

- According to Dr Megan Rossi (theguthealthdoctor.com) “There is no single “best” food for gut health. Instead aim for a diet that is diverse in wholegrains, fruit and vegetables, nuts, seeds, pulse (beans and lentils), herbs and spices. “

The content for this leaflet is based on the knowledge and learnings shared by:

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Date published: 15/10/2021
Review date: 15/10/2023
Ref: EIM/Nut&Diet/TfLFDtHFD/01

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Transition from a Low Fibre Diet to a Higher Fibre Diet

A Patient's Guide



Tips to Bear in Mind throughout the Process

- Take it slowly- focus on gradual reintroduction of higher fibre foods.
- Re-introduce one food at a time in small portions.
- The aim is to systematically reintroduce higher fibre foods on an individual basis, so you can gradually establish your tolerance to each food. Continue the lower fibre diet while reintroducing the higher fibre foods.
- There are no prescriptive guidelines on which food should be reintroduced and in what order. You can decide.
- For example, perhaps in week 1 you could focus on wholegrain bread. By week 2 of the reintroduction process, you could focus on eating the skins on fruit and vegetables such as apples, pears or potatoes. Stewed apple with skin or stewed pear with skin might be an easy transition before eating the raw fruits with their skins intact. In week 3 you could trial a higher fibre breakfast cereal such as oats on a daily basis.

The Process

- Day 1 start with one tablespoon of the food being reintroduced. If tolerated well, on day 2 increase to two tablespoons of the same food. Likewise on day 3 increase to three tablespoons and assess tolerance. By day 4 if you are feeling well, you can say you have reintroduced the food in question. Now move on to the next higher fibre food you would like to reintroduce.
- Keep a food diary by creating two columns in a notebook – quantity of food eaten and symptoms. When you have gathered 10 days' worth of information, you will be able to assess the trends and be able to monitor what is working for you.

- If a certain food makes you feel more flatulent or in pain or gives rise to loose stools, stop the trial of the food and reintroduce in a few weeks' time.

General points

- If the food requires cooking, do not undercook. Cook food well to aid the process of digestion.
- Eat slowly and chew, chew, chew. Aim to chew each mouthful 10-20 times instead of gulping food down too quickly. Digestion starts in the mouth.
- As a general guide, the national guidance for daily fibre intake is 30g/d. This translates into two portions of fruit, five portions of vegetables, three portions of wholegrains and one to two portions of nuts, seeds or legumes each day. However, this target may not be suitable for your personal goal. The aim is to identify the daily quantity and types of fibre that you feel comfortable with.
- Drink between meals not with meals. Ensure you have adequate fluid throughout the day.
- If you have been prescribed laxatives to prevent constipation while on the lower fibre diet, you may no longer require these as you transition to a higher fibre diet.
- Relax after eating to help aid digestion. If you are feeling stressed, work on your gut-brain axis with stress management techniques that help you.

Final thoughts

- Establish what works best for you and what you can personally tolerate. It is a process of 'trial and error'. And remember that everyone is different regarding their personal tolerance levels.