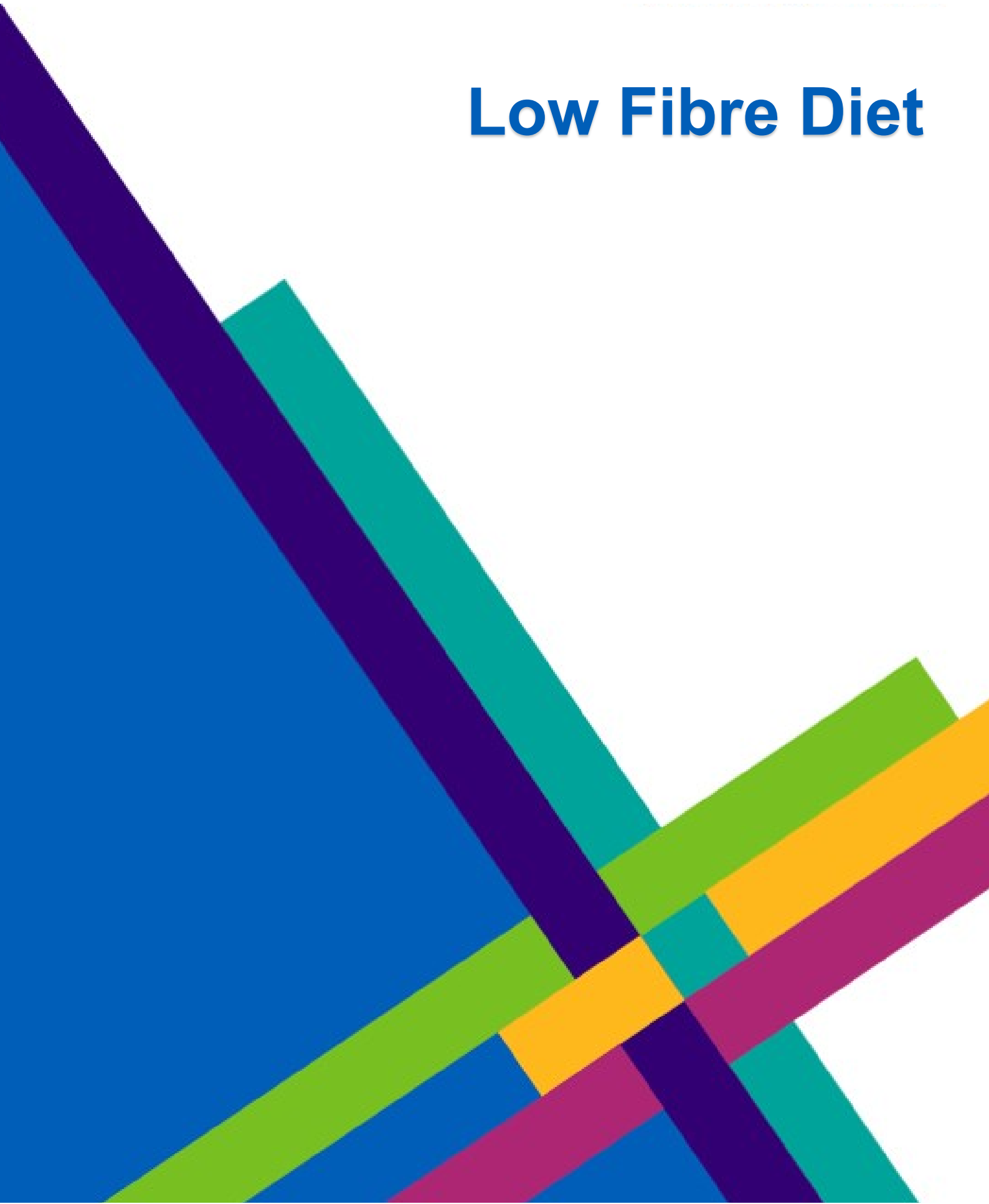




Salisbury
NHS Foundation Trust

Low Fibre Diet



This information has been provided to you as you have been recommended to follow a low fibre diet by a health care professional. It should provide you with some general guidance and advice.

If you have any questions, please contact your Colorectal Clinical Nurse Specialists or the relevant health care professional that has advised you to follow this diet.

Why have I been advised to follow a low fibre diet?

A low fibre diet may have been recommended if:

- You have had bowel surgery
- Your bowel is at risk of obstructing (blocking)
- You are experiencing diarrhoea or inflammation as a result of functional bowel disorder, treatment (such as radiotherapy) or due to a flare-up of an inflammatory bowel disease (such as Crohn's)

A diet low in fibre may reduce the amount of gas (wind) produced and bulk of the stool (faeces) passing through your bowel. This should help to reduce symptoms such as bloating and abdominal (tummy) discomfort and may also reduce the risk of your bowel becoming obstructed (blocked).

