

Low fibre diet

Nutrition & Dietetics Department

What is a low fibre (residue) diet?

Dietary fibre (also known as roughage) is the part of plants that cannot be easily digested. Some of it passes through the body without being absorbed.

A low fibre (low residue) diet will help you to reduce the volume and frequency of your stools. It also lengthens the time food passes through your gut.

Who is this leaflet for?

Your dietitian may ask you to follow a low fibre (low residue) diet:

- prior to and during Papillon radiotherapy treatment
- before and/or after bowel surgery
- after the insertion of a colonic stent
- if you have bowel adhesions or narrowing of the colon
- during an active flare-up of ulcerative colitis, Crohn's disease or diverticulitis
- if you are suffering from diarrhoea
- if you are experiencing excessive wind and bloating
- if you are experiencing abdominal pain or cramping
- if you have a high output ileostomy/colostomy

These changes are usually only recommended for a short period of time. Your dietitian will follow your progress and advise you on the next stage of your treatment.

What fruit and vegetables can I eat?

Fruit

Foods allowed (limit to 1 portion per day)	Foods to avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Fruit juice (no bits)■ Bananas■ Mango, papaya■ Pineapple (without the core)■ Melon, watermelon■ Fruit with the skins removed e.g. peeled apples, pears, peaches, plums, nectarines, apricots■ Pureed, stewed or cooked fruit (without skins, pips or stones)■ Tinned fruit■ Fruit sauces and coulis with pips removed e.g. sieved raspberry coulis, apple sauce	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Fruit juice with bits■ Smoothies■ Fruits with skins on e.g. grapes, cherries, blueberries■ Citrus fruit■ Coconut■ Pineapple core■ Rhubarb■ Berries and fruits with seeds e.g. strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, kiwi, pomegranate, passion fruit■ All dried fruit e.g. raisins, cranberries, apricots, prunes, dates

Vegetables

Foods allowed (limit to 1 portion per day)	Foods to avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Well cooked root vegetables e.g. carrots, parsnips, swede, turnips ■ Butternut or gem squash ■ Pumpkin ■ Peeled marrow, courgette patty pan ■ Well cooked cabbage, broccoli and cauliflower (no tough stalks) ■ Peeled and de-seeded tomato, cucumber, peppers ■ Avocado ■ Smooth vegetable soups ■ Well cooked, softened onions and garlic (as a paste) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All skins, pips and seeds ■ Tough stalks of vegetables e.g. cauliflower, broccoli ■ Raw vegetables ■ Asparagus ■ Aubergine ■ Brussel sprouts ■ Leeks, spring onions ■ Raw or undercooked onions and garlic ■ Pickled onions, gherkins ■ Sweetcorn ■ Peas, sugar snaps, mangetout ■ Green, french and runner beans, broad beans ■ Mushrooms ■ Spring greens ■ Beetroot ■ Celery ■ Radish ■ Lettuce, rocket, watercress and spinach ■ Whole tomatoes ■ Bean sprouts ■ Pak choi ■ Soup with whole vegetables e.g. minestrone ■ Chicory, fennel ■ Olives

What starchy foods can I eat?

Breads and cereals

Foods allowed	Foods to avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Rice Krispies®, Cornflakes®, Cocopops®, Frosties®, Cheerios® ■ White flour, cornflour, rice flour, potato flour ■ White bread, rolls, baguettes ■ Seedless rye bread ■ White pitta bread ■ White tortilla wraps ■ Crumpets, plain or cheese scones, scotch pancakes ■ Croissants, brioche ■ Melba toast, crackers and crispbreads (without seeds and grains) ■ Rice cakes ■ Plain white bagels ■ Plain white muffins (without berries) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Wholemeal, wholegrain and bran cereals e.g. All Bran®, Branflakes®, Weetabix® ■ Cereals containing dried fruit, seeds or nuts e.g. Sultana Bran®, Fruit n Fibre®, Muesli, Crunchy Nut Cornflakes® ■ Special K® (all types) ■ Oats, porridge, Ready Brek® ■ Granola ■ Wholemeal flour, wholegrain or granary flour ■ Chickpea flour, cornmeal ■ Wholemeal, 50/50, granary, malted, seeded or multigrain bread and bread products ■ Bran ■ Barley, pearl barley, spelt ■ Wholegrain or seeded crackers or crispbreads ■ Oat cakes ■ Cereal bars containing nuts, seeds and fruit

Potato, rice and pasta

Foods allowed	Foods to avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Peeled white or sweet potatoes (boiled, mashed, fried or roasted) ■ Plain hash browns ■ White rice ■ White pasta ■ Yorkshire pudding ■ Pastry ■ Waffles ■ Rice pudding ■ Couscous, bulgar wheat, quinoa, gnocchi, tapioca, sago 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Skins of jacket potatoes ■ Brown and wild rice ■ Wholemeal pasta ■ Hash browns made with onion

What protein foods can I eat?

