

Low FODMAP Diet for Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)

Information for patients

The Low FODMAP diet is extremely effective in improving the symptoms in approximately 70% of patients with IBS. However, it is a complex diet to tackle without appropriate support and guidance. Careful implementation of a low FODMAP diet is needed to ensure that the diet is effective and nutritionally adequate. Education should be provided by a FODMAP trained dietitian.

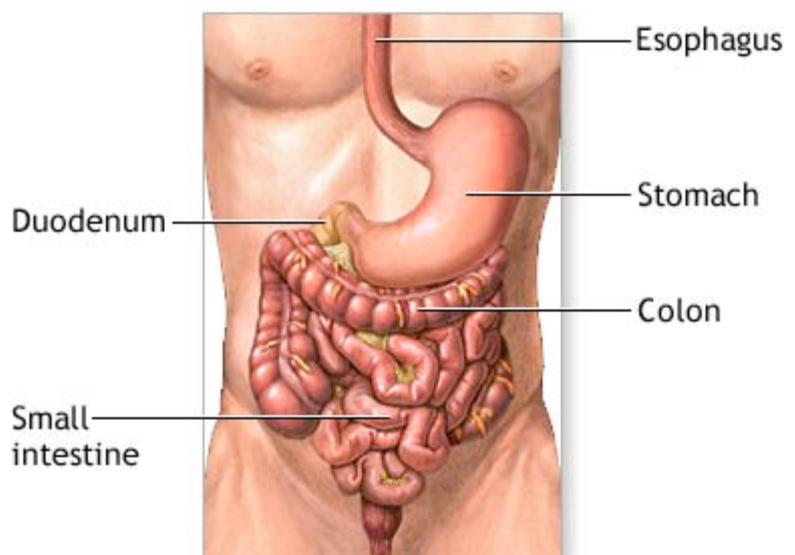
What is the Low FODMAP Diet?

Some carbohydrates may contribute to IBS symptoms. These carbohydrates are called **F**ermentable **O**ligo-saccharides, **D**i-saccharides, **M**ono-saccharides, **A**nd, **P**olyols, also known as **FODMAPS**.

Please note that **only** these carbohydrates are a problem and **not** all carbohydrates.

These FODMAP carbohydrates are not absorbed in the small intestine and so create food residue. This food residue passes out of the small intestine and into the large intestine (colon) where it is then fermented by the bacteria in this area of the gut.

The fermentation of this food residue in the colon can cause gas producing symptoms such as wind, bloating, abdominal pain and can alter stool consistency resulting in diarrhoea.



Summary

FODMAPs are dietary carbohydrates, which are poorly absorbed in the small intestine and fermented in the large intestine triggering symptoms in sensitive individuals.



Dietary intervention

- Dietary intervention involves the strict elimination of FODMAP foods for an 8 week period.
- FODMAP containing foods are then reintroduced to identify which particular FODMAPs you are most sensitive to. Different individuals will be more sensitive to certain FODMAPs.
- **Please Note:** Reintroduction is vital as research suggests that this diet can have a negative effect on the gut bacteria, although the reintroduction of a selection of tolerated FODMAP foods will correct this effect.
- Foods are often well tolerated after this period of elimination and the majority of individuals will not need to be too restrictive for the long term.

Useful Resources

The low FODMAP diet should be followed with the support or advice from a FODMAP trained dietitian to help prevent a nutritionally deficient diet. However, if you would like further information on the diet we have listed some reliable resources below:

- **Smartphone App** - The 'Food Maestro FODMAP' smartphone app. Available for IOS and Android at £3.99 (*please avoid free apps as the information is generally not kept up to date*)
- **YouTube Videos**

The FODMAP Grand Tour Down Under: IBS relief. Video by Monash University
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z_1Hzl9o5ic

King's College London YouTube videos
Starting the low FODMAP diet
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3PRHv3q0SyQ>

Stage 1 Restriction – video guide
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LQZbJJCaiko>

Stage 2 Reintroduction – video guide
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SVLiJoghiY8>

Stage 3 Personalisation – video guide
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V26KHLkRL9s>

Twitter Accounts

@MonashFODMAP
@foodmaestroUK
@patientwebinars

Facebook Accounts

MonashFODMAP
FoodMaestro
TheIBSNetwork

And finally: Is the low FODMAP diet an allergy diet?

No. IBS is caused by irregular gut function, e.g. bacteria fermenting food residue when there are too many FODMAPs in the diet. IBS is also called '*functional gut syndrome*'. IBS sufferers can often tolerate small to moderate amounts of the suspect foods.

Food allergy, on the other hand, involves the immune system and the body may react to tiny amounts of the suspect food. The immune system is not involved in IBS, and therefore IBS is not an 'allergy' and will not show up on allergy tests.

Patient Webinars

Somerset community dietitians have set up other award winning webinars on their website www.patientwebinars.co.uk. Simply visit this website and click on the IBS page to access the **webinar on the Low FODMAP Diet**.

Why are webinars useful for patients?

Webinars allow a patient to gain reliable and accurate information on their medical condition from the comfort of their own home. Patients are anonymous, and they can gain information directly from specialist NHS clinicians. They can hear the latest thinking on their medical condition with no need to travel, pay for hospital parking, take time off work, find childcare or care cover. You can access a webinar anywhere in the world as long as you have a mobile phone, tablet, laptop or computer with Wi-Fi or 4G.

