



Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital
Caring for your Child's Nutrition

Nutrition Therapy for Diarrhea

By eating the foods recommended in this handout, your child will get less fiber, fat, sugar, and lactose (the sugar in milk) than usual. This should help decrease the diarrhea and make your child feel better. The diet restrictions may only need to be followed for a specific amount of time. Talk with your child's doctor about how long he or she might need to follow these restrictions.

Recommended Foods

Note: These suggestions are good for most people. However, if your child's symptoms get worse after eating foods on this list, stop serving them until he or she feels better.

Food Group	Recommended Foods	Notes
Milk and Milk Products	Buttermilk Evaporated, fat-free, and low-fat milk Soy milk Yogurt with live active cultures Powdered milk Cheese Low-fat ice cream Sherbet	If your child has lactose intolerance, drinking milk products may make diarrhea worse. Try lactose free products (such as Lactaid milk products or lactose-free infant, toddler, and pediatric formulas). Avoid yogurts with nuts or dried fruit.
Meat and Other Protein Foods	Tender, well-cooked meat, poultry, fish, eggs, or soy foods made without added fat Smooth nut butters	

Food Group	Recommended Foods	Notes
Grains	White flour Bread, bagels, rolls, crackers, and pasta made from white or refined flour Cold or hot cereals made from white or refined flour	Choose grain foods with less than 2 grams (g) dietary fiber per serving. (To find out how much fiber is in a serving of a packaged food, look on its Nutrition Facts label.)
Vegetables	Most well-cooked vegetables without seeds or skins Potatoes without skin Lettuce Strained vegetable juice	
Fruits	Fruit juice without pulp, except prune juice Ripe bananas Melons Canned soft fruits	See the Foods Not Recommended list for fruits to avoid.
Fats and Oils	Choices include vegetable oils, butter, cream, cream cheese, margarine, and mayonnaise	Limit fats and oils to less than 8 teaspoons a day
Beverages	Beverages without caffeine Rehydration beverages	Talk with your child's doctor to determine how much he or she needs to drink.

Foods Not Recommended

Food Group	Foods Not Recommended
Milk and Milk Products	Whole milk Half-and-half Cream Sour cream Regular (whole milk) ice cream Yogurt with berries, dried fruit, or nuts
Meat and Other Protein Foods	Fried meat, poultry, or fish Luncheon meats, such as bologna or salami Sausage and bacon Hot dogs Fatty meats Nuts Chunky nut butters
Grains	Whole wheat or whole grain breads, rolls, crackers, or pasta Brown or wild rice Barley, oats, and other whole grains Cereals made from whole grain or bran Breads or cereals made with seeds or nuts Popcorn
Vegetables	Raw vegetables (except for lettuce) Fried vegetables Beets Broccoli Brussels sprouts Cabbage Cauliflower Collard, mustard, and turnip greens Corn Potato skins

Food Group	Foods Not Recommended
Fruits	<p>All raw fruits except banana and melons</p> <p>Dried fruits, including prunes and raisins</p> <p>Fruit juice with pulp</p> <p>Canned fruit in heavy syrup</p> <p>Any fruits sweetened with sorbitol</p> <p>Prune juice</p>
Fats and Oils	<p>Limit fats and oils to less than 8 teaspoons per day.</p>
Beverages	<p>Beverages containing caffeine, including regular coffee, regular tea, colas, and energy drinks</p> <p>Limit beverages containing high-fructose corn syrup to 12 ounces per day</p> <p>Avoid beverages sweetened with sorbitol</p> <p>Alcoholic beverages</p>
Other	<p>Sugar alcohols such as xylitol and sorbitol</p> <p>Honey</p>

Sample 1-Day Menu

This menu is appropriate for a 7- to 10-year old child with diarrhea. Ask a registered dietitian if this is right for your child, or what changes may need to be made.

Breakfast	1 cup Rice Krispies 1 cup Lactaid milk ½ ripe banana
Snack	1 cup decaffeinated iced tea 6 ounces yogurt or 2 graham cracker rectangles
Lunch	2 cups chicken rice soup with 2 ounces of added chicken ¼ cup cooked carrots 1 slice white toast with thin spread of jelly ½ cup applesauce
Snack	2 or 3 saltine crackers 1 cup fruit juice without pulp
Dinner	4 to 6 ounces baked fish topped with breadcrumbs, a squeeze of lemon, and 1 teaspoon butter or margarine ½ cup mashed potato without skins ½ cup green beans, cooked well 1½ cups water or other caffeine-free beverage
Snack	½ cup sorbet 1 cup sugar-free hot chocolate made with water or Lactaid milk

1,685 kcal; 110 g protein; 252 g carbohydrate; 28 g fat; 15 g fiber.

Meal Planning Tips

- Limit foods and beverages that contain sugar, lactose, fructose, high-fructose corn syrup, and sorbitol.
- Avoid beverages with caffeine.
- Encourage your child to eat a small meal or snack every 3 or 4 hours.
- If any food makes diarrhea worse, have your child stop eating that food. He or she can try it again when the diarrhea stops.
- Avoid spicy foods if they make diarrhea worse.

Cooking Tips

Some types of diarrhea can spread through food or from person to person. To avoid this:

- **Clean:** Always wash hands, silverware, dishes, cooking tools, and cooking surfaces thoroughly. Use soap and hot water. Also wash fresh fruits and vegetables before cooking or eating them.
- **Separate:** Keep raw and cooked foods separate from one another. Don't eat or serve food with forks, spoons, knives, or other cooking tools that were used to prepare raw meat, eggs, or fish (unless the tools were washed after use).
- **Cook:** Foods should be cooked completely. Hot foods should be kept and served at a temperature above 140 degrees Fahrenheit. Avoid rare and raw meat.
- **Chill:** Store meats, fish, poultry, eggs, milk, dairy foods, fresh fruits and vegetables, and all cooked foods in the refrigerator or freezer. Keep these foods at 40 degrees Fahrenheit or colder until you are ready to cook or serve them.

Additional Information:

If you have questions, call: _____, *Registered Dietitian*

Phone: (717) 531- _____ or (717) 531-8406