

# Eating a Low-fiber Diet

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## What is fiber?

Fiber is the part of food that the body can't digest. It helps form stools (bowel movements).

If you eat less fiber, you may:

- Reduce belly pain, diarrhea (loose, watery stools) and other digestive problems
- Have fewer and smaller stools
- Decrease inflammation (pain, redness and swelling) in the GI (gastro-intestinal) tract
- Promote healing in the GI tract.

For a list of foods allowed in a low-fiber diet, see the back of this page.

## Why might I need a low-fiber diet?

You may need a low-fiber diet if you have:

- Inflamed bowels
- Crohn's disease
- Diverticular disease
- Ulcerative colitis
- Radiation therapy to the belly area
- Chemotherapy
- An upcoming colonoscopy
- Surgery on your intestines or in the belly area.

## Sample Menu

### Breakfast:

1 scrambled egg  
1 slice white toast with 1 teaspoon margarine or butter  
½ cup Cream of Wheat with sugar  
½ cup milk  
½ cup pulp-free orange juice

### Snack:

1 to 2 tablespoons smooth peanut butter  
½ banana  
6 saltine crackers

### Lunch:

Tuna sandwich on white bread  
1 cup cream of chicken soup  
½ cup canned peaches (in light syrup)  
1 cup lemonade

### Snack:

½ cup cottage cheese  
½ cup canned fruit

### Dinner:

3 ounces well-cooked chicken breast  
1 cup white rice  
½ cup cooked, canned carrots  
1 white dinner roll with 1 teaspoon margarine or butter  
1 slice angel food cake  
1 cup herbal tea

Food group	ALLOWED	AVOID
<b>Grains</b>	Foods that contain refined white flour ( <b>1 gram fiber or less per serving</b> ), such as bread, pasta, muffins, cereals, crackers, etc.; white rice; Cream of Wheat; Cream of Rice	Whole grains (whole wheat bread, oatmeal, barley, brown or wild rice); foods containing nuts, seeds or bran
<b>Vegetables</b>	Canned or well-cooked vegetables; mashed potatoes; <b>non</b> -gas-forming vegetables; vegetables <b>without</b> skin, seeds or pulp; vegetable juice (½ cup per day or less)	Raw vegetables; cooked greens or spinach; gas-forming vegetables (broccoli, cauliflower, brussels sprouts); dried beans or peas (legumes)
<b>Fruits</b>	<b>Peeled</b> fresh fruit (bananas, melons); canned fruit (in juice or light syrup); fruit juice <b>without</b> pulp; applesauce	Dried fruit; fruit with pulp (oranges, grapefruit, pineapple); unpeeled fruit; prune juice; fruit with seeds or skins on
<b>Meats and other proteins</b>	Tender, well-cooked or ground meats; fish; eggs; tofu; <b>smooth</b> nut butters (peanut, soy, almond, sunflower)	Crunchy nut butters; tough meats; meats with gristle (bacon, sausage); dried beans or peas (legumes)
<b>Milk products</b>	Milk, soy milk, rice milk, almond milk, coconut milk; yogurt, soy yogurt; cottage cheese, mild cheese; ice cream, sherbet	<b>If you are lactose intolerant:</b> avoid milk, dairy products and foods made with milk.  <i>Note: Some people become lactose intolerant after surgery. This may or may not improve over time.</i>
<b>Other</b>	Salad dressings; oil, butter, margarine; jelly, honey, syrup	Any food containing nuts or seeds; coconut; marmalade; carbonated (“fizzy”) drinks