



Diarrhea Nutrition Tips

Diarrhea has many causes. You may get it because of chemotherapy, radiation therapy to the lower abdomen, malabsorption, or use of antibiotics. It can also develop because of intolerance to milk or difficulty in absorbing fats. If you have a loss of weight with diarrhea this may be due to dehydration, which means that your body doesn't have enough water. Speak with your health professional to try to determine the cause and obtain the proper treatment. If you have diarrhea:

- Drink plenty of room-temperature liquids to help prevent dehydration. These may include broths/bouillon, fruit juices (diluted, if necessary), dilute Gatorade, Pedialyte, Drip Drop Hydration, ginger ale, dilute fruit nectars, coconut water, water, or weak teas. Limit caffeinated and/or carbonated beverages, if gas or cramps occur.
- Carbonated beverages are sometimes better tolerated if you allow them to lose their fizz or stir them before you drink them.
- Consume more potassium-rich foods such as coconut water, bananas, peeled potatoes, lactose-free milk or yogurt.
- Drink or eat some high-sodium foods, such as broth, soups, crackers, pretzels, to help replace sodium losses.
- Try the modified "White Diet" – bananas, rice, applesauce, white toast, noodles, chicken breast, white fish, eggs, soft tofu, cottage cheese, smooth yogurt, etc.
- Choose smaller, but more frequent meals. Try to eat something every 3 to 4 hours.
- Avoid greasy, spicy, highly seasoned and very sweet/sugary foods.
- Avoid raw vegetables and the skins, seeds, and stringy fibers of unpeeled fruits. Gradually resume your consumption of higher fiber foods, fruits and vegetables once the diarrhea subsides.
- Use dairy products with care due to possible lactose intolerance. Try lactose-free milk, soy milk, or yogurt, which have low or no lactose.
- Limit use of sugar-free gums and candies made with sorbitol – these can cause gas/bloating/diarrhea.

Food Group	Better Tolerated Foods	Food to Limit or Avoid
Dairy	Buttermilk Skim, low-fat and evaporated milk Soy/almond/rice/coconut milk Yogurt Low-fat, part-skim and aged cheese	Whole milk Half-and-half Cream Sour cream Regular (whole milk) ice cream Yogurt with berries, dried fruit, or nuts Most cheeses Tip: Try avoiding lactose, if you find that you are sensitive to dairy. Opt for lactose-free milk, yogurt, cheese, etc.

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Grains	<p>Bread, bagels, rolls, crackers, and pasta made from white or refined flour</p> <p>White rice</p> <p>Cream of wheat, cream of rice</p> <p>Cereals made from refined grains (puffed rice, corn flakes) without added fiber</p>	<p>Whole wheat or whole grain breads, rolls, crackers, or pasta</p> <p>Brown or wild rice</p> <p>Barley, oats, and other whole grains</p> <p>Cereals made from whole grain or bran</p> <p>Breads or cereals made with seeds or nuts</p> <p>Popcorn</p> <p>Tip: Choose grain foods with less than 2g dietary fiber per serving. (To find out how much fiber is in a serving of a packaged food, look on its Nutrition Facts label.)</p>
Fruits and Vegetables	<p>Fruit juice without pulp</p> <p>Ripe bananas</p> <p>Melons</p> <p>Fresh Apple, Pear, or Peach, if peeled</p> <p>Canned soft fruits</p> <p>Most well-cooked vegetables without seeds or skins</p> <p>Lettuce, if tender and ribbing removed</p> <p>Strained vegetable juice</p> <p>Potatoes without skin</p>	<p>Most raw fruits</p> <p>Dried fruits, including prunes and raisins</p> <p>Fruit juice with pulp</p> <p>Canned fruit in heavy syrup</p> <p>Any fruits sweetened with sorbitol</p> <p>Prune juice</p> <p>Most raw vegetables</p> <p>Fried vegetables</p> <p>Beets, Broccoli, Brussels sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower</p> <p>Collard, mustard, and turnip greens</p> <p>Whole corn kernels</p> <p>Potato and sweet potato skins</p>
Proteins	<p>Tender, well-cooked meat, pork, poultry, fish, eggs, or soy foods made without added fat</p> <p>Smooth nut butters (if tolerated)</p>	<p>Fried meat, poultry, or fish</p> <p>Luncheon meats, such as bologna or salami</p> <p>Sausage, Bacon, Hot dogs</p> <p>Fatty, gristly meats</p> <p>Whole nuts, Chunky nut butters</p>
Beverages	<p>Water</p> <p>Broth/bouillon</p> <p>Decaffeinated coffee</p> <p>Caffeine-free teas</p> <p>Dilute fruit juices or nectars</p> <p>Oral rehydration beverages</p>	<p>Beverages containing caffeine, including regular coffee, regular tea, colas, and energy drinks</p> <p>Limit or avoid beverages containing high fructose corn syrup or sorbitol</p> <p>Alcoholic beverages</p> <p>Tip: Healthy people need 8 to 10 cups of fluid each day. You may need to drink more to replace fluids lost to diarrhea.</p>
Fats/Other	<p>Fats include oil, butter, cream, cream cheese, margarine, mayonnaise and salad dressings.</p>	<p>Tip: Limit fats to less than 8 teaspoons a day.</p> <p>Sugar alcohols such as xylitol and sorbitol; honey</p>



Medications to Help Control Diarrhea

Goal: Less than or equal to 3 soft, semi-formed or formed stools per 24 hours.

Step 1: Start when frequent stooling or loose watery stools begins to occur.

Use 1-2 tablets of Imodium after each loose stool until you reach goal diarrhea control.

Do not exceed 8 tablets per day.

Choose the better tolerated foods as listed above.

Drink at least 8 cups of fluids daily (dilute Gatorade, Pedialyte, dilute fruit juice, broths, coconut water).

Step 2: If Step 1 is not effective, add Lomotil to the regimen; alternating Imodium and Lomotil as follows:

15 minutes before breakfast – take 2 Lomotil

Mid morning – take 2 Imodium

15 minutes before lunch – take 2 Lomotil

Mid-afternoon – take 2 Imodium

15 minutes before evening meal – take 2 Lomotil

Early evening – take 2 Imodium

Just before bedtime – take 2 Lomotil

These 2 drugs can be used simultaneously for synergistic effect. Lomotil is effective at decreasing intestinal peristalsis. Imodium is effective at increasing absorption

Step 3: If step 2 is not effective, call your physician or their team. You may need to use opiates, tincture of opium, etc. or they may need to modify your treatment plan.

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