

What is a low-residue diet?

The low-residue diet limits high fiber foods which produce bulky stools, or “residue” in the colon, with the goal of producing fewer, smaller bowel movements. This diet is easier to digest, and may help ease bloating, gas and diarrhea.

This diet is not intended to be followed for a long period of time as it is lacking several vital nutrients. Rather, it should be used when you are having a flare or recovering from a procedure. Talk to your doctor to decide if the diet is right for you.

What can I eat?

Grains:

- Products made from refined flour
- Enriched white breads
 - Avoid whole grain or bread with seeds
- Plain crackers, such as saltines
- Cooked cereal such as cream of wheat or grits.
 - Avoid oatmeal, bran and whole wheat cereals.
- Cold cereal such as Special K, Rice Krispies or Corn Flakes.
 - Avoid bran, whole wheat and cereals with fruit or nuts.
- White rice
 - Avoid brown rice and lentils
- Refined pasta

Produce:

- Vegetables: canned or well cooked (without seeds) such as mushrooms, carrots, green beans, spinach, asparagus or pumpkin.
 - Certain vegetables should be avoided, even if they are cooked: broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, peas, onions, baked beans and corn (including corn bread)
- Fruit: canned or cooked fruit with skin removed, applesauce, ripe bananas, honeydew melon, avocado.
 - Avoid pineapple and coconut.
- Cooked potatoes with the skin removed
- Tomato sauce without seeds

Dairy:

- Any dairy products such as milk, yogurt, cheese, creamer, sour cream, cottage cheese, etc. may be consumed as milk does not contain fiber.
- However, dairy can cause cramping and diarrhea in some patients. If this is the case, you may consider lactose-free milk.

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Meat and Proteins:

- Lean, tender, soft meats may be consumed as animal products do not contain fiber.
- Eggs
- Avoid tofu, beans, lentils, crunchy peanut butter and cured deli meats

Condiments:

- Margarine, oils, butter
- Ketchup or Mayonnaise
 - Avoid horseradish, relish, sauerkraut, pickles and olives
- Salad dressing (containing no seeds)
- Soy sauce
- Syrup, honey, clear jelly
- Plain gravy
- Sugar, salt, pepper, spices, cooked herbs, bouillon

Desserts:

- Cakes or cookies (containing no seeds or nuts)
- Ice cream, sherbert, custard, tapioca, puddings, gelatin, popsicles
- Plain crackers, pretzels, vanilla wafers
 - Avoid popcorn
- Hard candies

Drinks:

- Water
- Milk
- Strained (no-pulp) fruit or vegetable juices
- Caffeine-Free coffee, tea or carbonated beverages. Caffeine can irritate the stomach.