

Low Fiber/Low Residue Diet

Purpose

Dietary fiber is the undigestible part of plants that maintains the structure of the plant. Dietary fiber includes cellulose, hemicellulose, polysaccharides, pectins, gums, mucilages, and lignins. Although they are chemically unrelated, they all resist digestion by the human body. It is this resistance that makes these fibers important in both the normal functioning and in disorders of the large intestine or colon.

In certain medical conditions, it is important to restrict fiber. These include acute or subacute diverticulitis, and the acute phases of certain inflammatory conditions of the bowel – ulcerative colitis or Crohn’s disease. After some types of intestinal surgery, a low fiber/low residue diet may be used as a transition to a regular diet. A low fiber diet may also be used for a period of time after a colostomy or ileostomy is performed.

Nutrition Facts

Depending upon individual food selection, the low fiber/low residue diet is adequate in all nutrients (National Research Council’s Recommended Dietary Allowance). If the diet must be strict and followed over a long period of time, the intake of fruits and vegetables may not be adequate; and/or on a low residue diet, there may not be enough calcium included. In these cases, a multivitamin supplement or liquid nutritional supplement may be needed.

Special Considerations

If a low fiber or low residue diet results in abdominal cramps or discomfort, notify the dietitian or physician immediately.

Food Groups

Group	Recommend	Avoid
Milk & Milk Products (2 or more cups daily)	all milk products	Low Residue Diet – only 2 cups daily of all milk products
Vegetables (2 servings daily) 1 serving = 1/2 cup	vegetable juice without pulp; the following cooked vegetables: yellow squash (without seeds), green beans, wax beans, spinach, pumpkin, eggplant, potatoes without skin, asparagus, beets, carrots; tomato sauce and paste	vegetable juices with pulp, raw vegetables, cooked vegetables not on the Recommend list
Fruits (2-3 servings daily) 1 serving = 1/2 cup	fruit juices without pulp, canned fruit except pineapple, ripe bananas, melons, peeled and cooked apples, orange and grapefruit without the membrane	fruit juices with pulp, canned pineapple, fresh fruit except those on Recommend list, prunes, prune juice, dried fruit, jam, marmalade
Starches – Bread & Grains (4 or more servings daily)	bread and cereals made from refined flours, pasta, white rice, saltines, tapioca	whole-grain breads, cereals, rice, pasta, bran cereal, oatmeal
Meat or meat substitutes (5-6 oz daily)	meat, poultry, eggs, seafood, cottage cheese, other mildly flavored cheese	chunky peanut butter, nuts, seeds, dried beans, dried peas, tough gristly meats, hot dogs, sausage, sardines, fried meats, strongly flavored cheeses
Fats & Oils	all oils, margarine, butter	coconuts, fats used for deep frying
Sweets & Desserts (servings depend on caloric needs) list	all not on Avoid list	desserts containing nuts, coconut, raisins, seeds
Miscellaneous	all not on Avoid list	popcorn, pickles, horseradish, relish

Sample Menu

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
orange juice 1/2 cup cornflakes 1 cup poached egg white toast 1 slice margarine 1 tsp jelly 1 Tbsp skim milk 1 cup coffee 3/4 cup sugar 1 tsp non-dairy creamer salt/pepper	fish 3 oz rice 1/2 cup cooked green beans 1/2 cup white bread 1 slice margarine 1 tsp jelly 1 Tbsp applesauce 1/2 cup coffee 3/4 cup sugar 1 tsp non-dairy creamer salt/pepper	chicken breast 3 oz noodle 1/2 cup cooked carrots 1/2 cup white bread 1 slice margarine 1 tsp jelly 1 Tbsp canned peaches 1/2 cup skim milk 1 cup coffee 3/4 cup sugar 1 tsp non-dairy creamer salt/pepper