism spectrum disorder is Regressive autism.

38. The method of any one of claims 1 to 34 wherein the autism spectrum disorder is Rett syndrome.

39. The method of any one of claims 1 to 34 wherein the autism spectrum disorder is Childhood disintegrative disorder (CDD).

40. The method of any one of claims 1 to 34 wherein the autism spectrum disorder is Pathological demand avoidance syndrome (PDA).

41. A pharmaceutically acceptable composition configured to at least one symptom of autism selected from twelve diagnostic criteria for autism according to the DSM-IV, 4th edition (2000), the composition comprising at least one probiotic *Pediococcus* strain and at least one second probiotic microbial organism in an amount adequate to cause statistically significant reduction of at least one symptom of autism selected from twelve diagnostic criteria for autism according to the DSM-IV, 4th edition (2000), and wherein the second probiotic microbial organism is at least one of a bacterium or a fungus.

42. The composition of claim 41 wherein the second probiotic microbial organism is at least one of *Lactobacillus*, *Bifidobacterium* or *Saccharomyces*.

43. The composition of any one of claims 41 to 42 wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable composition is located in a pharmaceutically acceptable container and is labeled as a dietary supplement.

44. The composition of any one of claims 41 to 43 wherein a dose or serving of the agent comprises from about 1 million to 150 billion Colony Forming Units (CFU) of the *Pediococcus* and at least about 1 million CFU of the second probiotic microbial organism.

45. The composition of any one of claims 41 to 44 wherein a dose or serving comprises about 150 billion CFU of the *Pediococcus* per gram of pharmaceutically acceptable composition.

46. The composition of any one of claims 41 to 45 wherein the *Pediococcus* strain comprises at least one of *Pediococcus acidilactici*, *Pediococcus pentosaceus*, *Pediococcus damnosus*, *Pediococcus dextrinicus*, or *Pediococcus parvulus*.

47. The composition of any one of claims 41 to 46 wherein the *Pediococcus* strain comprises *Pediococcus acidilactici*.

48. The composition of any one of claims 41 to 47 wherein the second probiotic microbial organism comprises at least one of *Lactobacillus acidophilus*, *Lactobacillus brevis*, *Lactobacillus bulgaricus*, *Lactobacillus casei*, *Lactobacillus crispatus*, *Lactobacillus curvatus*, *Lactobacillus fermentum*, *Lactobacillus gasseri*, *Lactobacillus helveticus*, *Lactobacillus johnsonii*, *Lactobacillus paracasei*, *Lactobacillus paraplantarum*, *Lactobacillus pentosus*, *Lactobacillus plantarum*, *Lactobacillus reuteri*, *Lactobacillus rhamnosus*, *Lactobacillus salivarius*, *Lactobacillus sakei*, *Bifidobacterium adolescentis*, *Bifidobacterium animalis*, *Bifidobacterium bifidum*, *Bifidobacterium breve*, *Bifidobacterium lactis*, *Bifidobacterium longum*, *Bifidobacterium infantis*, *Saccharomyces boulardii*, and *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*.

49. The composition of any one of claims 41 to 48 wherein the second probiotic microbial organism comprises at least one of *Lactococcus lactis*, *Leuconostoc lactis*, *Leuconostoc pseudomesenteroides*, *Leuconostoc mesenteroides*, *Streptococcus thermophilus*, *Bacillus subtilis*, *Bacillus coagulans*, *Bacillus licheniformis*, *Bacillus cereus*, *Enterococcus faecium*, *Escherichia coli* Nessler 1917, *Propionibacterium acidipropionici*, *Propionibacterium freudenreichii*, *Propionibacterium jensenii*, and *Propionibacterium thoenii*.

50. The composition of any one of claims 41 to 49 wherein none of the probiotic microorganisms in the pharmaceutically acceptable composition have been propagated or grown in media containing casein.

51. The composition of any one of claims 41 to 50 none of the probiotic microorganisms in the pharmaceutically acceptable composition have been propagated or grown in media containing gluten.

