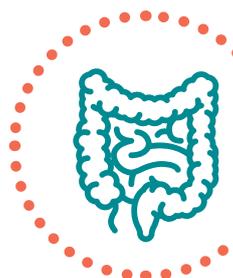


Eating for a healthy gut

When one suffers from gastrointestinal symptoms such as constipation, diarrhoea, bloating or abdominal cramps often associated with conditions such as piles, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and inflammatory diseases (ulcerative colitis, coeliac disease and Crohn's disease), the food you eat could have a significant impact on your health.¹



Inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), encompassing both Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis (UC), is a chronic inflammatory intestinal disorder. A number of factors such as interactions between drugs and food, the location of the disease, symptoms and dietary restrictions can lead to protein energy malnutrition and specific nutritional deficiencies.²

Patients suffering from IBD should follow a normal, healthy diet as best as can be tolerated. But some patients may benefit from a tailored diet that is dictated by your food preferences and the symptoms experienced.²

Low FODMAP diet^{3,4}

Target symptom: *Diarrhoea, bloating*

Conditions it may present in: *Inflammatory bowel diseases, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) with diarrhoea*

FODMAP stands for Fermentable Oligosaccharides, Disaccharides, Monosaccharides and Polyols. FODMAPs are carbohydrates that do not fully absorb in the digestive tract and can irritate the bowels of people suffering from Crohn's disease or IBS. The FODMAPs draw water into the intestines and get fermented by the gut bacteria to produce gas, bloating and a change in intestine movement.^{1,3,4}

Foods that are regarded high FODMAP foods^{1,3,4}

FOOD TYPE	HIGH FODMAP FOODS TO BE AVOIDED	ALTERNATIVES
Fruit	Apples, avocado, mangoes, pears, watermelons, apricots, nectarines, persimmons, cherries, lychees, peaches, plums	Bananas, blueberries, cantaloupes, grapefruit, honeydew melon, kiwi, lemons, limes, mandarin, oranges, passion fruit, pawpaw, raspberries, strawberries
Vegetables	Onion, garlic, spring onion, asparagus, brussels sprouts, beetroot, broccoli, cabbage, eggplant, okra, leek, fennel, cauliflower, green bell pepper, mushrooms, sweet corn	Carrots, celery, chives, choy sum, green beans, lettuce, parsnips, pumpkins, spring onions (green part only), tomatoes; garlic-infused oil, onion and garlic substitutes
Legumes	Baked beans, chickpeas, soybeans, kidney beans, lentils	Canned chickpeas
Grains	Cereal, wheat bread, rye bread, couscous, pasta	Gluten-free and spelt bread and cereal products
Dairy (containing lactose)	Milk, ice cream, soft cheese, yogurt	Lactose-free milk and yogurt, rice milk, hard cheeses, butter, ice cream substitutes such as gelato and sorbet
Sweeteners	Sorbitol, xylitol, maltitol, isomalt, mannitol	Sucrose, glucose, maple syrup, golden syrup



The low FODMAP diet requires a very drastic change, and is introduced in a 2-step approach:^{1,4}

1. Elimination of high FODMAP foods over 6–8 weeks.
Keep an eye on your symptoms and see if they improve.

2. Reintroduce high FODMAP foods gradually
Foods that have been excluded should be reintroduced into the diet gradually and the symptoms assessed.

The aim of this approach is to make sure you can still eat the maximum variety of foods as you can tolerate, with still controlling your symptoms.⁴

The low FODMAP diet has proven to reduce gastrointestinal symptoms such as abdominal pain, diarrhoea and bloating in conditions such as inflammatory bowel diseases and IBS and is recommended by the British Dietetic Association as part of IBS treatment.³⁻⁵

General dietary considerations for a healthy gut:²⁻⁶



Eat smaller, frequent meals, and use of oral liquid supplements can also be used



Reduce intake of fats and spices



Reduce caffeine consumption



Reduce alcohol consumption



Avoid processed, junk food and carbonated drinks



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