

Patient Information Sheet

**FOLLOWING A LOW FIBRE DIET**



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# *What is Fibre?*

Fibre is the part of plant foods (vegetables, grains, fruit etc) which the digestive tract is not able to completely digest or breakdown in our small intestine. When we eat fibre it passes through our stomach into the small intestine and into our large bowel (see the picture of a digestive system below).



Source: GESA

Most people benefit from high fibre as part of a healthy balanced diet. But sometimes certain medical conditions require a low fibre diet for a short period.

A low fibre diet can:

* Reduce stool weight and bulk
* Reduce the time it takes stools to move through the bowel

***How much fibre should I have?***

On a low fibre diet you should eat around 10 of fibre each day. This amount can vary depending on your symptoms. Some people find they need to eat much less or that they can eat more than recommended. To choose foods that are low in fibre, a general guide is to choose those foods that contain less than 2g of fibre per serve.

***What can I eat?***

This table lists foods that you should choose or avoid on a low fibre diet. Use it to guide your choices.

| **FOOD GROUPS** | **CHOOSE** | **AVOID** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **MCFD00931_0000[1]Breads and cereals**  | * White bread/ rolls
* White pita bread, flat breads,
* Tortilla or taco shells
* Croissant, english muffin and crumpet
* White rice, semolina, polenta, millet
* White pasta, noodles and white flour
* Plain water crackers or other crackers made with white flour, e.g. Plain Sao®
* rice cakes
* Rice bubbles®, Crunchy Nut®, Corn Flakes®, Nutri-grain®, CocoPops®, Rice Porridge, Sago, Tapioca
* Canned spaghetti
* Plain Pappadums, Rice noodles, Gnocchi
* Cornflour
* Cakes/ biscuits made with white flour (no nuts/seeds/coconut), banana bread
* White cous cous, pikelets, plain scone
 | * Wholemeal and wholegrain breads/ rolls/muffins, roti, Naan
* Hi-Fibre white breads
* Bread with added fruit, nuts & seeds
* Rye, Gluten-free & Spelt bread and rye products
* Buckwheat, pearl barley, brown rice, bulgur
* Wholemeal pasta and flour
* Bran and bran cereals (e.g. All-Bran®, Sultana Bran®, Special K®)
* Canned baked beans, quinoa
* Oat Porridge, muesli, Guardian®, Just Right®, Weetbix® and other high fibre cereals
* Ryvita® crackers/crispbreads
* Bagel, chapatti, Focaccia
* Fruit scone
* Flour – chickpea, rye, soya, wholemeal, spelt
* Corn cakes
* Muesli bar (plain/with no fruit and nuts)
 |
| **Vegetables** | * Eat freely: zucchini, cucumber, lettuce, capsicum, sprouts, radish, chives, squash, garlic, gherkin, ginger, leek, onion, spring onion, shallot
* Eat in moderation:, pumpkin, ½ cup mashed or ½ baked potato, silverbeet (avoid stems), bok choy, Chinese cabbage, fennel, turnip, canned and puree tomato, eggplant, mushroom, asparagus, English spinach \*large pieces of mushrooms need to be avoided in ileostomies only
 | * **MCj02961440000[1]**All other vegetables (e.g. corn, peas, snow peas, cabbage, celery, cauliflower, beetroot, broccoli, carrot, sweet potato, brussel sprouts, beans, swede, kale and parsnip, tomato, avoid stems of leafy greens
 |
| **MCj04369080000[1]Fruit (small portions only)** | * Melon fruits (honeydew, rockmelon, watermelon)
* Lychees
* Avocado (limit serve to ¼ avocado)
* ½ small banana
* Canned or fresh apricots
* Canned peaches (2 halves)
* Small mandarin
 | * Juice with ‘bits’
* Prune juice
* All other fresh fruit
* All dried fruit
* **MCj02334920000[1]**Coconut
* All berry fruits
* Fresh fig
* Persimmons
 |
| **Nuts and seeds** | * None
 | * All nuts and seeds
 |
| **Legumes, Tofu and lentils** | * None
 | * All beans, lentils, tofu and legumes
* Falafel
 |
| **Meat and meat products** | * All lean meat/ fish/ poultry
* Fresh eggs
 | * Gristly meat and sausages with skins
 |
| **MCj00901770000[1]Milk and milk products** | * All milk, custard, white sauces, plain yoghurt, cheese and ice cream
 | * Ice cream or yoghurt containing fruit or nuts (unless containing fruit from the “choose” fruit column)
 |
| **Fats** | * Margarine, butter, oil, salad dressing and mayonnaise
 | * None
 |
| **Spreads and miscellaneous** | * Vegemite, honey, clear jelly, clear jam, lemon butter, cheese spread, fish and meat paste
* potato crisps(sml portions)
* Gravy, white sauce
* Lollies, chocolate (without fruit, nuts or coconut)
* Salt & pepper
 | * Jams and marmalades with skins, seeds and peel
* Hot Potato chips, wedges and corn chips
* Chocolate with fruit or nuts
* Popcorn
* Hummus
 |
| **Soups** | * Strained broths
* Cream of chicken, condensed, canned
* French onion - instant
* Clear soup or stock cubes
 | * Pea, Minestrone soups
* Unstrained vegetables and barley soups
* Soups made with vegetables listed as avoid
 |
| **MCj00901770000[1]Fluids** | * Water and soda water
* Tea (regular and herbal) and coffee
* Bonox® and Bovril®
* Commercial Fruit juice, no bits
* Soft drink and cordial
* Milk
* Cocoa drinks
* Strained homemade fruit and/or vegetable juice/smoothie
 | * Juice with ‘bits’,
* Milkshakes, unstrained juice or smoothies made with fruit or vegetables listed as avoid
* Milo® beverages (in large amounts), Up & Go®
 |