52. The composition of any one of claims 41 to 51 wherein none of the probiotic microorganisms in the pharmaceutically acceptable composition have been propagated or grown in media containing casein or gluten.

53. The composition of any one of claims 41 to 52 wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable composition is a dried powder, a tablet, or within a gelatin capsule.

54. The composition of any one of claims 41 to 53 wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable composition is provided within an ingestible support material for human consumption.

55. The composition claim 54 wherein the ingestible support material is one of a cereal based product, rice cake, soy cake, food bar product, cold formed food bar product, custard, pudding, gelatin, rice milk, soy milk, mashed fruit product, candy, candy bar, and applesauce.

56. The composition of any one of claims 41 to 55 wherein the composition is further configured to reduce at least 3 or more symptoms of the ASD.

57. The composition of any one of claims 41 to 56 wherein the composition is further configured to reduce at least 6 or more symptoms of the ASD.

58. The composition of any one of claims 41 to 57 wherein the composition is further configured to reduce at least one symptom in each of the three categories of symptoms.

59. The method of claim 58 wherein the composition is further configured to reduce at least two symptoms in each of the three categories of symptoms.
60. The composition of any one of claims 41 to 59 wherein the composition further comprises at least one of an antibiotic agent or antifungal agent.
61. The composition of any one of claims 41 to 60 wherein the composition further comprises an antibiotic agent and an antifungal agent
62. The composition of claim 61 wherein the antibiotic agent or antifungal agent is vancomycin.
63. The composition of any one of claims 41 to 62 wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable composition further comprises at least one of a casomorphin inhibitor, a gluteomorphin inhibitor, an enkephalin inhibitor, and/or an endorphin inhibitor.
64. The composition of any one of claims 41 to 62 wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable composition further comprises a pharmaceutically effective amount of dipeptidylpeptidase IV or a dipeptidylpeptidase IV inducer.
65. The composition of any one of claims 41 to 64 wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable composition comprises about the following amounts of ingredients per serving or dose, where CFU means a Colony Forming Unit:

<i>Pediococcus acidilactici</i>	1.5 billion CFU
<i>Bifidobacterium breve</i>	0.5 billion CFU
<i>Bifidobacterium infantis</i>	0.5 billion CFU
<i>Lactobacillus paracasei</i>	0.5 billion CFU
<i>Lactobacillus salivarius</i>	0.5 billion CFU
<i>Bifidobacterium lactis</i>	1.0 billion CFU
<i>Bifidobacterium longum</i>	1.0 billion CFU
<i>Streptococcus thermophilus</i>	1.0 billion CFU
<i>Lactobacillus bulgaricus</i>	1.0 billion CFU

<i>Lactobacillus casei</i>	2.5 billion CFU
<i>Lactobacillus plantarum</i>	2.5 billion CFU
<i>Lactobacillus acidophilus</i>	3.0 billion CFU
<i>Bifidobacterium bifidum</i>	3.5 billion CFU
<i>Lactobacillus rhamnosus</i>	6.0 billion CFU

66. The composition of any one of claims 41 to 65 wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable composition further comprises at least one prebiotic agent that promotes the growth of probiotic microorganisms in the gastrointestinal tract.

67. The method of claim 66 wherein the prebiotic agent comprises at least one of a fructooligosaccharide, galactooligosaccharide, lactulose, beta-glucan, inulin, pectin and resistant starch.

68. A kit comprising a vessel containing a composition according to any one of claims 41 to 67 and a label comprising instructions for pharmaceutical use of the composition to inhibit an autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

69. The kit of claim 68 wherein the label is an FDA approved label.

70. An isolated and purified composition according to any one of claims 41 to 67 for use in the manufacture of a medicament for inhibiting, preventing, or treating an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in a human patient.

71. A method of manufacturing a medicament able to reduce symptoms associated inhibiting, preventing, or treating an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in a human patient, comprising combining a pharmaceutically effective amount of a composition according to any one of claims 41 to 67, and a pharmaceutically acceptable adjuvant, excipient, buffer or diluent.