Modified Fibre Diet

- **Who may need this diet:** people with a narrowing of the bowel (stricture or adhesions), an ileostomy or recent bowel surgery, or gastrointestinal symptoms during a disease flare (e.g., frequent loose bowel movements, abdominal pain or cramping).
- **The goal is to keep fibre in your diet by changing its texture** (peeling, cooking, mashing, blending) rather than cutting it out. Fibre feeds your gut bacteria and supports a healthy gut lining.
- **How long:** during a flare, this diet is usually temporary; move back to a varied, higher-fibre diet once symptoms settle. If you have a stricture or an ostomy, you may need to follow it longer term. If you're in remission and don't have a stricture or ostomy, you likely don't need to follow it. Speak with your dietitian, gastroenterologist or IBD nurse if you're unsure whether to follow this diet.

How to modify texture

- Peel fruits and vegetables and remove seeds, skins and membranes.
- Cook vegetables until fork-tender (they break apart easily with a fork).
- Mash, blend or purée foods, and strain if needed (e.g., berries in a smoothie).
- Chew thoroughly, eat slowly, and have smaller portions.
- Stay well hydrated.

Food guide

The "Avoid" column lists foods that pose a higher risk of blockage, even when cooked, if you have a stricture or ostomy.

Food Group	Recommended	Modify texture	Avoid (if you have a stricture or ostomy)
Vegetables	Well cooked (fork-tender), with skins/peels and seeds removed: • Beets, broccoli and cauliflower florets, celeriac, carrots, eggplant, garlic, jicama, kohlrabi, potatoes (white and sweet), parsnip, pumpkin, rutabaga, squash (except spaghetti squash), turnip, zucchini • Wax and green beans: trim the ends and pull off the tough string along the side and cook until tender.	Cook well, then blend, mash or purée until very smooth (e.g., in soups, sauces or smoothies): • Artichoke, asparagus tips, beet greens, bok choy, cabbage, fennel, green onion, green peas, kale, collard greens, leeks, spaghetti squash, spinach, Swiss chard, watercress	• Corn kernels (corn flour, polenta, corn tortillas, cornbread and corn blended smoothly into soup are fine) • Mushroom pieces (smooth mushroom soup is fine) • Arugula, lettuce • Bean and Brussels sprouts, okra, radish, snap and snow peas

Food Group	Recommended	Modify texture	Avoid (if you have a stricture or ostomy)
	• All vegetable juices • Small amounts of cooked, diced onion and shallots • Cucumber, tomatoes, tomato sauce, roasted red pepper (without skins and seeds)		• Celery, fiddleheads, bamboo shoots and other tough, fibrous stalks • Vegetable skins and peels
Fruits	Ripe and soft, with skins/peels, seeds and membranes removed: • Apple, apricot, avocado, banana, grapefruit, mandarin and other oranges, mango, melon (cantaloupe, honeydew, watermelon), nectarine, papaya, peach, pear, persimmon, plum • Canned fruit (no added sugar), unsweetened applesauce and fruit sauces • All fruit juices	Blend or purée (e.g., in a smoothie), then strain to remove seeds if needed; cooking may also help: • Berries (blackberries, blueberries, cranberries, raspberries, strawberries), cherries, dragon fruit, fresh figs, grapes, kiwifruit, passion fruit, pineapple, rhubarb	• All dried fruit • Coconut • Pomegranate seeds • Fruit skins and peels
Milk and Alternatives	• All milk, yogurt, kefir, cheese and non-dairy alternatives without nuts, seeds or chunks of fruit	• Yogurt or kefir with fruit: choose smooth or blended varieties	• Products containing whole nuts, large seeds or dried fruit
Grain Products	• Breads, pastas, crackers and baked goods made with almond flour, arrowroot, chickpea/gram, corn, millet, oat, rice, semolina, sorghum, tapioca, white, spelt or whole wheat flour • White sourdough bread without seeds or whole grains • Cereals made with these refined flours, e.g., Cheerios®, Corn	Introduce gradually once refined grains are well tolerated, by mixing a small amount into a grain you already tolerate (e.g., brown rice into white rice): • Whole wheat pasta • Brown rice • Quinoa • Buckwheat • Millet	• Bran and bran cereals • Granola, steel-cut oats, wild rice, wheat berries • Breads, cereals and baked goods with whole nuts, large seeds or dried fruit