Meat, fish, poultry, eggs and meat substitutes

Foods allowed	Foods to avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All types of fish, meat and meat products i.e. fresh, frozen, tinned ■ Smooth paté and liver sausage ■ Eggs ■ Tofu ■ Quorn ■ Soya mince ■ Corned beef ■ Ham, bacon, gammon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Skin and bones of fish ■ Convenience items which contain whole grains and vegetables e.g. onions, peppers ■ Coarse paté made with onions

Pulses, nuts and seeds

Foods allowed	Foods to avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ It is best to avoid all varieties of pulses, nuts and seeds. If you are vegetarian have a very small portion since these foods are a very good source of protein. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All varieties of pulses e.g. lentils, chickpeas ■ All varieties of beans e.g. borlotti, cannellini, kidney, soya, baked beans and broad beans ■ All nuts ■ All seeds e.g. sunflower, pumpkin, sesame, poppy ■ Peanut butter ■ Houmous

What dairy foods can I eat?

Foods allowed	Foods to avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All types of milk e.g. cow's, goat's, sheep's, soya, rice, oat ■ Cream, crème fraîche ■ Buttermilk ■ All types of cheese (without dried fruit and nuts) ■ Butter, margarine, spread ■ Smooth yoghurt ■ Ice cream and sorbet ■ Custard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cheese containing dried fruit or nuts ■ Yoghurt containing whole fruit, nuts or seeds or pips ■ Ice cream and sorbet containing nuts, seeds and whole fruits

What sweet treats can I eat?

Foods allowed	Foods to avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cakes made with white flour (without dried fruit or nuts) ■ Plain biscuits e.g. Rich tea, shortbread ■ Pancakes ■ Jelly (without fruit) ■ Boiled sweets ■ Chocolate (without dried fruit and nuts) ■ Toffee ■ Jelly sweets ■ Marshmallows ■ Smooth nougat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cakes made with wholemeal or wholegrain flour ■ Cakes made with dried fruit and nuts ■ Wholemeal and wholegrain biscuits e.g. Digestives, Hobnobs® ■ Biscuits containing dried fruit e.g. fig rolls, Garibaldi® ■ Hot cross buns, tea cakes, fruit scones ■ Cereal bars containing dried fruit and nuts ■ Flapjacks ■ Jelly made with fresh berries ■ Chocolate with nuts and dried fruit ■ Nougat made with nuts and dried fruit

What savoury treats can I eat?

Foods allowed	Foods to avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Crisps ■ Plain bread sticks ■ Cheese straws ■ Mini cheddars or TUC® sandwich biscuits ■ Smooth dips e.g. taramasalata, smooth guacamole 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Nuts ■ Popcorn ■ Bombay Mix ■ Dips that contain whole tomatoes, cucumbers, onions e.g. salsa, tzatziki

What condiments can I eat?

Foods allowed	Foods to avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Tomato ketchup ■ Smooth mustard ■ Brown sauce ■ Worcester sauce ■ Soya sauce ■ Mayonnaise, salad cream ■ Salt and pepper ■ Dried herbs ■ Powdered spices ■ Gravy ■ Seedless jam or marmalade ■ Lemon curd ■ Honey ■ Golden syrup, maple syrup ■ Marmite®, Vegemite®, Bovril® 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pickles and relishes ■ Chutneys ■ Wholegrain mustard ■ Stalks and leaves of fresh herbs ■ Jam with seeds ■ Marmalade with peel ■ Salad dressing with wholegrain mustard

Reference source(s):

- Eswaran S, Muir J, William C (2013) Fiber and functional gastrointestinal disorders. *The American Journal of Gastroenterology* **108**: 718-727
- Gandy J (ed) *Manual of Dietetic Practice* 5th Edition. 2014 Blackwell Publishing
- <http://www.nutrition.org.uk/healthyliving/basics/fibre.html>

Notes

The information in this leaflet was correct at time of writing. Please note that product changes are not the responsibility of the author.

Contact details

If you have any questions about the information in this leaflet please contact the Dietetic Department at the address below:

The Royal Surrey County NHS Foundation Trust
Department of Nutrition & Dietetics
Egerton Road, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 7XX.

Switchboard telephone: 01483 571122 **ext** 4202

Direct line: 01483 464119

Fax: 01483 464868

Email: rsch.dietitians@nhs.net

PALS and Advocacy contact details

Contact details of independent advocacy services can be provided by our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who are located on the right hand side as you enter the main reception area. PALS are also your first point of contact for health related issues, questions or concerns surrounding RSCH patient services.

Telephone: 01483 402757

Email: rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net

Opening hours: 9.00am–4.00pm, Monday to Friday

If you would like information documents in large print, on tape or in another language or form please contact PALS.

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Author: Lindsey Allan

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