

Eating Foods with Less Fructose

Some people may have symptoms of bloating, gas, pain, and diarrhea if they eat too much fructose at one time. **To find out if fructose is the cause of your symptoms, try eating less fructose for 2-4 weeks.**

What is fructose?

Fructose is a type of sugar. Most of the fructose eaten comes from:

- fruit, honey, and agave syrup
- white sugar or sucrose (half is fructose and half is glucose)
- high fructose corn syrup (glucose-fructose)

Fructose is absorbed in the small bowel. How well it is absorbed depends on two things:

- the total amount of fructose in the food
- if the food contains more fructose than glucose, the extra fructose is called **free fructose**.

Free fructose is not as well absorbed by the body. When this fructose goes into the large bowel it acts as food for bacteria that live there. Water comes into the intestine to mix with fructose. This can cause bloating, gas, pain, and diarrhea for some people.

How do you eat less fructose?

Choose foods that have:

- less than 3 grams of total fructose per serving
- no more than 0.5 grams of free fructose per serving listed

Use the fructose food lists on pages 2 and 3 to choose foods with less fructose.

- Keep a food, lifestyle, and symptom diary. Write down what foods you eat and when you have bloating, gas, pain, and diarrhea.
- Eat smaller servings of foods that contain fructose. Spread out fructose-containing servings at different times in the day instead of eating a large amount at one time.
- Eat foods that contain fructose with other lower fructose foods.
- Eat vegetables and fruits instead of drinking juice.
- Limit high sugar foods such as fruit juice, honey, fruit drinks, pop, or candy.
- 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, and unsweetened milk and milk products are naturally low in fructose so they are not on the food lists. Most vegetables have low amounts of fructose.

Read the ingredient list on food labels. Ingredients are listed by weight, from most to least. Avoid foods that have the following names for fructose listed in the first 5 ingredients on the list.

Names for fructose on ingredient lists

- fructose
- fruit juice concentrate
- glucose-fructose
- high-fructose corn syrup
- honey
- agave nectar or syrup

Medicines and supplements may contain fructose. Check to see if they contain the ingredients listed above. A pharmacist can help you choose products that do not have fructose.

Foods to Choose

Food group	Foods low in fructose	Serving size	Free fructose (grams)	Total fructose (grams)
Choose foods with these amounts →			0.5 g or less	3 g or less
Vegetables and Fruit	Apricots	3 pieces (105 g)	0	1.0
	Peaches	1 medium (98 g)	0	1.5
	Sweet onion	½ cup (125 mL)	0	1.7
	Nectarines	1 medium (136 g)	0	1.9
	Plums	1 small (66 g)	0	2.0
	Green peppers, sliced	1 cup (250 mL)	0	2.2
	Cucumber, slices	1 cup (250 mL)	0.1	1.1
	Tomato, red ripe	1 medium (123 g)	0.2	1.7
	Tangerine, mandarin	1 medium (84 g)	0.2	2.1
	Grapefruit, pink	½ fruit (123 g)	0.2	2.2
	Strawberries, frozen, thawed	½ cup (125 mL)	0.2	2.5
	Blueberries, wild	½ cup (125 mL)	0.2	2.6
	Kiwi	1 medium (69 g)	0.2	3.0
	Raspberries	½ cup (125 mL)	0.3	1.5
	Cantaloupe, cubes	½ cup (125 mL)	0.3	1.6
	Pineapple, diced	½ cup (125 mL)	0.3	1.7
	Red peppers, sliced	1 cup (250 mL)	0.3	2.2
	Honeydew	½ cup (125 mL)	0.3	2.7
	Asparagus	6 spears (96 g)	0.4	1.0
	Strawberries, fresh	½ cup (125 mL)	0.4	2.2
Drinks	Lemon juice	½ cup (125 mL)	0.1	1.4
	Orange juice	½ cup (125 mL)	0.2	2.9
Other foods	Tomato sauce, canned	½ cup (125 mL)	0	2.2
	Pickled sweet cucumbers	2 Tbsp (30 mL)	0	2.6
	Baked beans	¾ cup (175 mL)	0	2.9
Condiments	Maple syrup	1 Tbsp (15 mL)	0	0.1
	Tomato ketchup	1 Tbsp (15 mL)	0	1.3
	Sugar, brown	1 Tbsp (15 mL)	0	1.5
	Molasses	1 Tbsp (15 mL)	0.2	2.7

Foods to Avoid

Foods in this list contain more fructose than suggested.

