



## Medical Nutrition Therapy: Management of Diverticulosis

### What is Diverticulosis?

Diverticulosis and diverticulitis are sometimes used interchangeably, however, they are not. Diverticulosis means having pouches or sacs in the colon. There are usually few symptoms with this condition, such as occasional bleeding or constipation. When the pouches or sacs in the colon get inflamed or infected, it is called diverticulitis. Symptoms of diverticulitis can be pain or tenderness, usually in the left lower abdomen, diarrhea or constipation, nausea (and sometimes vomiting), and often fever, chills and cramping. If you suffer from the symptoms of diverticulitis (constant pain, fever, and diarrhea), please go and see your doctor

### Why do I need to manage diverticulosis?

The purpose of management of diverticulosis is to help prevent or control your diverticular disease. A high fibre diet that includes a wide variety of foods can help maintain your gut health and helps you stay well nourished. It is important to drink plenty of fluids when on a high fibre diet, to prevent constipation. Drink 6 to 8 cups of fluids such as water, tea, coffee or milk each day. Fibre draws water into your stools to keep them soft, bulky and helps them pass easily. Without drinking liquids, fibre does not work properly, and can make symptoms of constipation even worse. It is often recommended that people with diverticular disease avoid seeds, nuts, corn, popcorn and tomatoes, but there is no scientific evidence that this is needed or helpful.

### How do I manage it?

Fibre from fruits and vegetables may prevent more diverticula from forming, and may prevent diverticulitis or make the symptoms at least less severe. Add high fibre foods slowly and a little at a time. Adding too much fibre all at once can cause gas and cramping. The recommended amount of fibre according to the eating guidelines for diverticular disease is:

Gender Age Recommended fibre amount per day:

- Men 19 – 50 require 38 grams, and men >50 require 30 grams
- Women 19 – 50 require 25 grams, and women >50 require 21 grams

To manage a high fibre diet at home, aim for 7 to 10 servings a day of vegetables and fruits. This may sound like a lot, but if you look at what a serving is according to the Canadian Food Guide, it will look less intimidating. For example, half a banana is 1 serving, so one whole banana is already 2 servings; a cup of salad is one serving, but a full meal Caesar salad is easily 2 or even 3 servings. Other foods that are high in fibre include: whole grain and bran cereals, whole grain bread, crackers and noodles, brown rice, and lentils and dried beans.

If you would like help with implementing your diet, you can contact our Registered Dietitian [Jenneke@therapeuticmeals.com](mailto:Jenneke@therapeuticmeals.com) for a consultation.

Visit  
[www.therapeuticmeals.com](http://www.therapeuticmeals.com)

Email:  
[jenneke@therapeuticmeals.com](mailto:jenneke@therapeuticmeals.com)

phone:  
250 415 5444