CLAIMS

1. Use of a nutritional composition comprising a galactooligosaccharide for the manufacture of a medicament for stimulating the healing response of the gastrointestinal tract to treat an injury to the gastrointestinal tract of an individual.

2. The use of claim 1, wherein the gastrointestinal tract is injured as a result of at least one of antibiotic therapy, radiation therapy, chemotherapy, surgery, enteric infection, inflammatory bowel disease, colitis, bowel obstruction, and chronic stress.

3. The use of claim 1, wherein the nutritional composition further comprises at least one probiotic.

4. The use of claim 1, wherein the nutritional composition is selected from the group consisting of a human milk fortifier, an infant formula, a pediatric formula, a follow on formula, and an adult nutritional composition.

5. The use of claim 4, wherein the nutritional composition comprises the galactooligosaccharide in a concentration of from about 8 kg/1000 kg of the nutritional composition to about 160 kg/1000 kg of the nutritional composition.

6. The use of claim 1, wherein the nutritional composition comprises the galactooligosaccharide in a concentration of from about 164 kg/18,000 pounds (8165 kg) of the nutritional composition to about 818 kg/18,000 pounds (8165 kg) of the nutritional composition.

7. The use of claim 1, wherein the nutritional composition further comprises at least one human milk oligosaccharide.

8. Use of a nutritional composition comprising a galactooligosaccharide for the manufacture of a medicament for stimulating the expression of one or more mucin-associated proteins to treat an injury to the gastrointestinal tract of an individual.

9. The use of claim 8, wherein enhancing the expression of one or more mucin-associated proteins reduces the incidence of inflammation of the gastrointestinal tract of an individual.

10. The use of claim 8, wherein enhancing the expression of one or more mucin-associated proteins improves the barrier function in the gastrointestinal tract of an individual.

11. The use of claim 8, wherein the nutritional composition further comprises at least one probiotic.

12. The use of claim 8, wherein the nutritional composition is selected from the group consisting of a human milk fortifier, an infant formula, a pediatric formula, a follow on formula, and an adult nutritional composition.

13. The use of claim 8, wherein the nutritional composition comprises the galactooligosaccharide in a concentration of from about 8 kg/1000 kg of the nutritional composition to about 160 kg/1000 kg of the nutritional composition.

14. The use of claim 8, wherein the nutritional composition comprises the galactooligosaccharide in a concentration of from about 164 kg/18,000 pounds (8165 kg) of the nutritional composition to about 818 kg/18,000 pounds (8165 kg) of the nutritional composition.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. Use of a nutritional composition comprising a galactooligosaccharide in the manufacture of a medicament for enhancing the healing response of the gastrointestinal tract of an individual.

2. The use of claim 1, wherein the gastrointestinal tract is injured as a result of at least one of antibiotic therapy, radiation therapy, chemotherapy, surgery, enteric infection, inflammatory bowel disease, colitis, bowel obstruction, and chronic stress.

3. The use of claim 1, wherein the nutritional composition further comprises at least one probiotic.

4. The use of claim 1, wherein the nutritional composition is selected from the group consisting of a human milk fortifier, an infant formula, a pediatric formula, a follow on formula, and an adult nutritional composition.

5. The use of claim 4, wherein the nutritional composition comprises the galactooligosaccharide in a concentration of from about 8 kg/1000 kg of the nutritional composition to about 160 kg/1000 kg of the nutritional composition.

6. The use of claim 1, wherein the nutritional composition comprises the galactooligosaccharide in a concentration of from about 164 kg/18,000 pounds (8165 kg) of the nutritional composition to about 818 kg/18,000 pounds (8165 kg) of the nutritional composition.

7. The use of claim 1, wherein the nutritional composition further comprises at least one human milk oligosaccharide.

8. Use of a nutritional composition comprising a galactooligosaccharide in the manufacture of a medicament for improving an individual's gastrointestinal prevention function.

9. The use of claim 8, wherein the nutritional composition further comprises at least one probiotic.

10. The use of claim 8, wherein the nutritional composition is selected from the group consisting of a human milk fortifier, an infant formula, a pediatric formula, a follow on formula, and an adult nutritional composition.

11. The use of claim 10, wherein the nutritional composition comprises the galactooligosaccharide in a concentration of from about 8 kg/1000 kg of the nutritional composition to about 160 kg/1000 kg of the nutritional composition.

12. Theuse of claim 8, wherein the nutritional composition comprises the galactooligosaccharide in a concentration of from about 164 kg/18,000 pounds (8165 kg) of the nutritional composition to about 818 kg/18,000 pounds (8165 kg) of the nutritional composition.

13. Use of a nutritional composition comprising a galactooligosaccharide in the manufacture of a medicament for enhancing the expression of one or more mucin-associated proteins when enhancing the expression of one or more mucin-associated proteins.

14. The use of claim 13, wherein the expression of one or more mucin-associated proteins reduces the incidence of inflammation of the gastrointestinal tract of an individual.

15. The use of claim 13, wherein enhancing the expression of one or more mucin-associated protein improves the barrier function in the gastrointestinal tract o an individual.