Low fibre diet for women at risk of bowel obstruction

Consult your dietitian for advice regarding this diet on phone: 9382 7186

This diet plan has been recommended for you because you have described some of the following concerns which are probably linked to bowel problems;

* severe constipation
* colicky abdominal pain
* heartburn or indigestion
* bloating
* nausea
* vomiting
* lack of interest in food or feeling full quickly

We are advising that you follow a low fibre diet as foods high in fibre can make the symptoms you are feeling worse. Foods high in fibre have a tendency to form bowel motions which are large and bulky and therefore difficult to pass through areas of the bowel which may have become narrowed. Reducing the fibre in your diet will produce much looser bowel motions.

It is important to continue to have a variety of foods in your diet. Aim to maintain a balanced diet by including foods from the following groups;

* breads, refined cereals, rice, pasta
* vegetables
* fruit
* dairy (milk, yoghurt, cheese)
* meat, fish, poultry, eggs, legumes

Tips to reduce your fibre intake;

* avoid wholemeal or wholegrain cereals
* remove stalks, pips, seeds and skin of fruit and vegetables
* strain fruit and vegetable juices and soups
* avoid dried fruits, nuts and seeds

A list of foods to include in your diet and foods to avoid are included at the end of this leaflet. Some other hints that might help include;

* eat small servings and
* eat frequently

(If might help to put your meals on a small plate and include nutritious snacks throughout the day)

* chew all of your food well and choose softer foods
* sometimes it might be necessary to puree your food (particularly when you are experiencing symptoms)
* include high protein drinks as part of your diet

During periods when you have not been experiencing any symptoms you might be able to experiment with some of your favourite foods.

Introduce foods gradually and if your symptoms return cut back on the foods that you recently included. There might be a period of trial and error but you will soon work out which foods are more irritating to your stomach and bowels.
Some other tips or hints

Maintaining a low fibre diet
* Ensure you drink fluids regularly throughout the day as this will help your bowels to work
  o Choose strained fruit or vegetable juices to increase your calorie intake
  o If you are losing weight then include high calorie, high protein drinks such as milkshakes and nutritional supplements for example: Ensure, Sustagen, Resource and Fortisip
* Vary your diet, experiment with combinations of food on the recommended diet list
* If you drink alcohol, a small glass of wine, beer or sherry half an hour or so before eating may help to stimulate your appetite
* Try to get some exercise each day, such as a walk or a stroll as this may also help to stimulate your appetite

Laxatives
* It’s important to maintain regular bowel movements. This means opening your bowels at least once each day
* Along with a low fibre diet it will be necessary for you to take laxatives to help maintain your bowel activity
* The type of laxative that will work best for you is very individual and you might find there will be a period of trial and error before you work out the best combination of laxatives
* We commonly recommend Movicol but if you don't tolerate this product an alternative is Osmolax and another option is Lactulose
* A stool softener such as Coloxyl is also recommended and these can be taken at the same time as the laxative
* We do not recommend products containing Senna as these can causing cramping and abdominal pain

Indigestion/heartburn
* This is a common complaint and you can pick up over the counter medication such as Zantac or ask your doctor to prescribe another similar medication

During periods when your symptoms return or increase, try resting your stomach and bowel by just taking fluids for at least a day or until your symptoms completely go away. If your symptoms are severe requiring pain relief or if they are prolonged, then call

The CNC  9382 6229  Monday – Friday 8-430pm or
The ward  9382 6298/9  Any other time
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HIGH fibre</th>
<th>MEDIUM fibre</th>
<th>LOW fibre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AVOID these foods</td>
<td>You may be able to experiment with these foods</td>
<td>Choose these foods</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Bread

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wholemeal/wholegrain breads</th>
<th>Pumpernickel bread</th>
<th>Rye bread</th>
<th>White bread</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fruit bread</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>White crumpets/English muffins</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Cereals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wholegrain cereals</th>
<th>Cereals with fruit and nuts eg. Muesli</th>
<th>Oatmeal</th>
<th>Refined breakfast cereals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All bran, bran flakes, sultana bran</td>
<td></td>
<td>Shredded wheat</td>
<td>Eg, rice bubbles™, cornflakes™, special K™</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Rice/ Pasta

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brown rice</th>
<th>Wholemeal pasta</th>
<th>Maize</th>
<th>Barley</th>
<th>Popcorn</th>
<th>Macaroni</th>
<th>Noodles</th>
<th>Spaghetti</th>
<th>White rice</th>
<th>Sago/tapioca/semolina</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Vegetables (all vegetables need to be peeled and cooked)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Raw vegetables</th>
<th>Beans, broccoli, Brussels sprouts</th>
<th>Asparagus</th>
<th>Cauliflower</th>
<th>Celery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pulses (lentils, kidney beans, broad beans)</td>
<td>Carrots</td>
<td>Tomato/cucumber (skins and seeds removed)</td>
<td>Button mushrooms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cabbage</td>
<td>Potato, pumpkin and zucchini (peeled)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Corn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parsnips</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Potato with skin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sweet potato with skin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Fruit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Any fruit with skin, pips</th>
<th>Apples (no skin) strawberries</th>
<th>Pawpaw and melon (no seeds)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fruit with a very fibrous texture (mangos)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Well cooked fruit with no skin or pips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dried fruit</td>
<td></td>
<td>Canned fruits, excluding mango, pineapple and grapes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raspberries, blueberries, blackberries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prunes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Milk, yogurt, cheese

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cheese with fruit or nuts</th>
<th>Yoghurt with fruit, nuts or cereals</th>
<th>All types of milk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cheese</td>
<td>Yoghurt with fruit, nuts or cereals</td>
<td>Cheese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Smooth yoghurt, cream</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Custard, plain ice cream</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nutritional supplements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIGH fibre</td>
<td>MEDIUM fibre</td>
<td>LOW fibre</td>
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**Meat, fish, poultry, eggs**
- Schnitzel, where wholegrain breadcrumbs have been used
- Tender lean meat
- Chicken (no skin)
- Fish
- Tofu
- Eggs

**Nuts, legumes**
- Kidney beans, baked beans, chickpeas, split peas, lentils
- Nuts and seeds

**Juice**
- All juices including vegetable and fruit juices without the pulp

**Miscellaneous**
- Chutney
- Pickles
- Coconut
- Popcorn
- Margarine, butter
- Mayonnaise
- Salad dressing
- Chocolate without fruit
- Honey, vegemite

References:
Addenbrooke’s Hospital
BC Cancer Agency
http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/NR/rdonlyres/01B68B82-61CD-45A4-B71D-37A5A1318453/9329/LowFibreFoodChoicesPartialBowelObstruction1.pdf
Queensland Government Low fibre diet for the prevention of bowel obstruction
SE Scotland cancer information service
http://www.scan-staging.scot.nhs.uk/default.aspx