

Dietary advice for patients with Ulcerative Colitis or Crohn's Disease

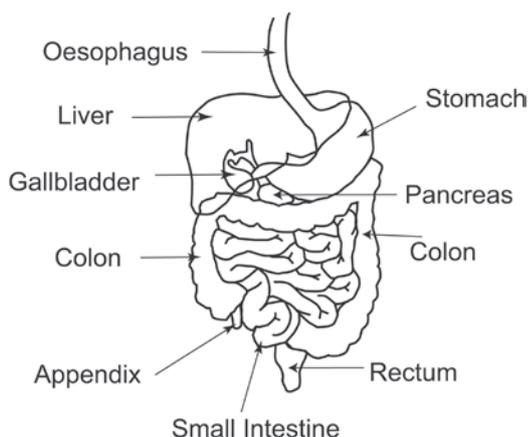
Both Ulcerative Colitis and Crohn's disease are known as Inflammatory Bowel Diseases (IBD). But how do the two conditions differ?

Ulcerative Colitis:

This is inflammation to the bowel, but it affects the colon and rectum only.

Crohn's Disease:

This is inflammation which can occur anywhere in the digestive tract, from your mouth to anus.



Treatment for both conditions is very individual and what works for one person may not work for the next, however dietary advice for both conditions is very similar. This leaflet is designed to help you make dietary choices to help you and your symptoms.

What diet should I follow on the whole?

Although there has been a huge amount of research into diets and IBD, there are no set rules for foods you should have and those you should avoid. However, it is recommended you have a

well-balanced / whole food/ unprocessed diet. You may find certain foods or drinks upset you. As each person is different some foods may be tolerated by one person but not the next. It is a very individual thing and involves some trial and error.

General tips:

- To help your digestion, take time over your meals and chew your food well.
- Eat regularly. Have three small meals a day with snacks and drinks between if necessary - "little and often", to ensure an adequate intake.
- Have a varied diet, with foods from all the food groups (fruit and vegetables, fats, protein and carbohydrates) this will ensure that you receive adequate nutrition.
- Have plenty of fluid -try to aim for 8-10 tall glasses of fluid per day.
- Avoid heavy meals or snacks before bedtime
- Avoid alcohol and caffeine drinks e.g. coffee,tea,cola before bedtime as they can stimulate the gut.

Healthy eating:

No one food contains all the nutrients needed for health so you should choose a variety of foods from each food group, discussed below:

Protein Foods

These are essential for health and repair of body tissues.

- Meat
- Fish

- Eggs
- Beans, baked beans, peas, lentils
- Nut products (caution needs to be taken with nuts if you have a stoma as they may cause a blockage), smooth nut butters may be tolerated.
- Meat alternative—Quorn, tofu

Include 2 portions from this list each day. Red meats, liver, kidney, oily fish, eggs and pulses are good sources of iron.

Dairy Produce

Milk, cheese and yoghurt are good sources of calcium, which is important for healthy bones. These foods also provide protein and some vitamins. Try to aim for 3-4 portions of dairy a day: A portion is:

- 200ml milk
- 30g block of cheese
- 1 (120ml) yoghurt

If dairy is problematic for you, then try an alternative such as calcium enriched soya or lactose free milk.

Starchy foods

These provide energy, vitamins and fibre. Examples include:

- Bread, chapattis, wraps, pittas etc.
- Breakfast cereals, oats
- Pasta
- Rice
- Potatoes, sweet potatoes
- Plantains, green bananas, yam

Include a variety of foods from this group and make them the main part of your meals.

Fruits and Vegetables

These provide fibre and a range of vitamins and minerals that are essential for good health. Choose a wide variety and try to eat 5 portions per day.

A portion is two tablespoons of vegetables, a small salad, a piece of fruit like an apple or banana, two tablespoons of stewed/tinned fruit or a small glass (150ml) of fruit juice.

If you find that some fruits and vegetables upset you, then try:

- Peeled fruits
- Tinned fruits in natural juice
- Stewed, baked or pureed fruits
- Fruit juices (unsweetened)
- Well-cooked or pureed vegetables
- Vegetables in soup or casseroles, pureed if necessary

Fats and oils

These provide energy, essential fats and some vitamins, but too much fat is not good for health so use the following foods sparingly:

- Butter
- Margarine
- Low fat spreads
- Cooking oils
- Mayonnaise and oily salad dressings

Fats and Sugars

The following foods contain fats and sugars and may be enjoyed as a treat, but try not to eat them too often and, when you do, have small amounts:

- Cakes, biscuits
- Puddings, ice cream
- Chocolate, sweets
- Crisps
- Sugar, sweetened drinks

Alcohol

Excessive amounts of alcohol are not good for health. Some types, such as beer may cause you to have symptoms. If you drink alcohol, take it in moderation: a maximum of 14 units spread out over the week, with several alcohol free days each week.

One unit is equal to half a pint of average strength beer, a single pub measure of spirit (25mls), a small glass of sherry or a small glass of wine (125mls).

What foods should I be careful of?

