

# Diarrhea Nutrition Therapy

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## What is Diarrhea?

- Diarrhea is when you have loose or watery bowel movements that occur more than 3 times per day. This may also be associated with stomach cramps, bloating and pain.
- Depending on the cause of your diarrhea and length of time you have it, some diet and medication changes may be helpful.
- If you have chronic diarrhea (longer than 6 months), then it is recommended to see a Dietitian to review and help manage your symptoms.

## What are some causes of diarrhea?

- Bacterial or viral infection
- Some medications (ex. Antibiotics)
- Food intolerances (ex. Lactose)
- Contaminated water or spoiled food
- Bowel surgery
- Irritable Bowel Disease
- Inflammatory Bowel conditions (Crohn's disease, Ulcerative Colitis, Celiac)
- Mental health factors (ex. Stress or anxiety)

## General tips to help with diarrhea

- Eat smaller meals more frequently.
- Avoid beverages with caffeine.
- Limit physical activity directly after meals.
- Make sure you drink enough fluids in a day to replace lost fluids (9-13 cups of fluid per day).
- Soluble fibre supplements may help improve diarrhea. Some examples include Metamucil and psyllium powder. Talk with your doctor or Dietitian and ask if a fibre supplement would be beneficial for you.
- Discuss probiotics with your doctor or Dietitian. There are many types of probiotics and each one if effective for specific causes of diarrhea. Probiotics contain healthy bacteria that may help reduce the number of loose bowel movements. They come in many different forms including pill, drink and yogurt.

## What diet changes can help with diarrhea?

- Following a diet that is lower in insoluble fibre, fat, lactose and sugar may help improve diarrhea. See below for specific recommendations.

Food Group	Foods to Choose	Foods to Avoid
<b>Grain Products</b>	<p>Choose grains made from white or refined flour.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bagels, bread, rolls, crackers, pasta, rice, English muffins, pancakes, waffles</li> <li>• Cream of wheat, oatmeal, Corn Flakes, Special K, Rice Krispies, Puffed Rice, Cheerios</li> </ul>	<p>Avoid grains made from whole wheat or whole grain.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bran, bran cereals (All Bran, Bran Buds, Raisin Bran, Bran Flakes), granola cereal, Red River, Shredded Wheat, pop corn</li> <li>• Whole wheat bagels, bread, rolls, crackers, pasta, rice, English muffins, crackers</li> <li>• Grains that contain nuts, seeds or dried fruit</li> </ul>
<b>Fruit</b>	<p>Fruits without skin, seeds and membranes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Banana, honeydew, cantaloupe, watermelon, applesauce, mixed fruit sauces, mango, peeled apples, pears, peaches, nectarines, plums, apricots</li> <li>• Natural sugar in fruit may make diarrhea worse- try to limit serving size to ½ cup</li> </ul>	<p>Fruits with skin, seeds and membranes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strawberries, blueberries, blackberries, cherries, grapes, prunes, rhubarb, coconut, dried fruit</li> <li>• Prune juice, all other juices with added sugar</li> <li>• Canned fruit in heavy syrup, fruits sweetened with sorbitol</li> </ul>
<b>Vegetables</b>	<p>Vegetable without skin and seeds and cooked.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• White or sweet potato, squash, carrots, green or yellow beans, vegetable juices, lettuce (iceberg, Boston)</li> </ul>	<p>Raw vegetables with skin and seeds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raw vegetables</li> <li>• Broccoli, Brussel sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, collard, mustard and turnip greens, corn, beets, fried vegetables</li> </ul>

<p><b><u>Food Group</u></b></p>	<p><b><u>Foods to Choose</u></b></p>	<p><b><u>Foods to Avoid</u></b></p>
<p><b>Dairy</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skim or 1% milk, buttermilk, soy milk, powdered milk</li> <li>• Yogurt</li> <li>• Low fat cheese</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you have lactose intolerance, drinking milk products may make your diarrhea worse</li> <li>• Try lactose free products</li> <li>• Avoid yogurts with nuts, seeds and dried fruit</li> </ul>
<p><b>Proteins</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tender, well cooked lean meat, pork, poultry, fish, eggs, soy based foods, smooth nut butters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fried meat, poultry or fish</li> <li>• Processed meats (lunch meat, hot dogs, sausage, bacon)</li> <li>• Beans, legumes, seeds, nuts</li> <li>• Chunky nut butters</li> <li>• Nuts, seeds</li> </ul>
<p><b>Fats</b></p>	<p>Limit fat to 8 tsp per day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oil (olive, canola etc.), butter, cream, cream cheese, margarine, mayonnaise, salad dressings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foods with excessive added fat such as cookies, cakes, donuts, deep fried foods</li> </ul>
<p><b>Other</b></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High fat, high sugar desserts such as ice cream, pastries, donuts, other desserts made with cream or whole milk</li> <li>• Sugar alcohols such as xylitol and sorbitol</li> <li>• Honey</li> <li>• Some spices such as hot peppers, hot pepper sauce, chilies, chili sauce, curry</li> </ul>

<p><b>Beverages</b></p>	<p>Keep hydrated with fluids that will replenish losses. Aim for 9-13 cups per day with more if diarrhea losses are high.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Water, rehydration solutions (G2 Gatorade), decaffeinated coffee and tea</li><li>• Nutrition supplements like Ensure or Boost may be helpful if intake is poor but the lower sugar versions are preferred.</li></ul>	<p>Avoid beverages that will make diarrhea worse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Caffeine containing beverages such as coffee, tea, cola, energy drinks</li><li>• High sugar beverages such as pop, added sugar juice, fruit beverages, beverages sweetened with sorbitol</li><li>• Alcoholic beverages</li><li>• Fluids that contain fructose</li></ul>
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## Sample Menu

**\*\*Remember to sip on rehydration solution or water throughout the day**

<b>Breakfast</b>	1 cup of refined oatmeal (no added sugar) 1 cup of milk 1 egg ½ ripe banana
<b>Morning Snack</b>	2 ounces of cheese 4 crackers
<b>Lunch</b>	2 cups of chicken vegetable noodle soup (if store bought, add ¼ cup cooked chicken) 1 slice of white toast or crackers ½ cup applesauce
<b>Afternoon Snack</b>	2 Tbsp of smooth peanut butter 4 pieces of melba toast
<b>Dinner</b>	4-6 ounces of baked fish or chicken ½ baked potato, without skin ½ cup cooked green beans
<b>Evening Snack</b>	Social tea cookies

Registered Dietitian: \_\_\_\_\_

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