



Diverticulitis diet

By Mayo Clinic staff

Original Article: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/diverticulitis-diet/MY00736>

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Definition

A diverticulitis diet can't treat or prevent diverticulitis. Instead, a diverticulitis diet may help you feel better while your doctor treats your diverticulitis with other therapies, such as antibiotics.

Diverticulitis occurs when small, bulging pouches (diverticula) in your digestive tract become infected and inflamed. A diverticulitis diet, which includes clear liquids and low-fiber foods, gives your digestive tract time to rest during your diverticulitis treatment.

If you experience a mild case of diverticulitis, your doctor may recommend that you eat a diverticulitis diet at home during your treatment. For people with more-severe signs and symptoms, hospitalization may be necessary.

Purpose

A diverticulitis diet gives your digestive system a chance to rest while your doctor treats your diverticulitis. A diverticulitis diet is not a treatment for diverticulitis. Your doctor may recommend that you eat a diverticulitis diet at home during your treatment if your diverticulitis signs and symptoms are mild.

People who experience worsening signs and symptoms or those who can't keep liquids down may need to be hospitalized for diverticulitis treatment.

Diet details

A diverticulitis diet gives your digestive tract a chance to rest while your doctor treats your diverticulitis. By limiting yourself to clear liquids and slowly adding low-fiber foods to your diet, your digestive tract has time to heal.

Diverticulitis diet during an attack

During an attack of diverticulitis, your doctor may recommend diverticulitis

treatments. Your doctor may also recommend that you stick to a clear liquid diet for two or three days.

Foods and beverages allowed on a clear liquid diet include:

- Broth
- Clear soda
- Fruit juices without pulp
- Ice chips
- Ice pops without bits of fruit or fruit pulp
- Plain gelatin
- Plain water
- Tea or coffee without cream

Diverticulitis diet once signs and symptoms begin to resolve

As you start feeling better, your doctor will recommend that you slowly introduce low-fiber foods.

Low-fiber foods include:

- Canned fruits
- Desserts without seeds or nuts
- Eggs
- Enriched white bread
- Fruit juice with little or no pulp
- Low-fiber cereals
- Milk
- Yogurt or cheese without seeds or nuts
- Smooth peanut butter
- Tender meat, poultry and fish
- White rice or plain pasta, noodles or macaroni
- Well-cooked vegetables without seeds or skins

Diverticulitis diet after an attack

If you're no longer experiencing diverticulitis, your doctor may recommend you eat a high-fiber diet.

Slowly increase the amount of fiber in your diet. As your body adjusts to your new diet, you can add more fiber. Aim for at least 25 grams of fiber each day if you're a woman, and 38 grams of fiber each day if you're a man.

High-fiber foods include:

- Brown rice
- Fruits
- Legumes, such as lentils and dried beans
- Whole-grain breads, such as whole wheat, rye and bran
- Whole-grain cereals that include wheat, bran or oats
- Wild rice
- Vegetables

Results

Diverticulitis signs and symptoms should begin to resolve two or three days after you begin medical treatment for your diverticulitis.

Contact your doctor if:

- You don't feel better in two or three days
- You develop a fever
- Your abdominal pain is worsening
- You're unable to keep clear liquids down

These may indicate a complication that requires hospitalization.

Risks

The diverticulitis diet has few risks. However, continuing a clear liquid diet for more than a few days can lead to weakness and other complications, since it's difficult to consume enough of the nutrients your body needs. For this reason, call your doctor if you aren't able to transition to low-fiber foods after two or three days on a clear liquid diet.

References

July 25, 2009

MY00736

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