

# Eating Foods with Less Fructans

Some people may have symptoms of bloating, gas, pain, and diarrhea if they eat foods with too many fructans at one time. **To find out if fructans are causing your symptoms, try eating lower fructan foods for 2–4 weeks to see if your symptoms get better.**

## What are fructans?

Fructans are a type of sugar.

There are two main types of fructans:

- inulin
- fructo-oligosaccharides (FOS)

Fructans are difficult to digest (break down) in the small bowel. The undigested fructans go into the large bowel and are used as food by bacteria. This can cause bloating, gas, pain, and diarrhea.

## How do you eat less fructans?

- Fructans are in many foods. Refer to the food lists on pages 2 and 3 to help you choose food with less fructans.
- Identify which foods may be giving you symptoms. Keep a food and symptom diary.



- Write down what foods you eat and when you have bloating, gas, pain, and diarrhea.
- Follow Canada's Food Guide and include a variety of lower fructan foods. This will help you get the vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients you need for good health.
  - meat, fish, poultry, eggs, milk and milk products are naturally low in fructans, so they are not on the food lists.
  - fruit, like apples, bananas, oranges, and others aren't on the food lists because they do not contain fructans.
- Read the ingredient list on food labels and avoid the ingredients:
  - inulin or chicory root inulin
  - fructo-oligosaccharides (FOS)

These types of fructans may be added to yogurts, snack bars, protein bars, protein powders, fibre supplements and liquid nutritional supplements.

- Medicines and other supplements may also contain fructans. A pharmacist can help you choose these products.

Note: Eating smaller amounts of foods that contain fructans at different times in the day will cause less symptoms than if you eat a large amount of foods that contain fructans at one time.

# Foods to Eat

Choose foods from the lower fructan foods list below when eating meals and snacks.

Try to eat the portions sizes listed. More than this amount at one meal or snack can cause symptoms.

Food group	Lower fructan foods	Portion size
<b>Grain Products</b>	Gluten free bread	2 slices bread (70 g)
	Gluten-free noodles, pasta, cooked	1 cup (250 mL)
	Oats, cooked (30 g dry)	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup (175 mL)
	Quinoa cooked	1 cup (250 mL)
	Rice or rice noodles, cooked	1 cup (250 mL)
	Rice cakes	2 cakes (11 g)
	Spelt bread	2 slices bread (70 g)
<b>Vegetables</b>	Asparagus	3 small spears
	Bean sprouts	1 cup (250 mL)
	Bell peppers, green	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 mL)
	Bok choy	1 cup (250 mL)
	Butternut squash	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup (175 mL)
	Cabbage, green and savoy	1 cup (250 mL)
	Carrot	1 medium (61 g)
	Cauliflower	1 cup (250 mL)
	Chives	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 mL)
	Corn	$\frac{1}{2}$ cob (52 g)
	Cucumber	1 cup (250 mL)
	Eggplant	1 cup (250 mL)
	Endive	2 cups (500 mL)
	Fennel bulb	1 cup (250 mL)
	Green beans	1 cup (250 mL)
	Lettuce	1 cup (250 mL)
	Mushrooms	1 cup (250 mL)
	Parsnip	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup (175 mL)
	Potato	1 cup (250 mL)
	Scallions	green part only
	Spinach, raw	2 cups (500 mL)
	Sweet potato	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 mL)
	Zucchini	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 mL)
Tomato	1 medium (123 g)	
Turnip	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup (175 mL)	
<b>Fruit</b>	Blueberries	$\frac{1}{3}$ cup (75 mL)
	Cantaloupe	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 mL)
	Grapefruit	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 mL)
	Honeydew	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 mL)
	Pineapple	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 mL)
	Raspberries	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 mL)

Food group	Lower fructan foods	Portion size
<b>Meat and Alternatives (Legumes and nuts)</b>	Butter beans	½ cup (125 mL) cooked
	Chickpeas	½ cup (125 mL) cooked
	Lentils	½ cup (125 mL) cooked
	Lima beans	½ cup (125 mL) cooked
	Mixed beans	½ cup (125 mL) cooked
	Navy Beans	½ cup (125 mL) cooked
	Romano beans	½ cup (125 mL) cooked
	Almonds	10 nuts (12 g)
	Brazil nuts	10 nuts (41 g)
	Cashews	10 nuts (30 g)
	Hazelnuts	10 nuts (15 g)
	Peanuts	32 nuts (28 g)
	Tempeh or tofu	⅓ cup+ 2 Tbsp (100 g)
	Walnuts	10 halves (30 g)
	<b>Drinks</b>	Black tea
Coffee		as tolerated
Herbal teas not listed below		as tolerated
<b>Fibre supplements</b>	Chia seeds or flaxseeds	as tolerated
	Psyllium	as tolerated

## Foods to Avoid

Caution: Even small amounts of these food can cause symptoms

Food group	Higher fructan foods		
<b>Grain Products</b>	Wheat or rye products including: bread, cold cereals, cakes, crackers, granola bars, flat bread, hot cereals, muffins, noodles, pastries, pasta, or tortillas		
<b>Vegetables</b>	Artichoke	Brussels sprouts	Onion and onion powder
	Beetroot	Garlic and garlic powder	Scallions (white part)
	Broccoli	Green peas	Shallots
		Leek, white bulb	Snow peas
<b>Fruits</b>	Apricots	Peaches	Rambutans
	Longan	Persimmons	Watermelon
	Nectarines	Plums	
<b>Meat and Alternatives (Legumes and nuts)</b>	Black beans	Pistachios	Split peas
	Mung beans	Red kidney beans	
<b>Drinks</b>	Chamomile tea	Chicory-based coffee substitutes	Fennel tea
<b>Fibre supplements</b>	Fructo-oligosaccharides	Inulin	Wheat bran

## What do you do after you have tried eating food with less fructans?

If your symptoms of bloating, gas, pain, and diarrhea are better, you may slowly try to eat some foods that have higher fructans. Start with eating small servings, for example, a Canada's Food Guide serving. Eat only one new food at a time. Wait 48 hours before trying a new food. This way you will know which food gives you symptoms.

If your symptoms are the same after eating less fructans, talk with your dietitian about other foods that may cause your symptoms.