

Nutrition Therapy ***The Low FODMAP Diet***

What are FODMAPs?

FODMAPs are a group of carbohydrates, specific sugars and fibers, found in many common foods. FODMAP carbohydrates are commonly malabsorbed in the small intestine. Undigested FODMAP carbohydrates can be fermented by gut bacteria to produce gas, as well as pull water into the intestine. In individuals with a sensitive gut, the excess gas and fluid can result in digestive distress such as bloating, pain, cramping and alteration in bowel habits.

FODMAP stands for:

Fermentable - creates gas

Oligosaccharide - a rapidly fermentable fiber found in beans, onion, wheat and garlic

Disaccharide - lactose, or milk sugar, found in milk, yogurt and ice cream

Monosaccharide - excess fructose found in mango, apples, pears and watermelon

And

Polyols - a group of sugar alcohols found as a sweetener in sugar free gum and mints, and naturally in pears, plums, nectarines, cauliflower.

What is a low FODMAP diet?

A low FODMAP diet is a short-term learning diet; it is not a permanent dietary restriction. This three-phase nutritional approach is used to help you discover which FODMAPs may be contributing to your gastrointestinal symptoms and how to manage your symptoms while eating the most varied and nutritious diet possible. Keep in mind that the low FODMAP diet is complex and is therefore most effective when done under the guidance of an experienced dietitian.

The three steps are:

1. The elimination phase. Only low FODMAP foods (and limited portions of moderate FODMAP foods) are eaten for 2-6 weeks.
2. The reintroduction phase. High FODMAP foods are reintroduced using a plan designed to help you identify which FODMAPs may be problems for you.
3. The personalization phase. Your dietitian will help you design the most varied and nutritious diet you can tolerate based on what you learned during the reintroduction phase.

A low FODMAP diet is not a dairy-free diet. Low lactose dairy milk products can be enjoyed during the elimination phase. A low FODMAP diet is not a gluten-free diet. However, because gluten-free grains tend to be low in FODMAPs, many gluten-free products such as breads and pastas can be enjoyed during the low FODMAP elimination phase (as long as they do not contain other high FODMAP ingredients).

Who can benefit from a low FODMAP diet?

The low FODMAP diet is an evidenced-based nutrition intervention for people with irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). Research shows that 50-75% of people suffering from IBS, find relief with the low FODMAP approach. It may also help people with inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) in remission who are still experiencing gastrointestinal symptoms. People with celiac disease or non-celiac gluten sensitivity who are still symptomatic on a gluten-free diet may also benefit from the diet. The FODMAP approach may be right for you if your gastrointestinal symptoms have been properly evaluated by your doctor, and if a high-fiber diet, plenty of water, and a consistent meal pattern have not helped.

This table provides examples of high- and low-FODMAP foods; it is not a complete list.

	Common High FODMAP Foods or Ingredients	Popular Low FODMAP Alternatives
Milk and Milk Products	Regular milk, yogurt, ice cream; Cottage cheese, ricotta cheese.	Lactose-free dairy milk, yogurt and ice cream; sorbet; rice or almond milk; aged cheeses such as Cheddar, Parmesan, Swiss, Brie
Fruits	Apples, pears, cherries, peaches, prunes, apricots, mangos, watermelon, blackberries; juices and dried fruit made of these; large fruit smoothies	Small portions of strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, grapes, pineapple, cantaloupe, honeydew, kiwi, banana, orange, grapefruit; small portions of juices and dried fruit made of these
Vegetables	Artichokes, cauliflower, button and portobello mushrooms, asparagus, leeks, peas	Spinach, kale, lettuce, tomatoes, cucumber, summer squash, carrots, red or yellow bell pepper, white potatoes, oyster mushrooms; small portions of broccoli, green beans, sweet potato, butternut squash, and zucchini
Grains and Starches	Regular breads, cereals, pastas or baked goods made of whole wheat or all-purpose flour, barley flour, or rye flour; high-fiber bars or cereals	Rice, cornmeal, or quinoa; breads, cereals, pastas or baked goods made of rice, buckwheat, cornmeal, millet, sorghum, or quinoa; small portions of oats; slow-leavened sourdough bread made of white, whole wheat or spelt flour
Sweets	Sugar-free candy, gum, supplements or shake mixes sweetened with sorbitol, mannitol, maltitol, xylitol, isomalt	Small portions of sweets made with sugar, 100% pure maple syrup, or stevia; small portions of dark or semi- sweet chocolate
Beans and Legumes	Canned, baked or refried beans, hummus, soy milk, silken tofu	Firm tofu, tempeh; small portions of canned, drained chickpeas or lentils and edamame
Nuts	Pistachios, cashews	Small portions of other nuts, nut butters or seeds
Condiments and Seasonings	Garlic, onions, shallots, barbecue sauce, commercial salad dressings, condiments sweetened with high-fructose corn syrup	Garlic-infused oil, chives, scallion greens, leafy herbs, sweet spices, ginger, vinegars, mustards, lemon or lime juice, soy sauce.
Beverages	Canned or bottled beverages sweetened with high fructose corn syrup or agave, such as soda, pop, ice tea, or lemonade; rum, sherry, or port; chamomile or fennel tea	Beverage sweetened with small amounts of sugar, 100% pure maple syrup, or stevia; beer, wine, gin, vodka, whiskey; espresso or coffee; green, black, peppermint, or ginger tea
Proteins	Meat, fish, or poultry seasoned or prepared with onion or garlic. Also see legumes.	Beef, pork, chicken, turkey, fish, seafood, venison, eggs
Fats and Oils	Gravies or sauces thickened with wheat flour	Butter, mayonnaise, or any type of oil; gravies or sauces thickened with cornstarch

Sample Low FODMAP Menu

Breakfast

2 slices slow-leavened sourdough wheat bread
Scrambled eggs with handful of spinach
½ cup of grapes
Lactose free yogurt with 1 tablespoon of chia seeds

Lunch

Greek salad made with grilled chicken, lettuce, tomatoes, feta cheese, Kalamata olives and a lemon and olive oil dressing
1 orange
Rice crackers

Snack

Rice cake topped with 2 tablespoons peanut butter and ½ banana

Dinner

Grilled salmon with lemon and herbs
Baked potato with butter
Roasted carrots and parsnips with olive oil
Lactose free dairy or almond milk

Ready to get started?

To find an experienced dietitian to guide you through the low FODMAP diet and provide individualized nutrition counseling, visit the [International Foundation for Gastrointestinal Disorders \(IFFGD\)](https://www.iffgd.org/). Select “Low FODMAP Diet” from the dropdown menu of the search engine.

Additional resources:

Monash University: <https://www.monashfodmap.com/>
University of Michigan: <http://myginutrition.com/diet.html>
FODMAP Friendly: <http://fodmapfriendly.com/app/>
Kate Scarlata: <http://www.katescarlata.com>
Patsy Catsos: <http://www.ibsfree.net>

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Disclaimer

The content found in this handout is intended for informational purposes only and is not intended to serve as a substitute for the consultation, diagnosis, and/or medical treatment of a qualified physician or healthcare provider. Please use this handout in conjunction with your dietitian and gastroenterologist.

This handout was created by Patsy Catsos, MS, RDN, LD, Kate Scarlata, MPH, RDN, and Lauren Van Dam, MS, RD, members of Dietitians in Gluten and Gastrointestinal Disorders (DIGID), a sub-unit of Dietitians in Medical Nutrition Therapy Dietetic Practice Group.