

SSMC

مدينة الشيخ شخبوط الطبية
Sheikh Shakhbout Medical City

Dietary Recommendations for IBD



DIETARY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INFLAMMATORY BOWEL DISEASE

At Sheikh Shakhbout Medical City Inflammatory Bowel Disease Center we are committed to providing comprehensive care for patients with Crohn's Disease and Ulcerative Colitis. Proper nutrition plays a crucial role in managing IBD and improving your overall quality of life. This leaflet offers an introduction to dietary therapies specifically tailored for IBD patients, highlighting the benefits of personalized diet plans and the importance of working closely with our dedicated IBD dietitian. Our goal is to help you manage your symptoms, reduce flares, and enhance your well-being through effective dietary strategies.

WHY DIET PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE TREATMENT OF IBD

Ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease, collectively known as inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), are long-term illnesses that cause inflammation in the intestines. Over the past few decades, the number of people with IBD has rapidly increased in North America, Australia, and Europe. Newly industrialized countries such as the United Arab Emirates are now seeing a similar rise in new cases. This rise in IBD is likely due to environmental factors, especially diet, rather than genetics.

As countries become more developed, their food becomes more processed. The Western diet, which includes a lot of simple sugars, fats, and processed foods, might cause gut problems and inflammation linked to IBD. Processed foods, which are high in energy, salt, and additives but low in nutrients, can damage the gut, change gut bacteria and trigger inflammation. Recent studies have shown a link between eating lots of processed foods and developing IBD.

Dietary modification is therefore important in the treatment of IBD. Specific dietary treatments often complement medical treatment to help reduce gut inflammation, heal the intestines, and manage symptoms. Diets used to complement the treatment of IBD include:

- 1. Exclusive Enteral Nutrition (EEN):** This diet consists of Liquid or Powder Nutritional formula only and is very effective for children and adults with Crohn's disease.
- 2. Crohn's Disease Exclusion Diet (CDED):** This diet eliminates certain foods that can harm the gut, combined with partial use of the liquid formula.
- 3. Mediterranean Diet:** A plant-based diet with some fish and poultry, good for overall health and IBD.
- 4. Modified diet for bowel narrowing Stricture:** Focuses on foods that reduce inflammation and excludes processed foods.
- 5. Low-FODMAP Diet:** Removes certain carbohydrates that can cause gas and bloating, helpful for people with IBD and irritable bowel syndrome (IBS).

At SSMC, we have a dedicated IBD dietitian to meet your needs, offering personalized diet plans tailored to your individual circumstances. These plans consider your disease status, whether you are experiencing active disease or are in remission, as well as your cultural and personal preferences. Our goal is to help you improve disease activity, reduce flares, and enhance your overall quality of life. For patients with IBD we recommend following a Mediterranean based diet while cutting out a Western diet consisting processed foods, however on some occasions we may recommend specific diet plans. We will give you a brief overview of what these diets involve for your reference.

CROHN'S DISEASE OR ULCERATIVE COLITIS – MEDITERRANEAN DIET

What is the Mediterranean Diet?

The Mediterranean diet is gaining interest for its potential role in preventing and treating inflammatory bowel disease, including Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis.

The Mediterranean diet is based on the traditional foods and eating habits of people in the Mediterranean region, including Greece, Italy, and Spain.

The Mediterranean diet is widely recognized as one of the healthiest diets in the world and is associated with numerous health benefits such as prevention & management of Diabetes & Cardiovascular Diseases.

The Mediterranean Diet emphasizes:

- » whole, unprocessed foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nuts, and olive oil.
 - » moderate amounts of fish, chicken, dairy, and
 - » very infrequent consumption of red meat.
-
- A key component of the Mediterranean diet is olive oil, known for its high content of monounsaturated fatty acids and antioxidants. Olive oil is used instead of other fats like butter and margarine, helping to lower cholesterol levels and reduce heart disease risk.
 - The Mediterranean diet promotes a healthy lifestyle, encouraging people to eat slowly, savor their food, and enjoy meals with family and friends. Physical activity is also emphasized, with common activities including walking, cycling, and swimming.

How to Follow the Mediterranean Diet

1. **Eat More Plants:** Fill your plate with fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, and seeds.
2. **Choose Healthy Fats:** Use olive oil for cooking and dressings.
3. **Moderate Portions of Poultry and Fish:** Include these in your diet a few times a week.
4. **Limit Red Meat and Sweets:** Keep these to occasional treats.

Mediterranean diet food pyramid

The Mediterranean diet pyramid was developed based on the eating habits of long-living adults in the Mediterranean region. This pyramid follows general food guidelines, rather than specific quantities, and promotes communal eating and an active lifestyle as key components of a healthy way of living.



