

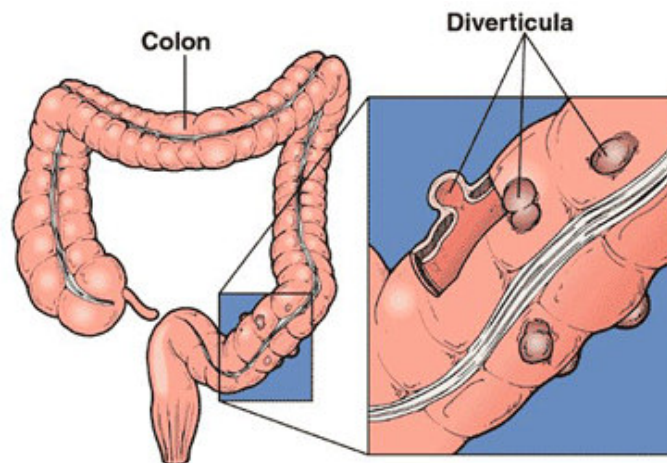


# Diverticular Disease

**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 diverticular disease without any symptoms.

**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.

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

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

## Nutrition for *Diverticulosis*

Follow these guidelines when you are *feeling well*.

- Enjoy a healthy diet that includes a variety of foods. Refer to Canada's Food Guide.
- Eat plenty of high fibre foods:
  - Choose whole grain bread, crackers and 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. Fruits and vegetables may help prevent diverticula from forming.
  - 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





- 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. Fibre loses its benefit without adequate liquids. 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 includes poultry, fish, beans and lentils.
- Respond to bowel urges



- 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.
- Fibre supplements have not been proven to help manage diverticular disease. However, these supplements (ie. bran, methylcellulose - found in some over the counter fibre supplements) can help boost your overall fibre intake if you are not getting enough dietary fibre
- There is no proof that seeds, nuts, corn, popcorn or tomatoes need be avoided in a person with diverticular disease. However, you should continue to choose these foods in moderation and chew them well.

## 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>Sweet potato</li> <li>Figs, dried</li> <li>Prunes</li> <li>Apricots, dried</li> <li>Raspberries</li> <li>Pasta, whole wheat</li> <li>Barley, cooked</li> <li>Blueberries</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><math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup</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{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 pita bread</li> <li>Brown rice, cooked</li> <li>Baked potato with skin</li> <li>Nuts (almonds, walnuts, peanuts)</li> <li>Peanut 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><math>\frac{1}{2}</math> pita</li> <li>1 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>

Reading a label for fibre content:

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

### 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 %

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## 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 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 	<u>Cooked vegetables</u> - carrots, potatoes, parsnip, squash, beets, green or wax beans, tomatoes (no skins or seeds), tomato sauce, tomato paste, vegetable juices	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
Desserts	Desserts made <u>without nuts and seeds or dried fruits</u> ; plain cakes or cookies, Jell-O, ice cream, milk puddings, or mousse, sherbet	Desserts made with nuts or seeds, dried fruit 
Other	<u>Smooth</u> peanut butter Plain candies, chocolate, jelly, honey, syrup	Crunchy peanut butter Coconut, olives, pickles, popcorn, candies made with nuts or dried fruits, jam, marmalade 