

Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) & Diet

Overview

Currently there is no specific diet that has been shown to cause, prevent or treat IBD. However, there is much interest and research on the interplay between diet and the human gut microbiome, and in turn how this may affect IBD. Consequently dietary recommendations for IBD may change in the future. Watch this space!

When well many people with IBD do not require any form of dietary restriction. It is best to restrict as few foods as possible to maintain a balanced and nutritious diet. Keep a food diary to see if any particular foods are associated with abdominal symptoms.

It is also important to keep in mind that other conditions requiring dietary management (e.g. coeliac disease, food intolerances) can also co-exist in patients with IBD. In these circumstances consulting with an accredited dietician can be especially helpful.

Dietary management during flare ups

During flare ups smaller and more frequent meals may be better tolerated.

A low residue and low fibre diet is recommended. A low residue diet (see below) is not only low in fibre, but also excludes foods that can stimulate bowel contractions which can contribute to abdominal discomfort and diarrhoea. Low residue foods should be well cooked (e.g. steaming, boiling, braising, poaching, simmering). Avoid roasting or grilling which may make food tough or dry. Remain well hydrated.

Dietary management does not replace seeing your Gastronorth doctor and changing your medication as appropriate

INCLUDE	AVOID
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - refined carbohydrates including white bread, white rice, pasta, and refined cereal (e.g Corn Flakes, Rice bubbles) - clear juices - clear broth and strained soups - raw lettuce, cucumber, onion, and zucchini - well-cooked or canned vegetables, no skins or seeds, including spinach, pumpkin, eggplant, green beans, asparagus, beets, carrots, and potatoes - some raw fruits, including ripe apricots, bananas, cantaloupe, honeydew melon, watermelon, nectarines, papayas, peaches, and plums - limited cooked fruits as (no seeds or skins) - finely ground, well-cooked meat - fish, eggs, and poultry - butter, vegetable oils, margarine - up to 2 cups per day of "smooth milk products," such as yogurt, cottage cheese, and ricotta cheese 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - legumes, nuts, and seeds - most raw fruits and vegetables - popcorn - unprocessed coconut - most whole grains, including breads or pastas dried fruits - figs, prunes, berries - deli meats - spicy foods and dressings - caffeine - prune juice or juice with pulp - chocolate

Special circumstances - Stricture

Some patients with Crohn's can develop a stricture (narrowing) in the small intestine. In these cases a very low fibre or even temporary liquid diet may be needed to help minimise symptoms.