

# ACTIVIA®

## PROBIOTIC PIONEER



**DANONE**  
**100**  
**YEARS OF**  
**SHARED**  
**HISTORY**



### DANONE: A CENTURY OF INNOVATION IN GUT HEALTH AND PROBIOTICS

For 100 years, Danone has stood at the forefront of a revolutionary idea: fermented foods, with their beneficial bacteria, have the power to support gut health and overall well-being. This concept, groundbreaking at its inception, laid the foundation for Danone's journey into exploring the gut microbiome and probiotic research.

Research shows that our bodies are home to trillions of microorganisms that play a role in our health. To nurture this vital ecosystem, incorporating probiotics found in foods like yogurt can be beneficial.

Danone remains committed to focusing on gut health at the core of its health strategy, aiming to fulfill its mission of "bringing health through food to as many people as possible."

### THE ORIGINS OF DANONE YOGURT: A STORY OF NUTRITIONAL INNOVATION

It all began when Isaac Carasso, a prominent Greek entrepreneur, embarked on a journey that would forever change the landscape of health food. During a family trip to Spain, Isaac was confronted with a troubling sight: widespread malnutrition and intestinal issues among local children. Driven by a deep concern for their well-being and that of his own son, Daniel, Isaac was determined to make a positive impact.

Drawing inspiration from the groundbreaking work of Metchnikoff, a pioneer who championed the life-enhancing benefits of Lactobacilli found in yogurt and sour milk, Isaac embarked on an innovative endeavour. He ingeniously blended fresh milk with ferments, crafting the very first batch of Danone yogurt. This was a staple in Greece, yet a novelty in Spain, where he introduced it as a beacon of health, initially distributing it through pharmacies across the city. The brand was named 'Danone', a playful take on his son's nickname in Catalan, Danon, with an added 'e' for a touch of product allure.

Fast-forward two decades, and Danone had become a household name, not just in Spain but also in France. This surge in popularity was propelled by Daniel, who, after honing his skills in bacteriology at the prestigious Pasteur Institute in France, opened the first Danone retail outlet on rue André Messager in Paris. This move introduced the wholesome goodness of Danone yogurt to a broader audience, marking the beginning of a nutritional revolution that continues to thrive.

# ACTIVIA®

## PROBIOTIC PIONEER



### ACTIVIA: A BEACON OF PROBIOTIC INNOVATION AND RESEARCH

For over two decades, Activia has been at the forefront of probiotic research, conducting more than 18 clinical studies. As a proud member of the Danone family, Activia champions the philosophy that true wellness begins in the gut, offering a range of delicious probiotic products designed to support digestive health.



# ACTIVIA®

## PROBIOTIC PIONEER

### THE MAKING OF A PROBIOTIC PIONEER

- 
- 1857** Louis Pasteur made a groundbreaking discovery about fermentation. He found that lactic acid bacteria were responsible for this process. More importantly, Pasteur showed that the lactate produced during fermentation could stop harmful pathogens from growing and prevent food from spoiling.
- 1899** Henri Tissier, a pediatrician at the Institut Pasteur, found a type of bacteria called *Bifidobacterium bifidum* in the fecal samples of breast-fed infants. He discovered that this bacteria could protect babies from getting diarrhea.
- 1908** Élie Metchnikoff, a Russian-born biologist and Nobel Prize winner, noticed that certain foods could positively change the gut's bacterial makeup. This was especially true for fermented foods. He managed to isolate pure cultures from Bulgarian fermented milk, including *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* and *Streptococcus thermophilus*, which are still used to make yogurt today.
- 1916** Isaac Carasso travelled to Spain and was shocked by the widespread malnutrition and intestinal issues among children there. Motivated by concern for their well-being and that of his son Daniel, he was determined to make a difference.
- 1919** Through experimentation Carasso mixed fresh milk with ferments isolated at the Institut Pasteur to create the first Danone yogurt – named after his son, Daniel. The yogurt was packaged in porcelain pots and was sold as a health food to pharmacies across the city.
- 1929** Daniel Carasso, who had studied bacteriology at the Pasteur Institute in France, joined the family business. He played a crucial role in expanding Danone yogurt throughout France.
- 1941** Daniel moved the family business to the United States. After the world wars, yogurt gained popularity as a source of important nutrients, thanks to fermentation. Daniel's yogurt was particularly well-received for its quality and taste.
- 1987** Danone introduced two types of fermented milks containing probiotics: Activia® with *Bifidobacterium lactis* CNCM I-2494 and Actimel® with *L. casei* CNCM I-1518. This marked the beginning of numerous probiotic studies, leading to over 40 peer-reviewed scientific publications.
- 2008** Danone Nutricia Research became a part of the MetaHIT consortium, a group focused on studying the human gut through metagenomics, thanks to funding from the European Commission. This project, running from 2008 to 2012, alongside their involvement in the Human Microbiome Project until 2013, paved the way for groundbreaking discoveries in microbiome research. They developed new bioinformatics tools and concepts, making it easier to study the complex world of microbes living in our intestines.
- 2013** A landmark moment came when Danone Nutricia Research, in partnership with UCLA, published the results of the first clinical trial exploring the connection between the gut and the brain using Activia probiotics. This study opened up new avenues for understanding how our digestive system and brain communicate, highlighting the potential benefits of probiotics for mental and physical health.