The need for a low fibre diet is usually temporary but can sometimes be permanent.

If your normal diet is rich in fruit, vegetables and wholegrains, then following a low fibre diet may be challenging, however, the purpose of this diet is to reduce your symptoms. It is important to maintain a balanced diet whilst on a low fibre diet, whilst choosing low fibre options.

You will need to drink plenty to maintain hydration; aiming for around 6 – 8 glasses of fluid (about 1.5 - 2 litres) a day (unless otherwise instructed by a health care professional). This can include a variety of water, tea, coffee, milky drinks and squash. Avoid large amounts of caffeine as this can cause looser stools.

What is a balanced diet?

A healthy balanced diet is what we should all aim to have as it gives you all the nutrients you need to keep your body working well.

Your balanced diet will be individual to you, the foods you can eat may vary and it may help to keep a food diary of what you eat. Diaries can help you to identify which foods are causing problems and you can adjust your diet accordingly.

The following can act as a guide as to how to maintain a healthy balanced diet:

Fruit and Vegetables

Aim for at least 5 portions a day; you need to choose low fibre options (see table below).

Plenty of Starchy Foods (carbohydrates)

Aim for 5-6 portions a day; this includes bread, rice, pasta, noodles, couscous and potatoes, choosing low fibre options.

Protein

Aim for 2-3 portions a day; this includes tofu, fish, meat, eggs. Choosing tender, leaner cuts of meat, consider at least two portions of fish per week, at least one should be an oily fish such as: salmon, mackerel and trout.

Dairy

Aim for 2-3 portions a day; this includes milk, yogurts and cheese, choosing low fibre options.

What is fibre?

Dietary fibre is part of plant foods that the body can't digest easily, so some of it passes into the bowel without being absorbed.

There are two types of fibre, soluble and insoluble, and some foods contain both types.

What foods contain fibre?

Soluble fibre dissolves in water, forming a sticky gel that helps to soften your stools, making it easier to pass:

- Grains – oats, barley, rye
- Fruit – apples, apricots, bananas, berries
- Beans and pulses – peas, baked beans, lentils, chickpeas
- Root vegetables – carrots, potatoes

Insoluble fibre isn't digested by the body but it adds bulk to stool and helps waste pass through the digestive system:

- Wholemeal breakfast cereals (muesli, weetabix, bran flakes)
- Wholemeal or granary bread
- Brown rice
- Wholemeal pasta
- Beans, peas and pulses

Food groups	Low fibre foods you can eat	High fibre foods you should avoid
Cereals	Low fibre cereals eg. Cornflakes, Rice Krispies, Coco Pops, Frosties, Ready Brek.	Wholemeal or high fibre cereals and any that contain nuts. Such as muesli, shredded wheats, Bran Flakes, Fruit and Fibre, porridge, granola.
Bread and flour	Bread made with white flour, including crumpets, pikelets, muffins, pitta breads, wraps, naan breads, cream crackers, rice cakes. Cakes, plain or cheese scones, biscuits and pastries made with white flour, croissants, pancakes	Brown, 50/50, wholemeal, granary, seeded loaves, breads with fruits or nuts added, such as hot cross buns, fruit loaf. Whole-wheat, cracked wheat, rye or brown crackers. Whole-wheat biscuits such as cereal, fig rolls, flapjack, fruit scones, cakes or pastries with fruit, seeds or nuts.
Rice, pasta and grains	White rice, pasta, noodles, cous cous and rice noodles.	Whole-wheat or brown pasta, rice, noodles, wild rice, bulgar wheat, quinoa.
Fruits	Fruits with pips, pith and skins removed. Such as ripe bananas, ripe peach or nectarines, mango, ripe melon, papaya, plums, ripe apricots, apple sauce. Tinned fruits including apple, pear, lychees.	Fruits with skin, seeds, pips and piths attached. Such as berries of any kind including raspberries, strawberries, blueberries, blackcurrants. Passion fruit, kiwi fruit, coconuts, pineapple, figs and dried fruits.
Vegetables – well cooked	Vegetables with skin, seeds, pips and any stringy or tough parts removed and well cooked. Such as potatoes, carrots, turnip, butternut squash, pumpkin, sweet potato, parsnip, courgette, aubergine, tomatoes and passata.	Vegetables with skins, seeds and pips attached. Such as cabbage, curly kale, celery, fennel, leeks, okra, peppers, spinach, brussel sprouts, peas, sweetcorn, yam, cassava, plantain, broccoli, cauliflower.
Vegetables - raw	Cucumber, courgettes with skins and seeds removed.	Salad vegetables including lettuce, beetroot, onions, garlic, artichokes, olives, peppers, avocado and mushrooms.

