

Low Fat Diet

For a regular healthy diet, it is recommended that of the total calories eaten, no more than 30% should come from fat. However, certain diseases and medical conditions can make it difficult for the body to tolerate even that much fat, so a low-fat diet may help people with these conditions.

Gallbladder Disease: Bile secreted from the gallbladder helps the body break down and absorb fats. When gallstones or gallbladder diseases are present, a low-fat diet is often used to prevent complications.

Delayed stomach emptying (Gastroparesis) is a condition in which the stomach empties food into the intestine too slowly. This can cause bloating, nausea, and even vomiting. Normally, fat in foods delays stomach emptying, so fats make gastroparesis worse.

Diarrhea can be caused by many conditions. When it occurs, it can be aggravated by eating fatty foods.

Malabsorption of nutrients: Absorption is the transfer of nutrients into the bloodstream from the intestine. In some diseases of the pancreas and small intestine, patients have trouble absorbing nutrients from the diet, including fat. A low-fat diet may help to control symptoms until the cause of malabsorption can be diagnosed.

Fatty Liver: For a number of reasons, fat may accumulate in the liver. Fat is not normally stored in the liver, and in some cases this can cause damage to the liver. A low fat diet and weight reduction may be helpful.

Special Considerations

Be careful how foods are prepared. Trim all visible fat from meats. Bake, steam, or broil meats and fish instead of frying. Toppings for potatoes and pastas should contain no fat above the three allowed daily servings. This low-fat diet should be used until the underlying medical condition is controlled or corrected. The physician will give any individual instructions, and tell you when you no longer need to use the low-fat diet.

In most cases, this diet provides all the nutrients required by the National Research Council's Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA). In some cases, however, the physician may prescribe supplements. Women of childbearing age and those people with malabsorption may need to take certain vitamin and/or mineral supplements.

Food Groups		
Group	Recommend	Avoid
Milk & milk products (2 or more cups daily)	skim milk, evaporated skim milk, skim buttermilk, nonfat sour cream, yogurt made with skim milk (3 gms fat or less/oz, maximum of 3 oz/day), fat-free cheeses, low-fat cottage cheese, part skim mozzarella cheese, part skim or skim ricotta cheese	whole milk, cream, sour cream, non-dairy creamer, whole milk cheese, cheese spreads
Bread & grains (4 or more servings daily)	whole grain and enriched breads, cold cereal, whole grain cereals (except granola), saltines, soda crackers, low-fat snack crackers, rice cakes, unbuttered popcorn, low-fat muffins, plain pasta, barley, oatmeal, home-made pancakes without fat, French toast made with egg substitute and skim milk	breads containing egg, cheese, or made with fat; biscuits; sweet rolls; pancakes; French toast; doughnuts; waffles; fritters; muffins; granola-type cereals; snack crackers; potato chips; packaged stuffing; fried rice; chow mein noodles
Vegetables (3 or more servings daily)	all vegetables (steamed, raw, boiled, or baked without added fat)	fried vegetables or those in cream, cheese, butter sauces, dips
Fruits (2 or more servings daily)	all other fruits	avocado

Meat or meat substitutes (5 to 6 oz daily)	poultry (without skin); veal; lean beef trimmed of fat (USDA good or choice cuts of round, sirloin, flank, and tenderloin); fresh, canned, cured, or boiled ham; Canadian bacon; lean pork (tenderloin, chops, cutlet); fish (fresh, frozen, canned in water); eggs (boiled, scrambled without added fat); luncheon meat at least 95% fat free	any fried, fatty, or heavily marbled meat, fish, or poultry; beef (USDA prime cuts, ribs, ground beef, corned beef); pork (spareribs, ham hocks); fish (canned in oil); eggs (fried in butter, oil, or margarine); luncheon meat less than 95% fat free
Beverages (4 to 6 cups or more daily)	decaffeinated or regular coffee or tea, cocoa made with skim milk, fruit juices, soft drinks, water	beverages made with high fat dairy products
Soups	fat-free broths, consommés, bouillon; soups made with fat-free broth, skim milk, evaporated skim milk	cream soups, soups with added oils or meat fats, soups made from stocks containing meat fat
Fats & oils (3 servings daily, each listed is one serving)	avocado 2 Tbsp or 1/8 medium, margarine 1 tsp, diet margarine 2 tsp, salad dressing 1 Tbsp, diet salad dressing 2 Tbsp, vegetable oils 1 tsp, nuts (raw or dry roasted): almonds 6, peanuts 20 small or 10 large, whole walnuts 2, whole pistachios 18, sesame seeds 1 Tbsp, sunflower seeds 1 Tbsp, saturated fats: bacon 1 strip, butter 1 tsp, dried coconut 2 Tbsp, cream cheese 1 Tbsp, sour cream 2 Tbsp, other fats: olive oil 1 tsp, peanut oil 1 tsp, large olives 10, peanut butter 2 tsp	any fat in excess
Sweets & desserts (servings depend on caloric needs)	sherbet made with skim milk, non-fat frozen yogurt, fruit ice, gelatin, angel food cake, vanilla wafers, ginger snaps, graham crackers, meringues, puddings made with skim milk, tapioca, fat-free cakes and cookies, fruit whips made with gelatin or egg whites, hard candy, jelly beans, jelly, jams, marmalades, maple syrup	ice cream, pastries, cakes, cookies, pies, doughnuts, pudding made with whole milk, cream puffs, turnovers, chocolate

Sample Menu

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
grapefruit 1/2 dry cereal 3/4 cup banana 1/2 whole wheat toast 2 slices margarine 2 tsp jelly or jam 1 Tbsp skim milk 1 cup coffee 3/4 cup	fat free vegetable soup 1 cup lean hamburger 2 oz mozzarella cheese made with skim milk 1 oz hamburger bun sliced tomato lettuce fresh fruit salad 1/2 cup angel food cake 1 slice skim milk 1 cup coffee 3/4 cup	tomato juice 1/2 cup broiled chicken breast without skin 3 oz herbed rice 1/2 cup broccoli 1/2 cup with low fat cheese sauce 1/4 cup hard dinner roll margarine 1 tsp carrot/raisin salad 1/2 cup low fat frozen strawberry yogurt 1/2 cup skim milk 1 cup