

Diet in Chronic Diarrhea: Optimizing Nutritional Support

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General Dietary Principles for Chronic Diarrhea Management

Hydration is Key

Replenish lost fluids and electrolytes by drinking plenty of water, broths, and oral rehydration solutions.

Small, Frequent Meals

Instead of large meals, opt for smaller, more frequent portions to reduce the digestive burden.

Identify Trigger Foods

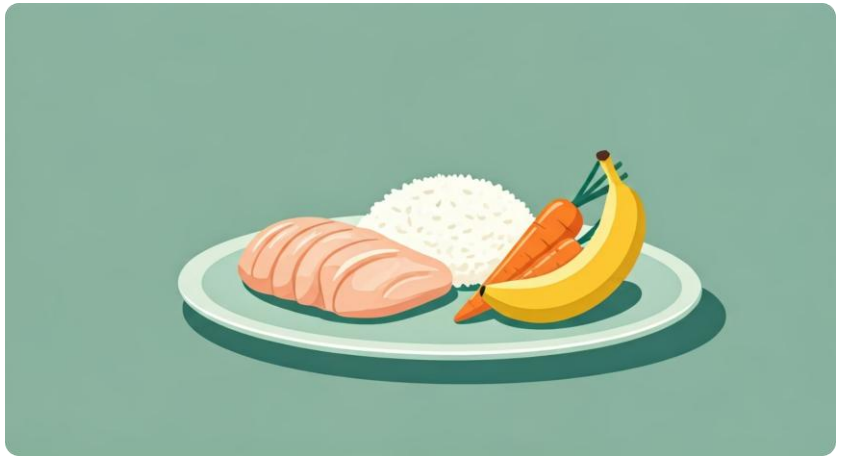
Maintain a food diary to pinpoint and eliminate foods that exacerbate symptoms.

Limit Irritants

Avoid high-fat foods, excessive sugar, artificial sweeteners, caffeine, and alcohol.

Specific Dietary Recommendations: Macronutrients and Micronutrients

- **Carbohydrates:** Focus on easily digestible sources like white rice, potatoes, applesauce, toast, and bananas. Avoid complex, high-fiber carbohydrates initially.
- **Proteins:** Opt for lean proteins such as baked chicken, turkey, fish, and eggs, which are gentle on the digestive system.
- **Fats:** Limit high-fat foods. Choose healthy fats in moderation from sources like avocado or small amounts of olive oil.
- **Vitamins & Minerals:** Chronic diarrhea can deplete vital nutrients.



Special Considerations: Lactose Intolerance, Gluten Sensitivity, and FODMAPs



Lactose Intolerance

Many individuals with chronic diarrhea experience temporary or permanent lactose intolerance. Avoiding milk or using lactase enzyme supplements can alleviate symptoms.



Gluten Sensitivity

For some, gluten (found in wheat, barley, rye) can trigger digestive distress. A trial elimination of gluten under medical supervision may reveal its impact.



FODMAPs

Fermentable Oligosaccharides, Disaccharides, Monosaccharides, and Polyols (FODMAPs) are types of carbohydrates that can be poorly absorbed in the gut, leading to symptoms. A low-FODMAP diet, guided by a dietitian, can be highly effective for certain conditions.

- Milk and other dairy products
- Legumes (chickpeas, beans, peas, lentils and lupins) and cabbage family vegetables—these are all high in fiber
- Fruits and juices that contain fructose
- Caffeine-containing beverages such as coffee and tea
- Alcoholic beverages such as beer, wine, and liquor
- Fatty meats such as bacon and heavily marbled meats
- High fat foods such as fried foods, pastries, and chips
- Artificial sweeteners such as NutraSweet®, Splenda®, Equal®, sorbitol, etc.
- Sugar-free gums and mints that contain sorbitol, mannitol, or xylitol
- Real black licorice (not the candy)
- Large quantities of nuts or nut butters
- Concentrated sweets
  - o Dried fruits such as figs, dates, raisins, and prunes
  - o Prune juice

Personal Daily Diary

Author: IFFGD

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Week Number_____; Day of the Week_____; Date _____

Time	**Bowel Movements** *Description (Loose; diarrhea; formed; hard, pellet-like; ribbon-shaped)*	**Symptoms** *Incomplete evacuation; strong urge; straining; incontinent; stain/smear*	**What were you doing?** *work; school; social; travel; shopping; medical appointments;*	**Pain** *Description & Duration*	**Emotional Status** *How do you feel? Why?)*	**Medications** *Prescription/Over-the-Counter*

DIET

FOODS

List: Items & Times

Breakfast _____ _____

Lunch _____ _____

Dinner _____ _____

Snacks _____ _____

BEVERAGES

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

Exercise

List examples: walk, run, bike, swim, aerobic, other; and times

_____ _____

_____ _____

Women _____

Menstrual cycle; ovulation; menstruation

Other Thoughts on your day

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

RESEARCH INSIGHTS

The Role of Fiber and Probiotics in Diarrhea Management

Fiber: A Double-Edged Sword

Soluble fiber (found in oats, apples, bananas) can help solidify stool by absorbing water. Insoluble fiber (whole grains, raw vegetables) can sometimes worsen symptoms by increasing gut motility.

To help with diarrhea, mix 1 tablespoon of pectin powder with ¼ cup of lemon water and drink it 20–30 minutes before a meal.

Probiotics: Restoring Gut Harmony

Probiotics, beneficial bacteria, can help re-establish a healthy gut microbiome, which is often disrupted in chronic diarrhea.

Life-style Modification

- Regularly scheduled meals
- Physical activity
- >8 cups non-caffeinated fluids daily
- < 3 cups coffee per day
- Avoiding alcohol and carbonated beverages

- low FODMAP Diet & soluble fiber

Thanks for your attention!

Any Question ?