

Limited Fiber

You may be asked to make short-term changes to your diet following recent intestinal surgery, diarrhea, or if you are at risk of developing an intestinal obstruction. These changes can help your body heal and reduce symptoms like nausea, gas, bloating, feelings of fullness, and abdominal cramping. Each person is different, and your medical team will work with you to determine how long to follow the diet. There is not one length of time that will work for each person.

What is a limited fiber diet?

A limited fiber diet is one that contains a decreased amount of dietary fiber. Fiber is the part of a plant the body does not digest, but it is still necessary for health. There are two types of fiber, insoluble and soluble. Insoluble fiber helps your food digest faster. Insoluble fiber is found in whole grains, nuts, seeds, berries and some vegetables. Soluble fiber absorbs fluid in your digestive track and thickens stool. Soluble fiber is found in cooked carrots, instant oatmeal, bananas, rice, and potatoes.

How do I follow the diet?

- **Eat small, frequent meals.** Try to eat every 2-4 hours instead of 3 large meals per day. Some people find 5 to 6 small meals per day works well.
- **Add a protein source to each meal/snack.** Choose lean protein foods including poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, whey protein powders and yogurt.
- **Choose low fiber foods.**
- **Avoid gas-forming vegetables** such as including broccoli, cauliflowers, cabbage, onions, and garlic, if you are experiencing flatulence.
- **Chew!** Digestion will be easier when food is well-chewed.
- **Report any changes in:** bowel symptoms, such as constipation, nausea/vomiting, or pain to your medical team.

Sample menu

Breakfast

1-2 scrambled eggs
with cooked
mushrooms
1 slice toast (<2
grams fiber/slice)
1 teaspoon butter
½ cup applesauce

OR

1 cup cooked
oatmeal
1 teaspoon butter
1 banana
6 oz milk

Lunch

½ cup plain tuna salad
(prepared with
mayonnaise)
6 crackers (<2 grams
fiber/serving and no
seeds)
1/8 avocado, sliced
½ cup applesauce

OR

Chicken noodle soup
with broth, chicken
pieces, egg noodles
6 crackers (<2 grams
fiber/
serving and no seeds)

Dinner

2-4 oz grilled, skinless
chicken
½ cup mashed potatoes,
without
skin
½ cup tender, cooked green
beans
1 teaspoon butter

OR

3-4 oz salmon
½ cup white rice
1 cup broccoli
tips (steamed)
Herbal tea

Food recommendations for home

Try these:	Limit/avoid these:
Protein	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well cooked, lean, tender fish, meat, poultry, or tofu (broiled, steamed, poached or baked) Creamy peanut butter and other nut butters Eggs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All high fat meats, fried meats, meat with casing (sausage, hot dogs) Nuts, seeds Crunchy peanut butter or other nut butters Beans, lentils, legumes
Grains	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cream of Rice[®], Cream of Wheat[®], grits or instant oatmeal, Cheerios[®], cornflakes, Just Right[®], Puffed Wheat[®], Rice Krispies[®], Special K[®] Cereals or breads with less than 2 grams of fiber Plain bagel or dinner roll without seeds, English muffin, tortilla, white bread Pasta White rice Saltines or other low fiber crackers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cereal with nuts, raisins, seeds, coconut or other dried fruit Whole wheat cereal or cereal with 3 grams fiber or more Whole or multigrain bread Bread with raisins, nuts, coconut or other dried fruit Whole grain pasta Whole grain crackers Brown rice Barley Popcorn
Vegetables	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well-cooked green beans, broccoli tips and asparagus Peeled and cooked carrots, beets and acorn squash Mushrooms and tomato sauce Most other well-cooked vegetables without seeds or skins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raw vegetables Cooked vegetables with large seeds like tomatoes, zucchini, or cucumber Corn Potato skins If you have gas, avoid gas-forming vegetables: broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, onions, garlic

Fruit	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bananas • Avocado • Mango • Papaya • Ripe melon • Cooked or canned fruit like applesauce, peaches, pears and other fruit without skin or seeds. • Fruit should be packed in juice not syrup. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All raw, fresh fruit except those recommended • Dried fruit (raisins, prunes, apricots) • Canned fruit with skins and/or seeds
Dairy	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milk, yogurt, cottage cheese, other cheeses as tolerated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruit-flavored yogurt with seeds or berries
Other	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broths • Strained soups • Rice, almond, soy, or coconut milk • Tea and coffee if approved by your dietitian. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foods or fluids with caffeine • Alcohol • Spicy foods

This education resource was intended to be given as a part of a nutrition consult by a Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center dietitian. Questions? Ask a Fred Hutch dietitian at nutrition@seattlecca.org.