

How to follow a Low Fibre Diet

Information and advice for patients

Nutrition and Dietetics

Fibre: Fibre is a type of carbohydrate that doesn't get digested in your small intestine, instead it is completely or partially broken down (fermented) by bacteria in your large intestine. It is found naturally in plant foods like wholegrains, beans, nuts, fruit and vegetables.

What is a low fibre diet?

A low fibre diet is made up of foods that are easily digested and absorbed leaving minimal residue in the bowel, supporting improvement of bowel symptoms.

Why follow a low fibre diet?

A low fibre diet is recommended in those patients who need to avoid foods that may obstruct narrowed parts of the bowel or irritate an inflamed bowel.

A low fibre diet may be recommended:

- When experiencing diarrhoea secondary to a flare up of Inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) – Ulcerative colitis, Crohn's
- High output stomas
- Chronic diarrhoea
- Those at risk of bowel obstruction /strictures

The aims of a low fibre diet:

- Reduce the risk of bowel blockage in patients with intestinal strictures /narrowing's
- Reduce irritation in an inflamed bowel
- Help reduce frequency and volume of stools / diarrhoea

Foods to include	Foods to avoid
<p>Breads & Cereals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Any variety of white pasta, rice, noodles <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> White bread, chapattis, naan, cakes, scones, pitta, muffins, dumplings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Refined breakfast cereals such as cornflake, rice krispies, milled oats such as ready brek <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plain crackers, biscuits made from white flour <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potatoes /sweet potatoes/ Yam/ Plantain/ Cassava without skins/ mashed, potato waffles, chips 	<p>Breads & Cereals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brown pasta, rice, noodles <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wholemeal/brown/granary/seeded bread, chapattis, naan, cakes, scones, pitta, muffins <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Breakfast cereals containing dried fruit or nuts <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Whole-grain/ wheat/oat based breakfast cereals e.g. Weetabix, Muesli, porridge <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cakes / biscuits made with wholegrains, oats, seeds, or dried fruit <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potato skins
<p>Fruit & Vegetables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Well cooked vegetables with no skin, seeds, stalks, or stems <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fruit peeled and soft without pips and seeds <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Smooth fruit juice <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cooked or tinned fruit that has been peeled e.g. apples, peaches 	<p>Fruit & Vegetables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Raw vegetables and salads <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Raw and dried fruit <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fruits / vegetables with pips, seeds e.g. berries <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Smoothies with pips and seeds
<p>Dairy Products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All milks, smooth yogurts, yogurt drinks and cheese 	<p>Dairy products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yogurts or cheese with seeds, nuts, dried fruits, cereals
<p>Meat, Fish, Meat alternatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All tender meats and fish <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eggs <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tofu 	<p>Meat, Fish, Meat alternatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tough meats and gristle <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Beans, pulses, peas, lentils <p><i>If you follow vegetarian /vegan diet, please speak with your dietitian to ensure adequate protein intake is achieved</i></p>

Useful tip

Food classified as high fibre contains over 6g per 100g and should be minimised when following a low fibre diet.

How long will I need to follow a low fibre diet for?

The need for a low fibre diet is usually short term unless specifically advised by your doctor. The length of time you will need to follow a low fibre diet will depend on the reason for its use. Your dietitian or doctor can advise you on how long you need to follow a low fibre diet.

Further information

This leaflet was produced by the Department of Nutrition & Dietetics Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust.

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Dietitian:

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M7346

Issue Date: August 2024

Review Date: August 2027