

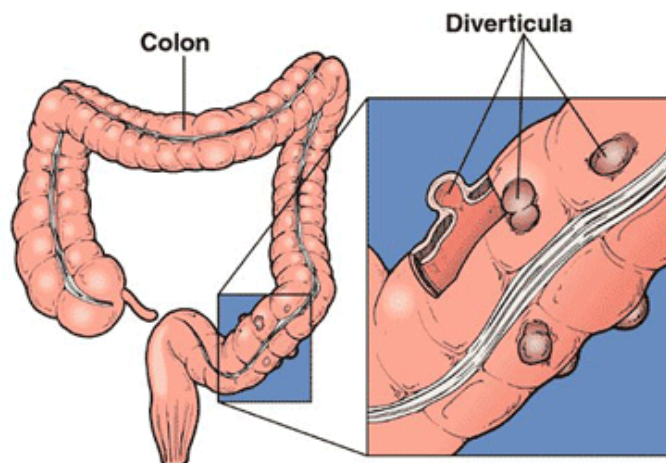
## Diverticular Disease

**Diverticular Disease** means having either diverticulosis or diverticulitis

**Diverticula** are small pouches or sacs that form in the wall of the intestinal tract. Diverticula can form anywhere, including in your esophagus, stomach, and small intestine. Most occur in your large intestine. Many people are unaware of these pouches since they seldom cause problems.

**Diverticulosis** means having diverticula without any symptoms. Occasionally there may be constipation or bleeding.

**Diverticulitis** is when the pouches or sacs get inflamed and become infected. If you have diverticulitis, you may notice pain in your lower left abdomen and a change in bowel habits. Other symptoms include abdominal tenderness, fever, nausea, vomiting, bloating, bleeding from your rectum, frequent or painful urination.



### Risk Factors

Diverticula develop when naturally weak places in your colon give way under pressure. This causes marble-sized pouches to protrude through the colon wall...the following may increase the pressure on the wall of your colon...

- ✗ Aging - diverticulitis is more common in people over the age of 40.
- ✗ Too little fibre - fibre helps keep the stool soft. A diet low in fibre can cause hard stools and constipation which can put pressure on the colon wall.
- ✗ Lack of activity - the association between lack of activity and diverticular disease is not completely understood. However, exercise does help promote normal bowel function
- ✗ Ignoring bowel urges - delaying bowel movements can lead to harder stools that require more force to pass.

## Nutrition for *Diverticulosis*

Follow these guidelines when you are *feeling well*.

- Enjoy a healthy diet that includes a wide variety of foods. Refer to Canada's Food Guide. [www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide](http://www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide)
- Eat plenty of high fibre foods:
  - Choose whole grain bread, crackers and pasta noodles, whole grain and bran cereals, brown rice, lentils, and dried beans, and fruits and vegetables.
  - Aim to include 7 to 10 servings of fruits and vegetables daily. The kind of fibre in Fruits and vegetables may help prevent diverticula from forming and make the symptoms of diverticular disease less severe.
  - Refer to this table to see how much fibre you need daily:



Gender	Age	Recommended fibre amount per day
Men	19-50	38 grams
Men	> 50	30 grams
Women	19-50	25 grams
Women	> 50	21 grams



- Add High fibre foods slowly into your diet and eat small amounts at one time. Adding too much fibre at one time can lead to discomfort such as abdominal bloating, gas and cramping.
- Drinking plenty of fluid goes hand in hand with a high fibre diet. The fluid will help keep your stools soft so they can pass easily. Without liquids, fibre does not work properly. Drink 6 to 8 cups of fluid daily (1.5 to 2.0 litres). At least half of this fluid should come from water.
- Keep meat and alternative serving sizes within those recommended by Canada's Food Guide (5 oz per day for women, 7.5 oz per day for men). Some evidence suggests that consuming large amounts of red meat may increase risk of diverticular disease. If you like red meat, include it as part of a healthy diet that also try other choices from this food group such as poultry, fish, dried peas, beans and lentils and tofu.
- Respond to bowel urges, don't delay. Delaying bowel movements leads to harder stools that require more force to pass and increase the pressure within your colon.






