

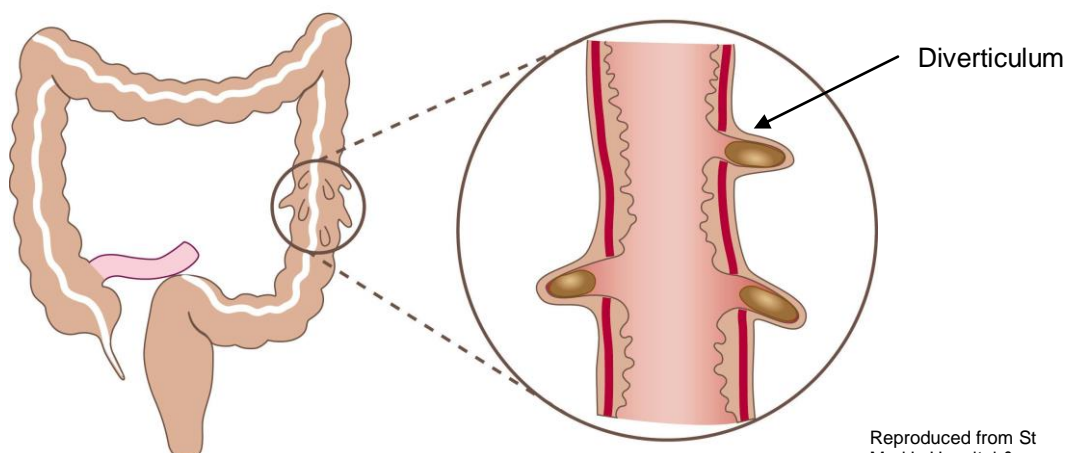
Department of Nutrition and Dietetics Patient Information

Dietary Advice for Diverticular Disease

What is Diverticular Disease?

Diverticular disease refers to the small pouches (diverticulum) which bulge out from weaknesses in the lining of the large intestine or colon. The presence of these diverticulum is known as diverticulosis or diverticular disease and generally this does not cause a problem.

Diverticular disease of the colon



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What is diverticulitis?

Diverticulitis is a condition associated with diverticular disease. It occurs when the diverticulum becomes inflamed or infected causing constant severe pain and fever. When inflammation and infection occurs, it may be necessary to take antibiotics and painkillers. This diet sheet aims to give dietary advice for managing episodes of diverticulitis.

What kind of foods will help when I have diverticulitis?

During episodes of diverticulitis, it is helpful to eat a relatively bland diet avoiding irritant foods. These are high fibre foods such as onions, fruit and vegetable skins, seeds and nuts. Therefore, a low fibre diet should be followed temporarily until symptoms subside.

Low fibre foods

- White flour and baked products made with white flour, e.g. bread, pastry, crumbles, pasta
- White rice, tapioca, sago, cornflour, custard and blancmange
- Rice krispies and cornflakes
- Plain biscuits e.g. rich tea
- Plain crispbreads, crackers and rice cakes
- Meat and fish dishes that don't include wholemeal pastry or breadcrumbs
- Tofu
- All types of milk, cheese, yoghurts (smooth with no fruit 'bits'), fromage fraais, cream and eggs.
- All varieties of fats and oils
- Sweets and desserts including ice creams, lollies and jelly's
- Jams and marmalade without pips and seeds
- Sugary drinks
- Fruit juices without bits and soft canned peaches, pears, mandarins
- Cooked and peeled root vegetables without seeds, pips or skin such as carrots, parsnips and potato
- Caffeinated drinks including cocoa
- Clear or cream soups and stocks
- Seasoning and spices. Bottled tomato sauce, mayonnaise, salad cream, beef/yeast extract.
- Milk or cheese sauces and gravy.

Fruit and vegetables which are suitable for a low fibre diet:

(*avoid skins, pips and seeds)

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------|
| • Apples | • Aubergine |
| • Apricot | • Beetroot |
| • Cherries | • Carrot |
| • Grapes | • Celery |
| • Grapefruit | • Courgette |
| • Kiwi | • Cucumber |
| • Lychees | • Leeks |
| • Plums | • Lettuce |
| • Rhubarb | • Marrow |
| • Strawberries | • Mushroom |
| • Mango | • Pepper |
| • Melon | • Potato |
| • Oranges/nectarines/ tangerines | • Radish |
| • Peaches | • Swede |
| • Pears | • Tomato |
| • Asparagus | |

What happens when I don't have symptoms?

A medium to high fibre diet is recommended when you are not suffering from any symptoms from your diverticular disease. A gradual increase in dietary fibre may ease symptoms and reduce complications, however this may not work for everyone as evidence is not conclusive.

The following foods have a medium to high fibre content:

- Wholemeal, brown, soya and carob flours and foods made with them including savoury snacks
- Wholemeal pasta
- Brown rice
- Wholegrain cereals like Weetabix, All-bran, porridge oats, muesli and any cereals and cereal bars containing dried fruit, nuts and seeds
- Digestives, flapjack, biscuits containing nuts or dried fruit such as fig rolls or garibaldi biscuits
- Rye and wholegrain crispbreads including oatcakes
- Peanut butter
- Meat and fish products with wholemeal pastry or breadcrumbs
- Dairy products with added wholegrain cereals (certain yoghurts) or dried/high fibre fruits
- All varieties of fats and oils.

Fruit and vegetables with medium to high fibre content:

- Banana and banana chips
- All berries including currants and sultanas
- Dates, figs
- Dried fruit including prunes and raisins
- All varieties of beans including baked and kidney
- Beansprouts
- Broccoli and cauliflower florets
- Green leafy vegetables (i.e. cabbage and spring greens)
- Chick peas
- Garden peas
- Lentils
- Mange-tout
- Onion
- Sweetcorn
- Sweet potato

Other medium to high fibre foods:

- Crisps
- Pickles and chutneys

As you increase your fibre intake it is also important to increase your fluid intake to prevent any constipation. Fibre absorbs water and makes the stool bulkier making it easier to pass.

Despite common advice, there is no rationale to avoid nuts, corn, popcorn or fruit with small seeds such as strawberries/blueberries.

The government recommends that everyone in the UK consider taking 10 micrograms a day of Vitamin D during the Autumn and Winter and there is some evidence that those with the lowest vitamin D levels are more likely to have a diverticulitis flare up.

If you experience an increase in symptoms with increased fibre intake and it is not thought to be due to a short term episode of diverticulitis then ask your GP or Health Professional for a referral to the Community Dietetic Service.

Contact details

Nutrition and Dietetics Department
Poole Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
Longfleet Road
Poole
Dorset
BH15 2JB
Tel: 01202 442687
www.poole.nhs.uk

Community Health Services
Dorset HealthCare University NHS
Foundation Trust
Community Dietetic Service
Parkstone Health Centre
Mansfield Road
Parkstone
BH14 0DJ

Tel: 01202 733323

For further health-related information please ask the relevant department for an Information Prescription or contact:

The Health Information Centre
Poole Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
Telephone: 01202 448003

www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

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We can supply this information in larger print, on audiotape, or have it translated for you. Please call PALS on 01202 448499 or the Health Information Centre on 01202 448003 for further advice.