

Low Residue and Low Fibre Diet Before Colonoscopy

Patient handout

This diet reduces food residue in the bowel so the preparation can work effectively and the lining of the colon can be seen clearly. Follow the start date and the time to stop solid food on your main colonoscopy preparation sheet.



The main rules

- **Choose refined and plain foods.** White bread, white rice and white pasta leave less residue than whole grains.
- **Remove skins seeds and peels.** Avoid nuts, seeds, bran, whole grains, raw produce and dried fruit.
- **Keep portions modest.** Choose tender proteins and simple meals rather than large, fatty or heavily seasoned meals.
- **Follow your own schedule.** When your preparation sheet tells you to begin clear fluids, stop all solid food, including every food listed below.

Food guide

Food group	Choose	Avoid
Bread grains and starches	White bread or toast; plain bagel or English muffin; white rice; white pasta or rice noodles; saltines or plain crackers; low-fibre rice or corn cereal; cream of wheat; potato without skin.	Whole-wheat or multigrain foods; brown or wild rice; oatmeal; granola or muesli; bran; quinoa or barley; breads or cereals containing nuts or seeds; popcorn.
Protein	Eggs; tender skinless chicken or turkey; fish or seafood; lean tender beef or pork; tofu; smooth peanut or almond butter in a small amount.	Tough or fatty meat with gristle; beans; chickpeas; lentils; split peas; nuts and seeds; chunky nut butter.
Milk and dairy	Milk if tolerated; mild cheese; cottage cheese; plain yogurt without fruit, seeds or granola; sour cream; butter.	Yogurt containing berries, seeds, nuts or granola; dairy products with added fibre; any dairy product that causes significant bloating or diarrhea.

Food guide continued

Food group	Choose	Avoid
Fruit	Ripe banana; applesauce; canned or cooked peaches, pears or apricots without skin; ripe cantaloupe or honeydew; pulp-free fruit juice.	Raw fruit with skin, seeds or membranes; berries; pineapple; oranges; watermelon with seeds; raisins or other dried fruit; coconut.
Vegetables	Potato without skin; well-cooked or canned peeled carrots, green beans, mushrooms, turnips or asparagus tips; peeled seedless cucumber if permitted by your preparation sheet.	Raw vegetables or salad; corn; peas; tomato; potato skins; broccoli; cauliflower; cabbage; Brussels sprouts; squash with skin or seeds; vegetables with seeds or tough skins.
Fats sauces and spreads	Butter or margarine; vegetable or olive oil; mayonnaise; smooth seed-free jelly; honey or syrup; plain gravy; smooth sauces without vegetable pieces.	Jam or marmalade with seeds or peel; chunky sauces; relish; pickles; olives; whole spices; dressings made with seeds or nuts.
Soups snacks and desserts	Clear broth; strained soup; plain custard or pudding; plain vanilla ice cream; gelatin that is not red or purple; plain cake or cookies made with white flour; hard candy.	Unstrained soup, chili, bean, lentil, pea or corn soup; desserts containing whole grains, nuts, seeds, dried fruit or coconut; red or purple gelatin.
Drinks	Water; tea or coffee; pulp-free pale juice; light-coloured sports drink or soft drink; milk if tolerated during the low-fibre phase.	Drinks containing pulp or added fibre; smoothies; beverages containing seeds; alcohol; red or purple drinks once your colonoscopy preparation begins.

Simple meal ideas

- Scrambled eggs with white toast and a ripe banana or applesauce.
- Turkey on white bread with mayonnaise, without lettuce or tomato, plus canned peaches without skin.
- Baked skinless chicken or fish with white rice or mashed peeled potato.
- Plain macaroni and cheese with smooth yogurt, if dairy is tolerated.
- Saltine crackers with cheese, or plain pudding, for a small snack.

Read labels. When choosing packaged foods, select products with no more than about 1 to 2 grams of fibre per serving and no visible nuts, seeds, bran or dried fruit.

Your main preparation sheet takes priority. It tells you exactly when to stop solid food, when to begin clear fluids and when to take each bowel preparation dose. If you are unsure whether a food is suitable, call the office before your procedure.