

Department of Nutrition and Dietetics

Dietary Advice for Bile Acid Diarrhoea

This dietary sheet is for service users diagnosed with bile acid diarrhoea. It should only be followed with advice from a Dietitian. This condition may also be referred to as bile acid malabsorption or bile salt malabsorption.

What is Bile Acid Diarrhoea?

Bile acids are produced by the liver, stored in the gallbladder and released into the gut after consuming a meal, particularly a meal containing fat. These bile acids breakdown and help you absorb the fats and vitamins from your food. After this process, bile acids are reabsorbed to be used again. If this reabsorption is disturbed it can result in bile acid diarrhoea. Dietary changes are an important part of your treatment. You may also be prescribed medications including Colestyramine (*Questran®*, *Questran Light®*, *Cholybar®* or *Olestyr®*) Colestipol (*Colestid®* or *Cholestaryl®*) or Colesevelam (*Cholestage®*).

Dietary Advice

Aiming for a total of less than 40g of fat per day should help improve symptoms. If you notice you are unintentionally losing weight, ask your GP or Consultant to refer you to a Dietitian for further advice.

Low Fat Alternatives

High Fat	Low Fat
Puff pastry/shortcrust pastry	Filo pastry
Ice cream	Fat free frozen yogurts
Oil for frying	Use spray bottle for the oil or coconut oil*
Visible fat on meat and skin on meat	Use lean cuts, cut visible fat off and remove skins on meat
Whole milk	Skimmed or semi-skimmed
Cream cheese	Low fat cheese spreads
Hard cheese	Reduced fat alternative or use less of a stronger hard cheese
Chocolate	Limit to fun-size bars or switch to boiled sweets (all in moderation)
Spreading fats (e.g. Butter and margarine)	Lower fat spreads (e.g. Those based on vegetable oils with less than 40g fat per 100g)

* Since coconut oil does not require bile salts for digestion you may find that it may not cause symptoms like other oils and fats.

Patient Information

Example Meals

Homemade food will often contain less fat than shop bought or takeaway food; this is because you can swap certain ingredients for lower fat options as shown above. Changing your cooking methods can also help; choose grilling or oven baked over frying. Below are some example meals/snacks with the amount of fat they contain.

Breakfast

- Oats made up with skimmed milk and berries = 3g.
- White bread with small tin of baked beans = 3g.
- Whole wheat biscuits with fat free yogurt and a banana = 1g.

Lunch

- Tortilla wrap with sliced chicken and salad = 17g
- Jacket potato with tuna (in water) sweetcorn and reduced fat mayonnaise = 3g
- Homemade tomato based vegetable curry with rice = 5g

Evening Meal

- Pasta with salmon and green vegetables = 11g
- Lean beef casserole with boiled potatoes and vegetables = 12g
- Chapatti with lentil dhal = 4g

Snacks

- Popcorn = less than 3g
- Fruit = less than 1g
- 3 rich tea biscuits = 5g
- Chocolate bar = less than 7g

Drinks

- Hot chocolate without cream (200mls) = 4g
- Milkshake with semi-skimmed milk (300mls) = 5g
- Be aware some cream liqueurs may contain fat.
- Suitable drinks include: cordial/squash, water, juices, tea/coffee with semi-skimmed/skimmed milk.

Tips for Shopping

When you are buying packaged foods ensure to check the nutrition information labels for the fat content.

High (per 100g) - shown in red	Over 20g
Medium (per 100g) - shown in orange	Between 3g and 20g
Low (per 100g) - shown in green	3g or less

Remember you are aiming for a maximum of 40g of fat per day.

Patient Information

Tips for Eating Out

- Phone in advance and explain your situation – ask what the restaurant/café could provide for you and ask about altering dishes to make them suitable.
- Ask for grilled meat (without skin) or fish with no sauce; this can reduce the fat content of your meal – aim for white meat if possible as this will have less fat than red meat.
- Ask for the dressings or sauces to be served separately.
- Select side orders such as boiled potatoes, rice or vegetables – make sure to check if the potatoes or vegetables are coated in butter or oil and ask for this to be removed if possible.
- Choose desserts such as sorbet or fruit salad; some places may offer fat free options such as fat free frozen yogurt – enquire about this before you arrive.

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