

Low Fiber Diet

What is Fiber?

Fiber is what gives strength and structure to plants. Dietary fiber or “roughage” refers to the part of a plant that cannot be fully digested by the human body. Low fiber nutrition therapy is intended to reduce the frequency and volume of stools which can help decrease diarrhea, gas, and bloating. This lessens the irritation in the gastrointestinal tract and can help it heal.

Conditions that may require a low fiber diet:

- Diverticulitis
- Bowel inflammation
- Radiation therapy to the pelvis and lower bowel
- New colostomy/ileostomy
- Recent intestinal surgery

General Tips and Guidelines

This diet can include many foods you already eat such as cooked vegetables and fruits, white breads, pasta and meat. It does NOT include foods such as:

- Whole grains
- Raw fruits and vegetables
- Beans and legumes
- Nuts and seeds
- The connective tissue of meats (gristle)

Pay attention to and read food labels. Many foods have unexpected fiber, such as yogurt, ice cream, cereal, and some beverages. **Less than 10-15 grams of fiber each day is generally recommended.**

A low fiber diet may need to be followed for a short time or for the rest of your life. Discuss this with your doctor or dietitian.



Milk does not contain fiber, but it may contribute to discomfort or diarrhea. If you experience discomfort after following a low-fiber diet, try lactose-free products.

Dietitian: _____



Phone: _____

Facility: _____

This handout is meant for use during an appointment with a registered dietitian only, and is not intended for use by other clinicians.

FOOD GROUP	FOODS RECOMMENDED	FOODS TO AVOID
<p><i>Milk and Milk Products</i></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milk/lactose free milk • Yogurt, lactose free yogurt or soy yogurt • Cottage cheese, lactose free cottage cheese • Soy milk, rice milk or almond milk (these are lactose free) • Sherbet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milk or foods made with milk if you are lactose intolerant. • Milk products with nuts, seeds, fruit, vegetables or granola added to them.
<p><i>Breads</i></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refined white flour products such as enriched white bread without seeds, pancakes, waffles, crackers made with refined flour. • Refined hot cereal such as cream of wheat • Refined cold cereals such as Corn Flakes, puffed rice, Special K, and Rice Krispies • White rice or pasta 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole wheat or whole grain breads • Brown, wild rice or other whole grains such as whole oats, kasha, barley and quinoa • Popcorn • Whole wheat pasta
<p><i>Fruits</i></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canned, soft or well-cooked fruits without skin, seeds or membranes • Fruit juice without pulp 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dried fruit • Prune juice • Fruit juice with pulp • Berries • Pineapple- raw or canned • Raw Fruit
<p><i>Meat and Meat Substitutes</i></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tender, well-cooked beef, pork, poultry or fish • Eggs • Smooth nut butters • Tofu 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tough meat or meat with gristle • Nuts or seeds • Beans • Lentils • Luncheon meats such as bologna or salami • Sausage, bacon or hotdogs • Sushi • Chunky nut butters

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FOOD GROUP	FOODS RECOMMENDED	FOODS TO AVOID
<p>Vegetables</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canned or well cooked vegetables without seeds, skins, or hulls, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Yellow squash (without seeds) – Pumpkin – Eggplant – Potatoes (without skin) – Wax beans – Asparagus – Carrots – Green beans – Beets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raw or undercooked vegetables • Alfalfa or bean sprouts • Cooked greens or spinach • Peas • Corn • Gas-forming vegetables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Broccoli – Cauliflower – Brussel sprouts – Cabbage – Lima Beans – Mushrooms – Onions – Peppers – Parsnips
<p>Fats</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Butter or margarine • Heavy cream or cream cheese • Salad dressing without seeds • Mayonnaise • Vegetable oils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coconut • Avocados • Salad dressing with seeds

REFERENCES:

- Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Nutrition Care Manual: Low-Fiber Nutrition Therapy. Available at: www.nutritioncaremanual.org.
- Mayo Clinic Low-fiber diet handout. Available at: <http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/nutrition-and-healthy-eating/in-depth/low-fiber-diet/art-20048511>
- Medline Plus Low-fiber diet handout. Available at: <https://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/patientinstructions/000200.htm>

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