



Nutrition Tips for Diarrhea

Diarrhea is frequent, loose, watery stools. Try these tips for managing diarrhea:

- Drink plenty of fluids...such as water & weak tea but also electrolyte containing beverages such as broth, sports drinks, clear juices, or oral rehydration solutions (available over-the counter at most pharmacies). Being dehydrated can make you feel worse. Including electrolytes can improve water absorption.
- Eat small, frequent meals of soft, bland or well cooked foods. Include foods that contain water-soluble fiber such as bananas, white rice, sourdough toast, applesauce, and well-cooked oatmeal.
- For chronic diarrhea, try taking a soluble fiber supplement, such as ground chia seeds, ground flax seeds (can add to oatmeal), over the counter products like Benefiber, or Metamucil. Start out with a small amount ($\frac{1}{2}$ -1 teaspoon per day) and gradual increase until bowel movements are soft and formed. Be sure to stay well hydrated.
- Eat foods that contain probiotics (healthy bacteria that balance the bacteria in the digestive tract) including yogurt (Activia and others), Kombucha (fermented tea), kefir or take a probiotic supplement that contains lactobacillus strains (Culturelle) or yeast based (such as Florastor).
- Peppermint essential oil has been shown to decrease inflammation and soothe the intestines which may help to reduce diarrhea. Mix 1-2 drops into 4 oz of liquid daily.
- Open herbal, vitamin, or mineral capsules or crush pills to aid absorption. Ask your primary healthcare provider or pharmacist about absorption of medications.
- Talk with your doctor or dietitian about an elimination diet if you are experiencing chronic diarrhea. If you have had your gall bladder out, you may need medication to handle constant bile drainage.
- Take anti-diarrhea medicine as prescribed. If the medicine is not controlling the diarrhea, call the healthcare professional that prescribed the medicine to increase or change therapy.



Nutrition Tips for Constipation

Constipation: bowels do not move regularly, stools become hard and difficult to pass.

- Most people experience improvement with The 3-2-1 Rule for Curing Constipation:
 - Eat **3** or more piece of fruit or vegetable per day
 - Drink at least **2** quarts of water per day (8 cups)
 - Eat at least **1** whole-grain food (e.g. oatmeal, whole-wheat bread, brown rice) daily
- Drink more healthy beverages to help keep your digestive system moving, especially warm water, prune juice, warm juice decaffeinated teas, and hot lemonade.
- Increase intake of high fiber foods such as whole grains, fresh and cooked vegetables, fresh and dried fruits, and foods containing peels, beans, nuts, and seeds.
 - You can also try adding a fiber supplement such as ground chia seeds, ground flax seeds, Benefiber, or Metamucil to your daily meal routine. Start out with a small amount (1-2 teaspoon per day) and gradual increase to as much as 6 grams of fiber per day or until bowel movements are soft and formed. Be sure to stay well hydrated.
- Increase physical activity as you are able, such as taking a walk or doing exercise every day. Your colon is a muscle that is healthier and stronger when it's exercised!
- Designate a routine time (usually 10- 30 minutes after breakfast is best) to sit on the toilet to encourage a bowel movement. Relax and bring something to drink or read.
- Boost your healthy gut bacteria by eating probiotic-containing foods (yogurt with live active cultures such as Activia, sauerkraut, kefir, kombucha, etc) or taking a probiotic supplement, starting at 5 billion colony forming units (CFUs) working up to 15 billion CFUs. Choose a probiotic that contains "lactobacillus" strains of bacteria.
- Deficiency in magnesium and vitamin C can also cause constipation. Try "Effervescent Vitamin C Magnesium Crystals" or "Buffered C Powder" (available on Amazon) for immediate constipation relief. Don't use this strategy more than 3 times per week. Citrus fruits, dark greens and beans are good food sources of magnesium and vitamin C.
- Soak your feet in Epsom's salts for 30 minutes- your skin absorbs magnesium in the Epsom's salts