Although with most foods it is a case of trial and error, it is recommended that you avoid nuts, pips and seeds. These are not always thoroughly digested and can get stuck in parts of the bowel, causing more inflammation.

What to do when having a flare up:

When patients are having a flare up of both these conditions, they can experience symptoms such as abdominal pain, diarrhoea and tiredness. In many patients, diet can be used to help alleviate these symptoms.

If you are experiencing difficulties with your bowels such as loose stools, you may find it useful to reduce the amount of fibre in your diet to ease your symptoms.

This means avoiding foods highest in fibre such as foods containing wholewheat/wholegrains, fruits and vegetables. This can sound limiting, but the aim of this leaflet is to help you choose appropriate foods.

This diet may be a temporary measure and your doctor or dietitian will advise you when and how to start increasing the fibre back into your diet. However, if you are to follow the diet for the long term, then you may benefit from a multivitamin and mineral supplement. Please check with your doctor or dietitian about this.

Foods allowed	Foods to avoid
<p>Breads and cereals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ White bread and white bread products: rolls, pita breads, wraps. ✓ Low fibre breakfast cereals: Rice Krispies, Cornflakes and Special K. ✓ White rice ✓ White pasta ✓ White flour ✓ Corn flour, Semolina, Tapioca 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Wholemeal, granary, brown and high fibre white breads, wholemeal bread products (such as pita's and wraps etc.), fruit breads. ✗ High fibre breakfast cereals: Weetabix, Shredded wheat, Bran flakes, Porridge Oats, muesli, Fruit and Fibre. ✗ Brown rice ✗ Whole-wheat pasta ✗ Wholemeal and granary flour ✗ Bran
<p>Cakes and Biscuits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Plain cakes: Victoria Sponge, Scones, meringues, iced buns ✓ Plain biscuits: Rich tea, Morning Coffee, Malted Milk ✓ White flour crisp breads and crackers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Cakes and biscuits containing wholegrain, nuts and fruit: Digestives and Hobnobs, fruit cake, carrot cake
<p>Fruit (2 portions/day allowed)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Fruit juice ✓ Canned fruit but not pineapple ✓ Melon ✓ Peeled and cored apples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Fresh and dried fruit except those allowed.
<p>Vegetables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Potatoes (without skin) ✓ Well cooked vegetables: Carrots, squash, courgette, asparagus, beetroot and swede. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Cold potatoes ✗ Vegetables except ones on allowed list (includes beans and pluses) ✗ All skins, pips, seeds and stalks.

Foods allowed	Foods to avoid
Meat ✓ All meat allowed	
Fish ✓ All fish allowed	
Dairy ✓ Milk ✓ Yoghurts (no bits) ✓ Cheese ✓ Eggs	✗ Yoghurts with bits of fruit, nuts or muesli
Desserts ✓ Ice cream ✓ Milky puddings ✓ Jelly	✗ Any containing fruit or nuts
Drinks ✓ All drinks	✗ Fruit juice with bits
Miscellaneous ✓ Boiled sweets, fruit gums, mints ✓ Seedless jam, honey, sugar ✓ Tea, coffee, squash, fizzy drinks ✓ Salt, pepper, herbs and spices ✓ Clear soup ✓ Marmite ✓ Chocolate	✗ All nuts ✗ Jam/marmalade with bits ✗ Drinks with added fibre ✗ Soups with large chunks of vegetables ✗ Chocolate with fruit and nuts

What shall I do if I have a poor appetite?

It is quite common for some people to find their appetite is poor and they don't feel like eating much when they are having a flare up. This is usually temporary but your Dietitian can supply you with some practical written information to help add extra nourishment to your diet.

- Try to eat small and frequent meals and snacks e.g. every two hours.
- Be positive about what you do eat – every extra mouthful helps.
- Try not to get out of the habit of eating. You actually need to eat to stimulate your appetite.
- Your appetite may come and go, so it is important to make the most of the times when you feel like eating.
- Don't worry if it isn't 'normal' foods at 'normal' times – if you fancy cereal at midnight, enjoy it.
- Try to relax and enjoy what you eat. Eat slowly and chew your food well, trying to rest before and afterwards.
- A short walk before a meal or some fresh air may help improve your appetite.
- Most of all indulge! Foods that are often seen as 'unhealthy' are high in energy and can be helpful when you are not up to eating much.

Reintroducing foods:

If you are following this diet for a short period and your symptoms have improved, your doctor or dietitian will advise you when it is appropriate to start reintroducing fibre back into your diet.

It is recommended you gradually reintroduce higher fibre foods back into your diet..

- Introduce one food at a time giving it a few days before introducing the next.
- If your symptoms start to flare up after introducing a certain food, then cut it out again and continue with what you know you can tolerate for a few days.
- Do try reintroducing the food again, to check whether you are able to tolerate it.

If you are experiencing any difficulties or need further advice then please contact your Dietitian.

Diet as a treatment:

Your Doctor may recommend you need to have a diet called Modulen IBD to help settle your symptoms. If this is the case then please speak with your Dietitian, who will be able to help you with this.

Useful contacts:

Dietitians

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