Food Group	Recommended	Modify texture	Avoid (if you have a stricture or ostomy)
	Flakes®, Crispix®, Rice Krispies®, Rice or Corn Chex® • Hot cereal: cream of wheat, farina, instant or quick oatmeal, cooked rolled oats • Rice: white, converted, parboiled • Pearl barley (well cooked) • Couscous, fine cornmeal, polenta	• Bulgur • Whole spelt	
Meat and Alternatives	• Tender meat, poultry, fish and seafood • Eggs, tofu • Smooth hummus, refried beans, split red lentils and other split legumes (e.g., split peas, split chickpeas), legume-based pastas • Smooth nut and seed butters (peanut, almond, sunflower, pumpkin seed, tahini, hazelnut); seeds such as poppy and sesame in small amounts	• Whole legumes (beans, chickpeas, lentils, edamame, tempeh): cook well, then mash or purée	• Sausages or other processed meats with casings • Tough or fatty cuts of meat; chicken and fish skin • Jerky; gristly or rubbery meat • Whole nuts and large seeds • Chunky nut or seed butters
Fats and Oils	• Butter, oils, margarine, mayonnaise, salad dressings	—	• Dressings with whole nuts or large seeds
Desserts and Snack Foods	• Puddings, custards, ice cream, Jell-O®, cheesecake, mousse, candies, marshmallows, chocolate (all without nuts, seeds or dried fruit) • Baked goods made with the flours above • Jellies, seedless jam, sugar and other sweeteners	• Desserts made with fruits from the "Modify texture" column: choose puréed or strained versions	• Desserts with whole nuts, large seeds, dried fruit or coconut • Jam with seeds or peels; marmalade • Popcorn, corn nuts

Food Group	Recommended	Modify texture	Avoid (if you have a stricture or ostomy)
	• Potato chips, cheezies, pretzels, saltine crackers, white rice cakes		
Other	• Ground spices and dried herbs • Condiments: ketchup, mustard, vinegar	—	• Whole spices • Relish, chutney, olives, pickles

Reintroducing fibre

When your symptoms improve, gradually move to firmer textures and higher-fibre foods:

1. **Step 1:** puréed or blended foods, e.g., puréed vegetable soups, smoothies, applesauce, banana, peeled cooked potatoes and squash
2. **Step 2:** mashed or soft-cooked foods, e.g., cooked spinach, green beans and peeled zucchini; peeled peaches, pears and melon; brown rice, quinoa
3. **Step 3:** soft raw foods, e.g., peeled cucumber and tomato, soft lettuce, berries, grapes, quinoa and rolled oats
4. **Step 4:** whole and raw foods, e.g., salads, corn, peas, dried fruit, nuts and seeds

Add one new food every 2–3 days, alongside a meal you already tolerate. Start with a small portion and slowly increase it over a few days.

Time-saving tips

- Store-bought puréed vegetable soups (also great as a pasta or meat sauce)
- Frozen vegetables, which are often pre-cut and soften quickly; canned vegetables with no added salt
- Jarred, peeled roasted red peppers
- Canned peaches, pears or mandarin oranges with no added sugar; frozen fruit for smoothies; unsweetened fruit sauces and puréed fruit pouches
- Ready-made smooth hummus, creamy nut butters and tofu

Fibre supplements

Getting fibre from food is preferred. A fibre supplement can be helpful in some situations, such as loose or very hard stools, or with a J-pouch or ostomy. Talk to your dietitian or IBD team before starting one.

Preferred: psyllium husk. It's a soluble fibre that forms a gel, so it can help firm loose stool and soften hard stool, and it tends to be less gas-producing than many other fibre supplements.

- **Dosing:** start with 1 tsp (about 4 g) per day. Increase gradually every 3–7 days, as tolerated, up to about 1 tsp three times per day (about 10–12 g per day). Some people prefer to take the full amount at once, though this can cause bloating.
- **How to take it:** mix into at least 250 mL (1 cup) of fluid or a supplement drink, drink it right away (it thickens quickly), and stay well hydrated.
- **Medications:** take psyllium at least 2 hours apart from medications, as it can affect how they're absorbed.
- **Strictures:** if you have a tight stricture or have had a bowel blockage, check with your IBD team before starting.
- **Ostomy or J-pouch:** psyllium may help thicken output, but it can interfere with water and micronutrient absorption, so it's mainly suggested if you have ongoing leakage around your appliance. Introduce it gradually and monitor your output.

Other options that are usually well tolerated: partially hydrolyzed guar gum (PHGG), and methylcellulose (e.g., Quality Choice Fiber Therapy, Citrucel®), which causes less gas.

Use with caution as these fibres are highly fermentable and may increase gas and bloating: inulin, chicory root fibre, fructo-oligosaccharides (FOS), galacto-oligosaccharides (GOS), wheat dextrin (e.g., Benefiber®) and resistant starch. Check the labels of "high-fibre" bars, drinks and protein powders for these.

Avoid wheat bran and other coarse, insoluble fibre supplements if you have a stricture, ileostomy or J-pouch.

When to seek urgent care

If you have a stricture and develop **severe abdominal pain, swelling or bloating, vomiting, or are unable to pass stool or gas**, go to your nearest emergency department.

Sources: Hamilton Health Sciences Patient Education – Low Fibre Diet; Niagara Health System – Low Residue Diet; Gold S et al. The Evolving Guidelines on Fiber Intake for Patients with Inflammatory Bowel Disease; From Exclusion to Texture Modification. Curr Gastroenterol Rep. 2025;27:23; GI Nutrition Foundation – Fiber Guide for IBD & IBS.