- Exercise regularly - Health Canada recommends 30 to 60 minutes of moderate activity on most days of the week. Exercise helps promote normal bowel function and may help lower the risk of diverticulitis. Follow the recommendations for your age in the Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines: <http://www.csep.ca/english/view.asp?x=804>
- Fibre supplements such as psyllium (Metamucil) or methylcellulose (Citrucel) have not been proven to help manage diverticular disease. However, these supplements can help boost your overall fibre intake if you are not getting enough dietary fibre each day.

- Avoidance of nuts, corn, popcorn and seeds such as sunflower, pumpkin, caraway, and sesame seeds is often recommended. However, eating more of these foods can reduce the chance of developing diverticulitis and related complications.
- The seeds in tomatoes, zucchini, cucumbers, strawberries, and raspberries, as well as poppy seeds, are generally considered harmless.
- People differ in the amounts and types of foods they can eat. Decisions about your diet should be made based on what works best for you.
- Keeping a food diary may help identify what foods may cause you symptoms.

## Appendix 1: Counting Fibre

Table 1: Fibre Content of a few Common Foods

<b>A Very High Source (more than 6 grams of fibre/serving)</b>	<b>Serving Size</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High fibre bran cereal (All Bran®, Bran Buds®, 100% Bran®, check labels for other cereals)</li> <li>• Legumes (dried peas, beans, lentils), kidney beans, lima beans, baked beans, green peas</li> <li>• Dates, dried </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <math>\frac{3}{4}</math> cup</li> <li>• 1 cup</li> <li>• 4 large</li> </ul>
<b>A High Source (4-6 grams of fibre/serving)</b>	<b>Serving Size</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pear with skin</li> <li>• Figs, dried</li> <li>• Prunes </li> <li>• Apricots, dried</li> <li>• Raspberries, blueberries or blackberries</li> <li>• Pasta, whole wheat</li> <li>• Barley, cooked</li> <li>• Brussels sprouts, cooked</li> <li>• Bran Flakes®, Corn Bran®, Raisin Bran®</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 medium</li> <li>• 5</li> <li>• 7</li> <li>• 8</li> <li>• <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup</li> <li>• 1 cup</li> <li>• 1 cup</li> <li>• <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup</li> <li>• <math>\frac{3}{4}</math> cup</li> </ul>
<b>A source (2-4 grams of fibre/serving)</b>	<b>Serving Size</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole wheat, multigrain bread</li> <li>• Whole wheat english muffin</li> <li>• Whole wheat pita bread</li> <li>• 1 packet of whole-grain cereal, hot (oatmeal)</li> <li>• Ground flaxseed</li> <li>• Brown rice or couscous, cooked</li> <li>• Quinoa, cooked </li> <li>• Baked potato or sweet potato with skin</li> <li>• Nuts (almonds, walnuts, peanuts)</li> <li>• Peanut butter or Almond butter</li> <li>• Sesame seeds</li> <li>• Orange, banana, kiwi, nectarine, peach, apple with skin</li> <li>• Strawberries</li> <li>• Most vegetables</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 slice</li> <li>• 1 muffin</li> <li>• <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> pita</li> <li>• 1 packet</li> <li>• 1 tbsp.</li> <li>• 1 cup</li> <li>• <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup</li> <li>• 1 medium</li> <li>• <math>\frac{1}{4}</math> cup</li> <li>• 2 tbsp</li> <li>• 2 tbsp</li> <li>• 1 medium</li> <li>• 1 cup</li> <li>• <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup</li> </ul>

# Label Reading Your Way to a HIGHER Fibre Diet

## Use the Nutrition Facts Table

Look at the Nutrition Facts panel to determine if a food contains fibre. This product has 2 grams of fibre per 125 ml serving.