Mediterranean Diet Shopping List

Here's an example of simplified shopping list for the Mediterranean diet:



Nuts & Seeds: almonds, pumpkin seeds, sesame seeds, hazelnuts, walnuts, cashews, sunflower seeds, pistachios, hemp seeds, pine nuts.



Fish: sardines, salmon, sea bass, herring, tuna.



Whole Grains: whole-grain pasta, whole-grain bread.



Legumes: beans, lentils, peas, hummus, kidney beans.



Meat: goat, free-range chicken, pastured beef.



Fruits: grapes, apples, berries, citrus fruits, avocados, bananas, papaya, pineapple.



Vegetables: broccoli, mushrooms, celery, carrots, kale, onions, leeks, eggplant.



Frozen Vegetables: healthy mixed veggie options.



Eggs: preferably organic, free-range.



Seafood: wild salmon, small fatty fish like sardines, white fish, shellfish, low-sodium canned tuna.



Herbs & Spices: cilantro, parsley, bay leaves, mint, oregano.



Extra Virgin Olive Oil.

These ingredients can be used for various Mediterranean-inspired dishes like salads, grain bowls, pasta dishes, and roasted vegetables. Also, include fresh fruits for a balanced diet.

Healthy Eating Tips:

- Remove junk food like candy, refined grains, sodas, artificially sweetened drinks, crackers, and other processed foods from your kitchen.
- Having only Mediterranean diet items at home will help you stick to this healthy eating plan.

SPECIAL CASES: CROHN'S DISEASE ACTIVE FLARING) AND NO NARROWING (STRICTURE) IN THE BOWEL

Crohn's Disease Exclusion Diet (CDED)

The CDED is a structured, three-phase diet combined with partial enteral nutrition (oral nutritional supplements). It aims to improve gut health by reducing harmful dietary components and promoting a balanced intake of essential nutrients. CDED offers a less restrictive option for patients looking to manage their condition through diet. This is a diet that will be explained to you and prescribed by our SSMC IBD dietician if indicated who will closely monitor your progress.

How Does the CDED Work?

The diet is divided into three phases:

- Phase 1 (6 weeks):
 - 50% of calories from liquid or powder Nutritional Supplements
 - Strict diet with mandatory foods: chicken breast, eggs, potatoes, apples, and bananas (these must be eaten daily)
- Phase 2 (6 weeks):
 - 25% of calories from liquid or powder Nutritional Supplements
 - Less restrictive diet than Phase 1
- Phase 3 (Maintenance, indefinite):
 - 25% of calories from liquid or powder Nutritional Supplements
 - Expanded diet with more variety.
 - Includes 2 "free" days per week where dietary restrictions are relaxed

SPECIAL CASES: CROHN'S DISEASE WITH STRICTURES IN THE BOWEL

Dietary modification

Patients with IBD who have intestinal strictures may experience difficulty with fibrous, plant-based foods such as raw fruits and vegetables due to their texture. Strictures can lead to obstructive symptoms because the gastrointestinal tract has undergone inflammatory injury and scarring, making it difficult to tolerate these foods.

Tips for Managing Diet with Intestinal Strictures

Careful Chewing: Thoroughly chew all food to help break down fibers and make it easier to digest.

Cooking and Processing: Cook or process fruits and vegetables to a soft consistency. This makes them easier to tolerate and helps incorporate a wider variety of plant-based foods into your diet.

Steps for Safe Reintroduction of Plant-Based Foods

- **Cooked/Steamed:** Prepare fruits and vegetables by cooking or steaming them until soft.
- **Peeled:** Remove skins from fruits and vegetables to reduce Fibre content.
- **Mashed/Blended:** Mash or blend fruits and vegetables to achieve a smooth texture

Examples of Food Modifications

- **Raw Apple:** A fibrous, unpeeled apple can cause obstruction.
- **Applesauce:** A thick, liquid texture that is easily tolerated.

By following these dietary guidelines, patients with IBD and intestinal strictures can safely incorporate more fruits and vegetables into their diet, improving their nutritional intake while avoiding obstructive symptoms. Always consult with your SSMC IBD team and dietician to tailor these guidelines to your specific needs.

SUMMARY OF DIETARY THERAPIES FOR YOUR INFLAMMATORY BOWEL DISEASE


Work with your SSMC IBD team, including dietitians, to create a nutrition plan tailored to your unique needs. This individualized approach ensures that your diet supports your specific health goals and IBD management. Remember, dietary needs can vary greatly from person to person. What works for one individual might not work for another, so it's essential to have a personalized and holistic strategy..

Resource

[AGA Clinical Practice Update on Diet and Nutritional Therapies in Patients With Inflammatory Bowel Disease: Expert Review - Gastroenterology \(gastrojournal.org\)](#)



A world of experts, **for you.**

 800 SSMC | ssmc.ae
7 7 6 2

