

How to follow a Low Fibre Diet

Nutrition & Dietetics

This information leaflet sheet is for people who need a low fibre diet.

It aims to:

- Explain what is meant by low fibre
- Explain why a low fibre diet is needed
- Give advice on how to follow a low fibre diet

Why follow a low fibre diet?

Low fibre diets are usually used for one of the following reasons:

- A narrowing of the gut (sometimes called a stricture) which means fibre containing foods may not pass through effectively and therefore may cause a blockage
- An inflammation of the lining of the gut wall caused by a disease or by radiotherapy which means that foods containing high fibre and fat may aggravate the gut and lead to diarrhoea
- As a way to prepare your bowel before certain medical investigations or procedures

In the above instances food is not the cause of the problems but avoiding higher fibre foods may make you feel more comfortable. There is always some trial and error and you may find that you can tolerate small amounts of fibre which will help to make your meals more varied and interesting.

What is a low fibre diet?

A low fibre diet is made up of foods that are easily digested and absorbed, leaving a minimal residue in the bowel. This should help to improve your bowel symptoms.

Practical ways to reduce your fibre intake and other useful tips

- Choose refined or 'white' cereals such as Cornflakes or Rice Krispies. Avoid porridge oats, muesli and wholegrain and bran based cereals such as Weetabix and Branflakes/All Bran or Shreddies
- Choose 'white' varieties of rice and pasta- avoid the wholewheat varieties
- Choose plain white biscuits such as rich tea, custard creams, nice or malted milks. Avoid digestives, garibaldi or others with nuts and dried fruit
- Choose savoury snacks such as crisps
- Choose white varieties of bread, crumpets, crackers and plain scones and cakes

The prevention of infection is a major priority in all healthcare and everyone has a part to play.

- **Please decontaminate your hands frequently for 20 seconds using soap and water or alcohol gel if available**
- **If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, cough or other respiratory symptoms, a temperature or any loss of taste or smell please do not visit the hospital or any other care facility and seek advice from 111**
- **Keep the environment clean and tidy**
- **Let's work together to keep infections out of our hospitals and care homes.**

- Avoid the skins of potatoes
- If you do some home baking use white flour
- All fruit, vegetables and salad ingredients contain fibre especially those which have skins, seeds and pips. Some people find that they can tolerate well boiled or pureed vegetables and fruit but trial cautiously. Avoid meals where vegetables make up the majority of the meal for example salads and stir-frys
- Take note of added vegetables, fruit, nuts and seeds in ready bought soups, sauces and convenience / ready made meals
- Include vitamin C containing fruit squash or a small glass of fresh fruit juice (without bits) to help get a balanced diet while you are restricting a lot of fruit and vegetables in the diet
- Eat small meals at regular intervals (every three to four hours)
- Chew food slowly and thoroughly

Example of a low fibre diet

Breakfast	Cornflakes or rice based cereal, White toast / crumpet / bagel / muffin Fruit juice (no bits)
Mid-Morning snack	Tea, coffee, fruit squash or water White biscuits (rich tea / custard cream) or a packet of crisps
Lunch	Well-cooked tender meat, fish, cheese or egg White bread / pitta Well cooked vegetables (small portion) Stewed fruit or fruit juice (no bits) Tea, coffee, fruit squash or water
Mid Afternoon snack	Tea, coffee, fruit squash or water. White biscuits (rich tea / custard cream) or plain cake or packet of crisps
Evening Meal	Well cooked tender meat, fish, cheese or egg Potatoes (no skin)/ white rice / bread / chapattis Well cooked vegetables (small portion) Stewed fruit or fruit juice (no bits) Tea, coffee, fruit squash or water
Supper	Tea, coffee or hot milky drink White scone / toast / cereal or biscuit

Eating a low fibre diet in hospital

If you are an inpatient at New Cross Hospital and have been put on a low fibre diet by your doctor or dietitian you will need to order meals from the 'Low Fibre Menu'. This is in addition to having suitable snacks from the ward 'snack trolley' or from home. Suitable snacks include white toast, Tuc biscuits, sweet biscuits such as rich tea, shortie or custard cream, plain cakes and custard. Ask on the ward to see the special 'Low Fibre Menu' if one has not been provided to you.

Additional information

How long will I need a low fibre diet for?

This diet is not designed for long term use unless specifically advised by your doctor. The length of time you will need to follow the low fibre diet will depend on the reason for its use. Your nurse, dietitian or doctor will have more information and can advise you on how long you need to follow a low fibre diet.

What if I am vegetarian on a low fibre diet?

If you do not eat meat or fish you will find it difficult to follow a low fibre diet for a long period of time. Please ask to be referred to a dietitian for individual advice.

How do I follow this diet if I have other food intolerances?

Occasionally people with an inflamed gut may find they are intolerant to other foods such as spicy foods or dairy foods. If you think you may have other food intolerances please speak with your doctor or dietitian before starting any other food restrictions.

What if I am not eating well and losing weight before or after starting the low fibre diet?

Please ask your doctor if you should be referred to a dietitian.

Will I miss out on important nutrients on this diet?

The diet is not normally used for a long enough time period to cause long term nutritional deficiencies. If you are on this diet for an extended period your doctor/ dietitian may recommend you take a daily multivitamin / mineral supplement.

Dietitian:

Contact Number: 01902 695335

This leaflet was produced by:

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English

If you need information in another way like easy read or a different language please let us know.

If you need an interpreter or assistance please let us know.

Lithuanian

Jeigu norėtumėte, kad informacija jums būtų pateikta kitu būdu, pavyzdžiui, supaprastinta forma ar kita kalba, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Jeigu jums reikia vertėjo ar kitos pagalbos, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej postaci, na przykład w wersji łatwej do czytania lub w innym języku, prosimy powiedzieć nam o tym.

Prosimy poinformować nas również, jeżeli potrzebowaliby Państwo usługi tłumaczenia ustnego lub innej pomocy.

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਸਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ, ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații în alt format, ca de exemplu caractere ușor de citit sau altă limbă, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret sau de asistență, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Traditional Chinese

如果您需要以其他方式了解信息，如易读或其他语种，请告诉我们。

如果您需要口译人员或帮助，请告诉我们。