

Your Nutrition Pathway for Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD)

Why is nutrition important in IBD?

- IBD puts you at a higher risk of malnutrition.
- Malnutrition can occur from:
 - nutrient losses (like from diarrhea)
 - poor nutrient absorption (due to inflammation)
 - poor appetite or periods of not eating well
- Malnutrition:
 - worsens your symptoms of IBD
 - reduces your ability to heal
 - delays recovery after surgery
 - prolongs your stay in the hospital
 - impacts your quality of life
- Malnutrition can affect all people, ages, and body sizes.

What is the purpose of this nutrition pathway?

This pathway is a map for you and your healthcare team. It helps you to track your nutrition care for your IBD so you can ensure you get evidence-based support.

You and your healthcare team can modify the pathway for your healthcare needs.

A registered dietitian can help you with your nutrition. Ask your healthcare team for a referral or learn how to [self-refer](#) to a Health Link dietitian.

1. My IBD Diet Nutrition Pathway



- This self-managed pathway may not work for everyone with IBD. What works for one person may not work for another.
- You will be encouraged to change the way you eat. If you are experiencing malnutrition, don't try it.

2. Check for your risk of malnutrition

- Malnutrition may worsen your IBD. Tools have been designed to help you know if you are experiencing malnutrition.
- Complete the malnutrition risk assessment tool called the [Canadian Nutrition Screening Tool](#).
- Once you've completed your self-assessment, look up your nutrition risk in the table below.

Nutrition Risk: Yes or No	Required Action
Nutrition Risk - NO	Continue to question 3
Nutrition Risk - YES (Two "YES" indicate nutrition risk)	You can self refer to a registered dietitian by calling Health Link at 811 or by completing a self-referral form .

Tell your healthcare team if you have these symptoms:

- losing weight without meaning to
- your Body Mass Index (BMI) less than 18.5 ([check your BMI](#))
- blood in your stool or ostomy bag

Talk to your healthcare team if your symptoms don't improve, get worse, or keep interfering with your everyday activities.

3. Do you have a history of bowel obstructions?

- This nutrition pathway is not recommended if you have a history of bowel blockages or narrowing of your intestine.
- Check with your Gastrointestinal specialist to see if these conditions affect you.

4. Check for symptoms of active disease

- Symptoms of active disease may include:
 - abdominal pain
 - blood in your poop or ostomy bag
 - diarrhea
 - fever
 - reduced appetite
- If you are in active disease, there are therapeutic diets that may help. Before trying them on your own, [self-refer to a dietitian](#).

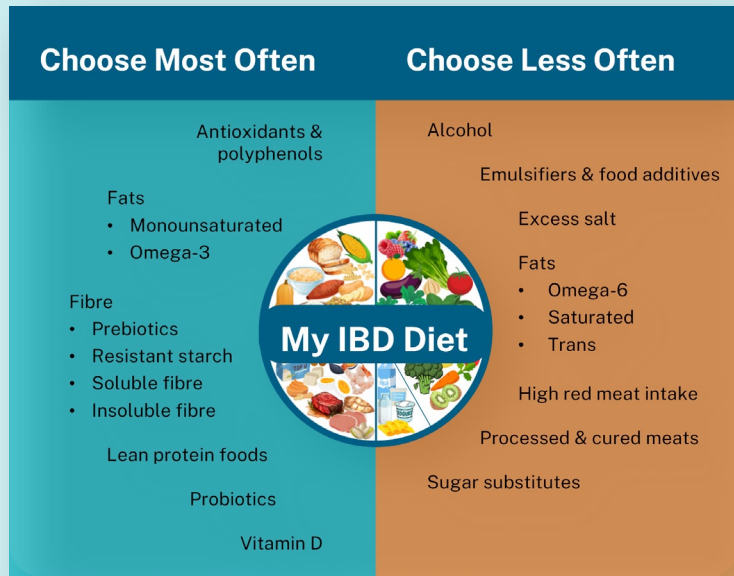
5. You are ready to start My IBD Diet

- See page 2 to learn more.

What is My IBD Diet?

My IBD Diet is a way of eating that helps to lower inflammation (swelling) and manage your symptoms.

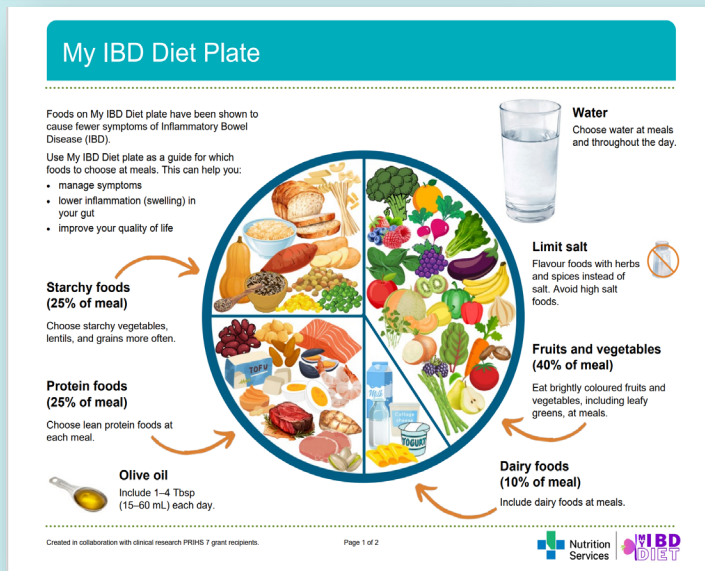
My IBD Diet: Eating to Lower Inflammation



My IBD Diet Plate

A guide to help you choose foods to eat at meals and snacks.

Find these resources and more at [Nutrition Education](https://www.nutritioneducation.ca).



If you continue to have symptoms after following My IBD Diet

- Try to identify foods that may cause you symptoms. A bowel and symptom journal can help you track.
- To manage gas and bloating, limit fizzy (carbonated) drinks and eat fewer gas-causing foods such as broccoli, cauliflower, and cabbage.
- To manage diarrhea or high output ostomy, consider a home-made oral rehydration solution, increasing soluble fiber, and limiting added sugars.
- To manage constipation, consider eating more foods higher in fiber and drinking more water.
- Drink water throughout the day. Try for 9–12 cups daily.
- Try to identify what causes you stress. Stress management can help with your symptoms. Check out [Stress Management \(alberta.ca\)](https://www.alberta.ca) for ideas to try.
- Be more active. Try to build up to 150 minutes each week. Try walking, biking, gardening, or swimming.

Learn more

- [MyHealth Alberta](https://www.alberta.ca): IBD
- Nutrition Education ([ahs.ca/NutritionHandouts](https://www.ahs.ca/NutritionHandouts)), search topic “Digestive Health”
- Find Nutrition Workshops & Classes ([ahs.ca/NutritionWorkshops](https://www.ahs.ca/NutritionWorkshops))
- Canadian Digestive Health Foundation ([cdhf.ca](https://www.cdhf.ca)), search IBD
- Alberta Healthy Living Program ([ahs.ca/ahlp](https://www.ahs.ca/ahlp))



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