

Low Fructose Diet

What is Fructose?

Fructose is a natural sugar found in fruit, vegetables, and honey. When fructose is combined with glucose, another natural sugar, it forms sucrose, or “table sugar.” Fructose can also be found in high fructose corn syrup (HFCS), which is often used in sodas and other sweetened beverages, as well as candy, processed baked goods, and condiments.

Why do I Need to Follow a Low-Fructose Diet?

Fructose intolerance can occur in people with irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and other GI disorders. In some individuals, fructose is not digested or absorbed well in the body, causing bloating, abdominal pain, nausea, gas, and diarrhea.

There are varying degrees of tolerance to fructose. Some individuals have more symptoms with concentrated sources of fructose, such as HFCS and honey, rather than certain fruits. However, foods and drinks with HFCS may not upset your stomach if you limit them to 12 oz. total per day and enjoy them with a meal. You will need to see what works specifically for you.

General Guidelines

- Eliminate products with ingredients that list fructose, crystalline fructose (not HFCS), and honey on the label.
- Limit drinks with HFCS to 4-8 oz at a time and try drinking them with a meal instead of on their own.
- Limit commercial baked goods, candies, and other foods made with HFCS to small servings. Enjoy these sweets with a meal, not as a snack.
- Keep in mind the amount of fructose found in 2 apples or 4 tbsp of honey is the same fructose in 1 can of soda.
- Eat fruit in moderation and as part of a meal.
- Glucose is also a natural sugar. The more glucose than fructose in a product, the more “intestinal friendly” the fruit or fruit juice may be. For example, the fructose in apricots is balanced with glucose, so apricots usually do not cause problems. Bananas and mangos are equally high in fructose, but mangos have less glucose, so they usually cause more problems.
- Follow guidelines below for fruits, vegetables, and other foods that are friendlier to your intestines.
- **Note: The foods listed as “Foods to Avoid” should be avoided because of their high fructose content. These are otherwise healthy foods.**

Food Group	Serving Size and Suggestions	Intestine Friendly ☺	Foods to Limit	Foods to Avoid ☹
Fruits <i>Note: Avoid eating large amounts of any fruit.</i>	<p>½ cup of cut fruit or a medium (baseball size) whole fruit.</p> <p>Limit to 1 to 2 servings per day.</p> <p>Fresh or fresh frozen fruit may be better tolerated than canned fruit.</p> <p>Tolerance may depend on the amount you eat at one time.</p> <p>Limit concentrated sources of fruit, such as dried fruit and fruit juices.</p>	Apricot Avocado Bananas Blackberries Blueberries Cantaloupe Cherries Grapefruit Honeydew Lemons, Limes Nectarine Oranges, Tangelos Papaya Passion fruit Peach Pineapple Plum Raspberries Rhubarb Strawberries	Other fruit juices or drinks Sugar-free jam/jelly Canned fruit in heavy syrup Any other fruits not listed	Apples Applesauce Dried fruits (e.g., raisins, dates) Fruit juice Grapes Kiwi Lychee Mango Pears Prunes Watermelon
Vegetables <i>Tolerance may depend on the amount you eat at one time.</i>	<p>½ cup for most vegetables or 1 cup of leafy greens</p> <p>Limit to 1½ to 3 servings per day.</p> <p>Cooked vegetables may be tolerated best since cooking causes a loss of free sugars.</p>	Asparagus Bamboo shoots Bok choy Brussels sprouts Celery Chives Cucumber Lettuce Parsnips Pumpkin Radish Scallions Spinach, Kale White potato Zucchini	Broccoli Carrots Cauliflower Corn Eggplant Green beans Green peas Green peppers Sweet potato Tomatoes <i>Some of these foods are low in fructose but are gas-causing. See what works for you.</i>	Ketchup Pickles Sugar snap peas Sweet corn Tomato paste Tomato sauce

Sweeteners	Tolerance may depend on the amount you eat at one time	Barley malt syrup Brown rice syrup Brown sugar Dextrin Dextrose (available in specialty stores and online; binds free fructose in gut) Glucose or glucose syrups Maltose or isomaltose Raw or turbinado sugar Sugar substitutes:), Sugar Twin® , Sweet One® , Stevia®	Real maple syrup (limit to 1 Tbsp) Aspartame* (Nutrasweet® or Equal®) or Sucralose (Splenda®) if not well tolerated Sugar alcohols: mannitol, sorbitol, xylitol (for some people)	Agave syrup Caramel Fructose High Fructose Corn Syrup Honey Invert Sugar Licorice Molasses Pancake Syrup Palm Sugar Sorghum
Other foods		All meats All fats All eggs All dairy (plain/unsweetened /unflavored)	All beans (low in fructose but gas-causing) Limit products with HFCS if symptoms still continue such as: Jams, jellies, baked beans, bar-b-que sauce, etc.	Flavorings with fructose Desserts (ice cream, candy, cookies, bars) sweetened with fructose Cereal or other processed foods with fructose on the label