Food groups	Low fibre foods you can eat	High fibre foods you should avoid
Meat, fish and protein alternatives	Any tender, lean meat, poultry and fish. Eggs, tofu, sausage rolls and meat pies made with white flour.	Tough or course meats with gristle. Quorn, dried beans or pulses, lentils. Pies or pastries made with wholemeal flour, beans, nuts or seeds.
Milk and dairy	Milk (fresh, evaporated or condensed), cheese, cottage cheese, cream cheese, cheese spreads, cream, plain smooth yogurts or fromage fraise, ice creams.	Muesli or nut yogurts, yogurts containing whole fruits.
Miscellaneous	<p>Chocolate, sweets, crisps, honey, lemon curd, treacle, syrup, marmite, marmalade (without shred), jams (seedless).</p> <p>Condiments such as tomato sauce, brown sauce, soy sauce, mayonnaise, stock cubes.</p> <p>Smooth peanut butter.</p> <p>Fats, oils and dressings without seeds.</p> <p>Desserts with no seeds or nuts.</p>	Pickles, horseradish, popcorn, seeds and nuts, marmalade with shreds or jams with seeds, crunchy peanut butter.

Low fibre meal ideas

Breakfast	<p>Low fibre cereal with milk.</p> <p>White bread or toast, croissant, crumpet or muffin with butter, marmite, seedless jam or marmalade without shred.</p> <p>Eggs (boiled, fried, scrambled or poached) on white toast with butter.</p> <p>Bacon or sausage sandwich in white bread or white roll.</p>
Lunch	<p>Smooth soup – if homemade choose low fibre options.</p> <p>Sandwich made with white bread filled with such things as; chicken, ham, eggs, cheese, tuna.</p> <p>Jacket potato (avoid eating the skin) filled with such things as; tuna mayonnaise, cheese, cream cheese, prawn mayonnaise.</p> <p>Serve with a low fibre pudding such as jelly and ice cream or yogurt.</p>
Dinner	<p>Meat or protein with low fibre vegetables and white rice, pasta or potato.</p> <p>Omelettes with cheese and/or ham.</p> <p>Pizza with low fibre toppings. Fish in sauce served with potatoes (skin removed).</p> <p>Burgers (lean meat) – served in a white roll with potatoes (skin removed).</p> <p>Roast dinner served with low fibre vegetables, potatoes (skin removed) and gravy.</p> <p>Cottage/Shepherd's pie served with low fibre vegetables.</p> <p>Serve with a low fibre pudding such as sponge and custard, milk pudding, crème caramel, chocolate mousse.</p>
Snacks	<p>Cheese and crackers (low fibre crackers).</p> <p>Plain biscuits with a hot drink.</p> <p>Crisps.</p> <p>Low fibre pastries – eg sausage rolls.</p> <p>Smooth yogurt.</p> <p>Milky drinks – milkshake made with ice cream.</p>

These meal ideas act as a guide to help you adjust to a low fibre diet. You can adjust most meals to make them low in fibre; if you follow the chart above, you can work out how to change your favourite recipes and continue to enjoy a balanced diet.

Tips to help with poor appetite and weight loss whilst following a low fibre diet

- Eat little and often and eat slowly to avoid bloating and wind
- Eat 3 small meals and 2 - 3 snacks every day
- Include a variety of foods that you enjoy
- Have starchy foods with each meal e.g. potatoes, rice, pasta, breads
- Have protein in at least two of your meals a day (meat, chicken, turkey, fish, eggs, cheese and yogurts)
- Avoid drinks during meals to avoid feeling bloated or too full, drink half an hour before or after meals instead
- Try and have a pudding at least once a day, if needed wait half an hour after your meal before having dessert
- Have high calorie snacks between meals e.g. cake, biscuits, toast with butter and seedless jam, honey, syrup or cream cheese, fish or meat pastes
- Try adding oils, butter, cheese, cream cheese, crème fraiche, cream, full fat yogurts, ice cream or custards to meals
- Try high calorie or “build up” drinks with added vitamins and minerals, you can buy these over the counter from a chemist
- Try getting some fresh air and gentle exercise before meals as this can help you to feel hungry
- If food smells make you feel sick, try and stay away from the kitchen and ask friends and family to cook or eat cold foods that don't need cooking
- Go with your cravings, you are more likely to feel like eating more if you go for what you really want, rather than what you think you should have
- Make large meals that you can eat in smaller portions, such as soup, cottage pie or lasagne. This allows you to go back for more if you want to
- Pre-prepared foods that can be chilled or frozen can be useful if you don't have time to cook or if you aren't able to cook for yourself. Make sure you reheat these properly before eating.
- Have meals in a room where you feel relaxed and without distractions.

Further information

For any further information, please speak to your Colorectal Clinical Nurse Specialist on 01722 425 194 (direct line).

Notes:

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