



LOW-FIBER (LOW RESIDUE) DIET

Fiber is part of fruits, vegetable and grains, not digested by your body. A low-fiber diet limits these foods and, in doing so, limits the amount of undigested materials that pass through your large intestine and lessens stool bulk. A low-fiber diet may be recommended for a number of conditions or situations. A low-fiber diet is sometimes called a restricted-fiber or low-residue diet. Residue simply means any food, including fiber, that isn't digested and remains in the intestines.

Purpose: Your doctor may prescribe a low-fiber diet if there is narrowing of the colon due to inflammatory disease (i.e. Diverticulitis, Crohn's, Ulcerative Colitis), or when treatment, such as radiation, damages or irritates the gastrointestinal tract. As your digestive system returns to normal, you usually can slowly add more fiber back into your diet.

Diet details: A low-fiber diet limits the types of vegetables, fruits, cereals and grains that you can eat. Occasionally, your doctor may also want you to limit the amount of milk and milk products that you can eat. Milk doesn't contain fiber, but it may leave a residue in the digestive tract and because of your current medical condition, temporarily contribute to discomfort and diarrhea. Because the ability to digest food varies from person to person, the following are guidelines about the types and amounts of foods for a low-fiber diet. Depending on your condition and tolerance, your doctor may recommend a diet that is more or less restricted. Also, be sure to read food labels. Foods you might not expect, can be high in fiber.

LOW-FIBER FOODS	FOODS TO AVOID
Enriched white bread or rolls without seeds	Whole-wheat or whole-grain breads, cereal or pastas
White rice, plain white pasta, noodles and macaroni	Brown or wild rice and other whole grains such as oats, kasha, barley and quinoa
Crackers	Dried fruits and prune juice
Pancakes or waffles made from white refined flour	Raw fruit, including those with seeds, skin or membranes, such as berries
Refined cereals such as cream of wheat	Raw or undercooked vegetables, including corn
Most canned or cooked fruits without skins, seeds or membranes	Dried beans, peas and lentils
Fruit and vegetable juice with little or no pulp, fruit flavored drinks and flavored water	Seeds and nuts, and foods containing them
Canned or well-cooked vegetables without seeds, hulls or skins, such as carrots, potatoes or tomatoes	Coconut
Tender meat, poultry and fish	Popcorn
Eggs	
Tofu	
Creamy peanut butter-up to 2 tablespoons a day	
Milk and food made from milk, such as yogurt, pudding, ice cream, cheeses and sour cream-up to 2 cups a day, including any used in cooking	
Butter, margarine, oils and salad dressings without seeds	
Desserts with no whole grains, seeds, nuts, raisins or coconut	

Keep in mind you may have fewer bowel movements and smaller stools while you're following a low-fiber diet. To avoid constipation, you may need to drink extra fluids. Drink plenty of water unless your doctor tells you otherwise, and use juices and milk as noted.

Results: Eating a low-fiber diet will limit your bowel movements and help ease diarrhea or other symptoms of abdominal conditions, such as abdominal pain. Once your digestive system has returned to normal, you can slowly reintroduce fiber into your diet.

Risks: Because a low-fiber diet restricts what you can eat, it can be difficult to meet your nutritional needs. Therefore you should use a low-fiber diet only as long as directed by your doctor. If you must stay on this diet a longer time, consult a registered dietician to make sure your nutritional needs are being met.

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