***Tips for a Low Fibre diet:***

* Limit yourself to two pieces of fruit each day (from the choose column)
* Limit yourself to the choose vegetables only
* **![MCFD00942_0000[1]]()**Peel all fruit and vegetables
* Avoid seeds, stalks and skins from fruit and vegetables
* Choose white breads and pasta
* Change your cereal to one listed in the choose column
* Avoid legumes (e.g. baked beans, lentils, kidney beans)
* Avoid all types of nuts
* Avoid foods that make your symptoms worse (e.g. bloating, cramping)
* Be aware that cooking, chopping, canning or pureeing foods will not change the amount of fibre they have
* Chew foods well
* Make sure you drink lots of fluids during the day

***Other information***

* You may benefit from a multivitamin supplement whilst you are following a low fibre diet.
* Ensure an adequate fluid intake.  Ask your dietitian how much fluid you should be drinking. As a guide, aim to drink at least 2 litres of water each day.

Your dietitian recommends you consume \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ L of fluid/day

***Example meal plan (total fibre between 10-15g)***

**![MCj01991900000[1]]()*Breakfast***

1 cup low fibre cereal with milk

1 tub plain yoghurt

1 cup of fresh Orange juice (home squeezed, strained only)

Water

***Morning tea***

2 water crackers with cheddar cheese (4x small cubes)

Water

***Lunch***

2 slices white bread with spread of avocado, meat filling and salad

(Consisting of 2 lettuce leaves, 4 slices cucumber))

Water

***Afternoon Tea***

Melon fruit

Water/cup of tea

***Dinner***

Lean meat/chicken/fish

Stir fried low fibre vegetables (bok choy, capsicum, zucchini)

1 cup cooked white rice

***Supper***

Canned peaches with ice cream

Water

**References**

1. Dietitians Association of Australia. 2014 Nutrition manual. 9th ed. Canberra: DAA.
2. New South Wales Agency for Clinical Innovation. 2011. Therapeutic diet specifications for adult inpatients. Chatswood: Agency for Clinical Innovation Nutrition Network.
3. Marlett, J.A., M. McBurney, J.L. Slavin. 2002. Position of the American Dietetic Association: health implications of dietary fiber. J Am Diet Assoc 102:7 (993-1000).
4. AUSNUT 2011-13 food nutrient database. Food Standards Australia New Zealand.

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**Disclaimer**

All information contained in this handout is current at the time of revision. If you have concerns about your health, you should seek advice from your general practitioner or health care provider. If you require urgent care you should go to the nearest Emergency Dept.

Revised: April 2016

Ref: 13.7