

Low fibre diet



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The Information Standard Certified Member

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What is fibre?

Introduction: Dietary fibre is a part of cereals, pulses, fruits and vegetables that are not digested in the gut. It adds bulk to stool (faeces) and helps to move contents through the bowel.

There are two main types of fibre: soluble and insoluble.

What foods contain fibre?

Soluble: Oats, Fruits, vegetables, peas, beans and pulses.

Insoluble Fibre: Wholemeal bread, cereals containing wholegrain and wholemeal.

Why have I been advised to follow a low fibre diet?

A low fibre diet may have been recommended by your doctor if:

- Your bowel is obstructed, or you are at risk of bowel obstruction
- You have had bowel surgery
- You are experiencing diarrhoea or inflammation as a result of functional bowel disorder, treatment (e.g. radiation) or due to a flare-up of an inflammatory bowel disease such as Crohn's disease or Ulcerative Colitis.

A diet low in fibre may reduce the amount of gas produced and bulk of stool passing through your bowel. This should help to reduce symptoms such as bloating and abdominal discomfort and may also reduce the risk of your bowel becoming obstructed.

The need for a low fibre diet is usually temporary but can sometimes be permanent. If you have to restrict fibre as part of your long term treatment your dietitian will speak to you about other ways to ensure sufficient vitamin and mineral provision.

If you have been used to eating a diet rich in fruit, vegetables and whole grains, then following a low fibre diet may be challenging. However, the purpose of this diet is to help improve your symptoms and this booklet gives ideas of the many other suitable foods which you can eat.

Balanced diet

It is important to maintain balance in your diet.

The following can act as a guide as to how to ensure healthy choices in your daily eating habits.

Meat, Fish, Poultry, Eggs, Tofu

- These are important sources of protein, vitamins and minerals, and form part of a healthy, balanced diet.
- Choose healthier and leaner cuts of meat; consider avoiding addition of fats to these products when cooking i.e. choose grilling, boiling or steaming rather than frying.
- Include 2-3 portions per day.
- Consider two portions of fish per week at least one to be an oily source.

Fruits and vegetables

Aim for 5 portions a day (ensure these are restricted to low fibre options).

Dairy

- Dairy products are good sources of energy; protein and calcium, milk and dairy products form part of a healthy diet.
- Our bodies need protein to work properly and to grow or repair themselves. Calcium forms the building blocks of healthy bones and teeth.
- Aim for 2-3 portions per day

Carbohydrates

- Starchy foods are a good source of energy and the main source of a range of nutrients in our diet, such as starch, calcium, iron and B vitamins
- These include rice, potatoes, bread, pasta etc. (choose low fibre options)
- Aim for 5-6 portions per day

Fluids

We all need at least 6-8 cups of fluids (about 1.5-2 litres) of fluids per day to maintain hydration (unless otherwise instructed by your dietitian or doctor). This can include a variety of water, tea, coffee, no added sugar squash and lower fat milky drinks.



Food Groups	Foods you may include	Foods high in fibre which should be avoided
Cereals	Low fibre breakfast cereals e.g. Cornflakes, Rice Krispies, Coco pops, Frosties.	Wholemeal or high fibre breakfast cereals or those with nuts added e.g. muesli, Bran flakes, Weetabix, Puffed wheat, Shredded wheat, Crunchy nut cornflakes, Fruit and Fibre, porridge, granola, Ready Brek.
Bread and flour	Bread made with white flour including pitta, naan bread, wraps. Crumpet, pikelets. Cream crackers, rice cakes.	Brown, 50/50, whole meal or granary bread. Seeded loaf, breads with fruit, fibre or nuts added e.g. teacakes, hot cross buns. Whole wheat, cracked wheat or brown crackers e.g. rye.
Potatoes	Peeled cooked potatoes, mashed, chipped or roast (remove all skins). Inside of jacket potato	Potato skins.
Rice, pasta and other	White rice, white and tricolore pasta and spaghetti. White noodles, couscous, rice noodles.	Whole wheat or brown pasta or noodles, brown rice or wild rice, bulgar wheat, Quinoa.
Cake and biscuits	Cakes, plain or cheese scones, biscuits and pastries made with white flour – no nuts, seeds or dried fruit added. Crumpets, white muffins, croissants, pancakes.	Whole wheat biscuits e.g. cereal, fig roll, flapjack, fruit scones, cakes or pastries with fruit, seeds or nuts.
Fruit	Fruit with all pips, pith and skin removed: e.g. ripe banana, apple, pear, peach, mango, melon, lychees, tinned fruit. Smooth fruit juice.	Fruit with skin, seeds, pips and/or piths attached: e.g. raspberries, strawberries, blueberries, blackcurrants, passion fruit, kiwi fruit, coconut, dried fruit, figs.