Nutrition Facts	
Per 125 mL (87 g)*	
Amount	% Daily Value**
<b>Calories</b> 80	
<b>Fat</b> 0.5 g	1 %
Saturated 0 g	
+ Trans 0 g	0 %
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0 mg	
<b>Sodium</b> 0 mg	0 %
<b>Carbohydrate</b> 18 g	6 %
Fibre 2 g	8 %
Sugars 2 g	
<b>Protein</b> 3 g	
Vitamin A 2 %	Vitamin C 10 %
Calcium 0 %	Iron 2 %

Look at the percent daily value.

- Foods with a Daily Value of **5% or less** contain a little amount of fibre.
- Foods with a Daily Value of **15% or more** contain a lot of fibre.
- Choose foods that have **greater than 5%** of fibre per serving size.

This product has 8% of your daily value of fibre per 125 ml serving.

### Fibre content claims on Food Labels

**Source of fibre**

**High Source of fibre**

**Very High source of fibre**

**More fibre or higher in fibre**

The food contains 2 g or more of fibre per serving

The food contains 4g or more of fibre per serving

The food contains 6 g or more of fibre per serving

The food contains at least: 25% more fibre






## Nutrition for *Diverticulitis*

Follow these guidelines when you are feeling **unwell** for the amount of time recommended by your dietitian.

Usually, fibre can be gradually added back into the diet after you are starting to feel better (ie. issues such as abdominal tenderness, fever, nausea, vomiting, bloating have resolved). This may take a few days to a few weeks.

**Table 2: Low Fibre Diet**

Food Group	Foods Recommended	Foods to Avoid
Milk products	All	
Breads and cereals  	All made from white refined flours without nuts, seeds, or dried fruit  <b>Breads</b> - plain, white or rolls  <b>Crackers</b> - soda, melba toast, rusks or similar  <b>Cereals</b> - plain refined cereals, Rice Krispies®, Special K®, Corn Flakes®, puffed rice, cream of rice, cream of wheat, oatmeal  <b>Pasta &amp; Rice</b> - plain refined pasta noodles, white rice	Whole grain flours and baked products with nuts, seeds, dried fruit  <b>Breads</b> - rolls, crackers or cookies containing nuts, seeds, dried fruit  <b>Cereals</b> - bran, whole grain cereals, granola cereals with nuts or dried fruit.  <b>Pasta &amp; Rice</b> - Whole grain pasta, brown or wild rice
Meats and alternatives	All meat, fish, poultry, cheese and eggs	Legumes (lentils, dried beans, peas, soybeans), nuts and seeds
Fruits	Fruit juice (except prune), <u>canned</u> fruit, banana, <u>peeled</u> apple or pear, applesauce, cantaloupe, honey dew melon	Prune juice, prunes, dried fruit, fresh fruit with skins and seeds, rhubarb, berries

Vegetables	<p><u>Cooked vegetables</u> - carrots, potatoes, parsnip, squash, beets, green or wax beans, tomatoes (no skins or seeds), tomato sauce, tomato paste, vegetable juices</p> 	<p>Raw vegetables, vegetable skins (potato), stringy vegetables (asparagus, celery), broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, corn, cauliflower, cucumber, eggplant lettuce, green pepper, radishes, spinach, mushrooms, peas, turnip</p>
Desserts	<p>Desserts made <u>without nuts and seeds or dried fruits</u>; plain cakes or cookies, Jell-O, ice cream, milk puddings, or mousse, sherbet</p>	<p>Desserts made with nuts or seeds, dried fruit</p> 
Other	<p><u>Smooth</u> peanut butter Plain candies, chocolate, jelly, honey, syrup</p>	<p>Crunchy peanut butter Coconut, olives, pickles, popcorn, candies made with nuts or dried fruits, jam, marmalade</p>

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

905-378-4647 ext. \_\_\_\_\_

**HOW ARE WE DOING?**

You can provide feedback  
or suggestions for  
Niagara Health Clinical  
Nutrition services at:

[www.niagarahealth.on.ca/en/clinical-nutrition](http://www.niagarahealth.on.ca/en/clinical-nutrition)