

# The FODMAP Diet for Irritable Bowel Syndrome



## What are FODMAPs?

They are short chain carbohydrates that may not be absorbed properly by people with IBS. This may cause diarrhea, pain, gas or bloating.

The acronym stands for:

**Fermentable**

**Oligosaccharides** (fructans, galactans)

**Disaccharides** (lactose)

**Monosaccharides** (fructose)

**Polyols** (sugar alcohols)

## Why are foods containing FODMAPs “trouble foods” for peoples with IBS?

The short chain carbohydrates may not be absorbed properly in people with IBS (although people without IBS may also experience similar symptoms, these side effects are not as strong). These malabsorbed carbohydrates remain undigested in the colon, where the gut bacteria happily ferment it.

## Meet the Family

### **Lactose** (Milk sugar)

Lactose intolerance occurs due to the reduced or absent lactase enzyme needed to digest lactose.

- Avoid lactose-rich foods such as ice cream, milk, condensed milk, and most soft cheeses (cottage cheese)
- Choose low-lactose cheeses (Swiss, Parmesan, Gouda, Colby, Cheddar, Monterey Jack), lactose-free milk, lactose-free cottage cheese and rice milk.

### **Fructose** (Fruit sugar)

Incomplete absorption of fructose in the small intestine can be fermented in the colon leading to abdominal bloating.

Avoid honey, agave, foods containing high fructose corn syrup (soda, barbeque sauce and some cereals), apples, pears, mangoes, sweet cherries, watermelon, and papaya.

## Fructans

Chains of fructose with one glucose molecule on the end.

Avoid wheat (white bread, pasta, pastries, and cookies), onions, and artichokes. Inulin and fructo-oligosaccharide sources of fructans are added to many foods to increase their fiber content. Although it encourages the growth of friendly gut bacteria, they may not be well tolerated by people with IBS.

## Galactans

Chains of galactose molecules with one fructose molecule on the end.

Avoid legumes (soy, beans, chickpeas, black-eyed peas, and lentils), broccoli, cabbage and brussel sprouts.

**Polyols** (sugar alcohols: sorbitol, xylitol, mannitol, isomalt, glycerol, lactitol and more)

Avoid “sugar free chewing gum”, peaches, apricots, plums, berries.

## The FODMAPs Approach

FODMAPs should be considered as a possible contributing factor in abdominal symptoms. Their amount should be limited but does not need to be completely eliminated.

1. First, eliminate FODMAPs foods as much as possible from the diet for 6-8 weeks.
2. After 6 weeks, foods that will less likely cause symptoms may be introduced back into the diet (diet challenge – one type of food every fourth day.

For example, on the first day of the seventh week, a piece of food low in lactose (like yogurt) may be tried. If after 72 hours there are no symptoms, other dairy products can be tried, and waited 72 hours again.

For more information and to personalize your diet, contact a registered dietitian.

### Additional resources

- Connect to our Web site at **kp.org** to access health and drug encyclopedias, interactive programs, health classes, and more.
- Check your *Kaiser Permanente Healthwise Handbook*.
- Contact your Kaiser Permanente Health Education Center or Department for health information, programs, and other resources.
- With a *Kaiser Permanente Healthphone Directory*, you can pick messages to hear on Kaiser Permanente Healthphone (1-800-332-7563, TTY, 1-800-777-9059). Request a Directory from your Health Education Center or Department or download a copy at kp.org (Search “Healthphone”).

Scarlasta, Kate. “The FODMAPs Approach – Minimize Consumption of Fermentable Carbs to Manage Functional Gut Disorder Symptoms.” *Today’s Dietitian Magazine*. Aug. 2010. Web. 15 Oct. 2010. <<http://www.todaysdietitian.com/newarchives/072710p30.shtml>>.

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