Food Groups	Foods you may include	Foods high in fibre which should be avoided
Vegetables	Vegetables peeled and cooked with stringy or tough bits removed: Turnip, carrot, butternut squash, pumpkin, sweet potato, parsnip, courgette, cucumber, and aubergine. Tomatoes skinned and deseeded. Puree or passata Well-cooked florets of cauliflower and broccoli (stalks removed)	Vegetable skins, seeds and or pips attached. Cabbage, curly kale, celery, fennel, leeks, okra, peppers, spinach, sprouts, sweet corn, yam, cassava, plantain, Salad vegetables including lettuce, beetroot, onions, garlic, artichokes, olives, avocado, mushrooms. Pulse vegetables including peas, mangetout, beans (e.g. French, broad, string and baked beans).
Meat, fish and protein alternatives	Meat, poultry, ham, bacon, sausages, fish, eggs, Tofu, sausage rolls, meat pies.	Quorn, beans (including baked beans), pulses, lentils. Pies or pastries made with wholemeal flour, beans, nuts or seeds.
Milk and dairy products	Milk (fresh, evaporated or condensed). Cheese, cottage cheese, cream cheese, cheese spreads. Cream. Plain smooth yoghurt or fromage frais. Ice cream.	Muesli or nut yogurts, or yogurts with whole fruit.
Miscellaneous	Plain or milk chocolate. Boiled sweets, toffee, fudges, wine gums, mints. Crisps. Honey, lemon curd, treacle, syrup, marmite, shredless marmalade and seedless jam. Condiments e.g. tomato sauce, brown sauce, soy sauce, mayonnaise, stock cubes. Smooth nut butter.	Any Chocolate containing fruit, nuts or seeds added. Popcorn. Marmalade with shreds or Jam with seeds. Crunchy nut butter.

Suggested low fibre meal plan

Breakfast	Low fibre cereal with milk Or White bread, toast, croissant or muffin - with butter or margarine and seedless jam or rindless marmalade Or Fried, scrambled or poached egg on white toast or sausage and bacon sandwich.
Lunch	Soup without bits (if homemade choose low fibre options outlined above) Or sandwich (white bread) with protein source i.e. ham/cheese/chicken/tuna/egg Or rice/pasta/potato with protein source (examples above) and vegetables (low fibre options) Serve with pudding e.g. jelly and ice cream, milk pudding, sponge, custard, yogurt, small portion of suitable fruit and cream.
Dinner	White rice/pasta/potato with protein source and vegetables (low fibre options) Or cheese omelette/pizza/fish in sauce/chicken burger/chicken breast, pork or lamb chop and gravy with mashed or boiled potato/chips/white rice Or small portion of cottage/shepherd's pie/corned beef hash with low fibre vegetables Serve with pudding e.g. jelly and ice cream, milk pudding, sponge, custard, yogurt, small portion of suitable fruit and cream.
Snack/ supper ideas	Slice of plain cake, plain biscuit, crumpet Cheese and crackers, crisps, sausage roll Crème caramel/mousse Smooth yoghurt/ seedless jam tart Hot or cold milky drink
Fluids	Remember To drink at least 6-8 cups of fluids (about 1.5-2 litres) of fluids per day (unless otherwise instructed by your dietitian or doctor). This can include a variety of water, tea, coffee, no added sugar squash and lower fat milky drinks.

Poor appetite or weight loss on a low fibre diet

Strategies to help with a poor appetite

- Eat little and often. Eat three small meals and two to three snacks every day. Include a variety of foods that you enjoy
- Have starchy foods at each meal, such as breads, potatoes, rice, pasta, cereals
- Include a protein source in at least two of your meals throughout the day (meat, chicken or turkey, fish, eggs, cheese or yoghurt)
- Take drinks half an hour after or before your meals to avoid feeling too full or bloated
- Have a pudding at least once a day - if you are too full after a meal wait 30 minutes before having a dessert
- Have high-calorie snacks between meals, such as cake, biscuits, crackers, bread sticks and toast with butter/margarine and honey/seedless jam
- Your Dietitian or Doctor can advise you on suitable oral nutritional supplements should it be necessary for you.

Food fortification

Try adding one of the following to low fibre bread:

- Thickly spread butter or margarine
- Seedless jam, honey, syrup, cream cheese, meat or fish paste

Try adding one of the following to puddings:

- Double cream, Clotted cream, full fat yoghurt, ice cream or custard
- Seedless jam, honey, syrup or sugar



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