

The low FODMAP diet

FODMAP stands for Fermentable Oligo-Di-Monosaccharides and Polyols. FODMAPs are carbohydrates (sugars) that are found in foods. Not all carbohydrates are considered FODMAPs.

The FODMAPs in the diet are:

- Fructose (fruits, honey, high fructose corn syrup (HFCS), etc.)
- Lactose (dairy)
- Fructans (wheat, onion, garlic, etc.). Fructans are also known as inulin.
- Galactans (beans, lentils, legumes such as soy, etc.)
- Polyols (sweeteners containing sorbitol, mannitol, xylitol, maltitol; stone fruits such as avocado, apricots, cherries, nectarines, peaches, plums, etc.)

FODMAPs are osmotic (they pull water into the intestinal tract), may not be digested or absorbed well and could be fermented upon by bacteria in the intestinal tract when eaten in excess.

Symptoms of gas, bloating, cramping and /or diarrhea may occur in those who could be sensitive to the effects of FODMAPs. A low FODMAP diet may help reduce symptoms, which will limit foods high in fructose, lactose, fructans, galactans and polyols.

The low FODMAP diet is often used in those with irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). The diet also has potential use in those with similar symptoms arising from other digestive disorders such as inflammatory bowel disease.

This diet will also limit fiber because some high-fiber foods also have high amounts of FODMAPs. Fiber is a component of complex carbohydrates that the body cannot digest, found in plant based foods such as beans, fruits, vegetables, whole grains, etc.

Low FODMAP Food Choices

MEATS, POULTRY, FISH, EGGS

Good to eat: beef, chicken, canned tuna, eggs, egg whites, fish, lamb, pork, shellfish, turkey, cold cuts

Limit: foods made with high FODMAP fruit sauces or with HFCS

DAIRY

Good to eat: Lactose-free dairy, small amounts of cream cheese, half and half, hard cheeses (cheddar, colby, parmesan, Swiss), mozzarella, sherbet

Limit: buttermilk, chocolate, cottage cheese, ice cream, creamy/cheesy sauces, milk (from cow, sheep or goat), sweetened condensed milk, evaporated milk, soft cheeses (brie, ricotta), sour cream, whipped cream, yogurt

MEAT, NON- DAIRY ALTERNATIVES

Good to eat: almond milk, rice milk, rice milk ice cream, nuts, nut butters, seeds

Limit: coconut milk, coconut cream, beans, black eyed peas, hummus, lentils, pistachios, soy products

GRAINS

Good to eat: Wheat-free grains/wheat-free flours (gluten-free grains are wheat free): bagels, breads, hot/cold cereals (corn flakes, cheerios, cream of rice, grits, oats, etc.), crackers, noodles, pastas, quinoa, pancakes, pretzels, rice, tapioca, tortillas, waffles

Limit: chicory root, inulin, grains with HFCS or made from wheat (terms for wheat: einkorn, emmer, kamut, spelt), wheat flours (terms for wheat flour: bromated, durum, enriched, farina, graham, semolina, white flours), flour tortillas, rye

FRUITS

Good to eat: bananas, berries, cantaloupe, grapes, grapefruit, honeydew, kiwi, kumquat, lemon, lime, mandarin, orange, passion fruit, pineapple, rhubarb, tangerine

Limit: avocado, apples, applesauce, apricots, dates, canned fruit, cherries, dried fruits, figs, guava, lychee, mango, nectarines, pears, papaya, peaches, plums, prunes, persimmon, watermelon

VEGETABLES

Good to eat: bamboo shoots, bell peppers, bok choy, cucumbers, carrots, celery, corn, eggplant, lettuce, leafy greens pumpkin, potatoes, squash, yams, (butternut, winter), tomatoes, zucchini

Limit: artichokes, asparagus, beets, leeks, broccoli, brussel sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, fennel, green beans, mushrooms, okra, snow peas, summer squash

DESSERTS

Good to eat: any made with allowed foods

Limit: any with HFCS or made with foods to limit

BEVERAGES

Good to eat: low FODMAP fruit/vegetable juices (limit to ½ cup at a time), coffee, tea

Limit: any with HFCS, high FODMAP fruit/vegetable juices, fortified wines (sherry, port)

SEASONINGS, CONDIMENTS

Good to eat: most spices and herbs, homemade broth, butter, chives, flaxseed, garlic flavored oil, garlic powder, olives, margarine, mayonnaise, onion powder, olive oil, pepper, salt, sugar, maple syrup without HFCS, mustard, low FODMAP salad dressings, soy sauce, marinara sauce (small amounts), vinegar, balsamic vinegar

Limit: HFCS, agave, chutneys, coconut, garlic, honey, jams, jellies, molasses, onions, pickle, relish, high FODMAP fruit/vegetable sauces, salad dressings made with high FODMAPs, artificial sweeteners: sorbitol, mannitol, isomalt, xylitol (cough drops, gums, mints)

Tips for a low FODMAP diet:

- Follow the diet for 6 weeks. After this, add high FODMAP foods one at a time back into the diet in small amounts to identify foods that could be “triggers” to your symptoms. Limit foods that trigger your symptoms.
- Read food labels. Avoid foods made with high FODMAPs such as high FODMAP fruits, HFCS, honey, inulin, wheat, soy, etc. However, a food could be an overall low FODMAP food if a high FODMAP food listed as the last ingredient.
- Buy gluten free grains as they are wheat free. However, you do not need to follow a 100% gluten free diet as the focus is on FODMAPs, not gluten. Look for gluten free grains made with low FODMAPs, such as potato, quinoa, rice or corn. Avoid gluten free grains made with high FODMAPs.
- Limit serving sizes for low FODMAP fruits/vegetables and high fiber/low FODMAP foods such as quinoa to a ½ cup per meal (½ cup=size of a tennis ball) if you have symptoms after eating these foods. The symptoms could be related to eating large amounts of low FODMAPs or fiber all at once.

Low FODMAP Meals and Snack Ideas

1. gluten-free waffle with walnuts, blueberries, maple syrup without HFCS
2. eggs scrambled with spinach, bell peppers and cheddar cheese
3. oatmeal topped with sliced banana, almonds and brown sugar
4. fruit smoothie blended with lactose-free vanilla yogurt and strawberries
5. rice pasta with chicken, tomatoes, spinach topped with pesto sauce
6. chicken salad mixed with chicken, lettuce, bell peppers, cucumbers, tomatoes, balsamic vinegar salad dressing
7. turkey wrap with gluten free tortilla, sliced turkey, lettuce, tomato, slice of cheddar cheese, mayonnaise, mustard
8. ham and Swiss cheese sandwich on gluten-free bread, with mayonnaise, mustard
9. quesadilla with corn or gluten-free tortilla and cheddar cheese
10. beef and vegetable stew (made with homemade broth, beef, allowed vegetable)