Smaller servings of these foods may be tolerated by some people. Talk with your dietitian if you would like to try to eat these foods.

Food group	Foods high in fructose	Serving size	Free fructose (grams)	Total fructose (grams)
Fruit	Papaya, cubed	¾ cup (175 mL)	0	3.7
	Banana	1 medium (118 g)	0	5.7
	Cherries	15 cherries (120 g)	0	6.4
	Medjool date	1 pitted (24 g)	0	7.7
	Pineapple, canned in juice	125 mL (132 g)	0	8.6
	Blueberries	½ cup (125 mL)	0.1	3.8
	Blackberries	1 cup (250 mL)	0.2	3.7
	Orange, all varieties	1 fruit (130 g)	0.4	3.3
	Raisins, seedless	¼ cup (60 mL)	0.7	10.9
	Grapes, red or green	20 grapes (98 g)	0.9	8.0
	Watermelon	½ cup (125 mL)	1.4	2.7
	Mango	½ fruit (103 g)	2.7	4.8
	Apple	1 extra small (101 g)	3.5	6.0
	Applesauce, unsweetened	½ cup (125 mL)	4.6	7.6
	Pear	1 small (148 g)	5.9	9.5
	Agave, cooked	100 g	16.1	17.7
Agave, dried	100 g	39.3	42.8	
Drinks	Pomegranate juice	½ cup (125 mL)	0.1	8.4
	Lemonade, pink, frozen concentrate	½ cup (125 mL)	0.5	7.7
	Grape juice,	½ cup (125 mL)	0.7	9.8
	Sports drink	½ cup (125 mL)	1.3	4.2
	Dessert wine (18.8% alcohol)	6 Tbsp (90 mL)	2.3	4.7
	Ginger ale	1 can (355 mL)	2.3	13.6
	Coconut water	1 cup (250 mL)	3.2	5.2
	Apple juice	½ cup (125 mL)	4.0	7.5
	Cola	1 can (355 mL)	6	22.7
	Lemon-lime soda	1 can (355 mL)	7.6	19.1
	Other foods	Tomato paste, canned	¼ cup (60 mL)	0.1
Pasta with meatballs, canned, in tomato sauce		1 cup (250 mL)	1.1	4.0

Food group	Foods high in fructose	Serving size	Free fructose (grams)	Total fructose (grams)
	Granola bar, cereal, fruit-filled	1 bar (37 g)	1.6	4.8
	Miso	5 Tbsp (75 mL)	5.1	5.1
	Spaghetti without meat, canned	1 cup (250 mL)	5.9	5.9
Condiments	Honey	1 Tbsp (15 mL)	1.1	8.3
	Agave syrup	1 Tbsp (15 mL)	8.9	11.5

What do you do after you have tried eating food with less fructose?

If your symptoms of gas, cramps, pain, and diarrhea improve or go away when you eat less fructose then you can try adding back some food items that are on the *Foods to Avoid* list.

- Start with the foods on this list that have the lowest amounts of free fructose and total fructose compared to foods with the highest amounts.
- Add only one higher fructose food at a time and no more than the serving size listed in the table.
- Wait 48 hours after eating the higher fructose food to see if any symptoms return.
- If the added food item doesn't cause symptoms, then continue to add other higher fructose foods following the steps above.
- If symptoms return then do not eat the food, wait 48 hours and then try a smaller serving size of the same food or a different one.

If your symptoms are not improving after eating less fructose, talk with your dietitian about other foods that may cause your symptoms.