

# Diarrhea

## 5) Diabetes

If you have diabetes, you need to try to stabilize your blood sugars and meet your calorie needs. Your insulin dose may need to be changed due to less food. Eat fewer sugar-free items that may have Sorbitol or other sweeteners in them that cause diarrhea.

## 6) Medications

Check medications with your doctor or pharmacist to see if any new medications or medication combinations are causing the diarrhea.

## Long-term diarrhea

If the diarrhea goes on more than three days, then adding fiber to “soak up the water” and provide bulk to the stool may help.

Fiber is found in fruits, vegetables, whole grain breads and cereals, bran, nuts and beans. Many of these foods are high in potassium or phosphorus, so make good choices.

## Bran

Adding raw (unrefined) bran to your food can help with long-term diarrhea. Start with a few teaspoons throughout the day. You can slowly add more, up to 3 tablespoons each day.

Try adding bran to applesauce, hot cereal, muffin or pancake batter, scrambled eggs, soups, casseroles or vegetable dishes. Find bran in the grocery baking section and try the recipe below:

### Bran muffins

1 1/4 cups raw wheat bran  
1 1/4 cup flour  
2 teaspoons baking powder  
1 cup milk  
1/4 cup honey  
1 egg  
1/4 cup butter or margarine, melted

Heat oven to 375 degrees. Grease muffin tin. Mix dry ingredients. Mix milk, honey and egg in small bowl. Stir in butter, add to dry ingredients. Bake 18-25 minutes, until lightly browned.

Your dietitian: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Diarrhea happens when water and food are poorly absorbed in your intestine. Watery stools occur often, causing discomfort. Diarrhea may cause weakness and dehydration and stop you from doing your daily activities.

Make sure your doctors and nurses know you are having diarrhea, so they can help. Check with your dietitian to prevent dehydration and keep your lab values in a safe range.



**There are many possible causes of diarrhea. Check the problems that apply to you.**

**☐ Food allergies**

An allergy to milk or food made from milk can cause diarrhea. Try using lactaid milk or non-dairy substitutes.

**☐ Food poisoning**

Bacteria from spoiled food can cause diarrhea. Keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot. Don't eat leftovers older than 3 days.

**☐ Bacterial infection**

You can get a bacterial infection if you are in a hospital or nursing home. Your doctor can do tests to check for bacteria.

**☐ Antibiotics**

Antibiotics can kill "good" bacteria in your intestine, causing diarrhea. Eating yogurt every day may help add back good bacteria.

**☐ Medications**

Some medicines may cause diarrhea, so check with your pharmacist.

**☐ Surgery**

Stomach or intestinal surgeries may give you diarrhea as a short-term or long-term side effect.

**☐ Alcohol**

Alcohol can often cause diarrhea because it decreases absorption of water in your intestine.

**☐ Low parathyroid levels**

If your parathyroid glands are removed, it can give very low PTH levels in some people, which may cause diarrhea.

**☐ Increased calcium levels**

High calcium levels can lead to poor fat absorption, causing diarrhea.

**☐ Nutritional supplements**

Drinks like Ensure Plus™, Boost Plus™ and Nepro™ are high in calories. Sometimes these concentrated drinks can pull fluid into your intestines, causing diarrhea.

**☐ Spicy food**

Some spices like capsicum (the spicy part of Jalapeno peppers) may cause diarrhea.

**☐ Diabetes**

People with diabetes may have slower movement of food through their intestine. This can cause bacteria to grow and cause diarrhea. Sugar-free foods and medicines often contain sorbitol, which can cause diarrhea.

**☐ Chronic diseases**

Crohn's disease, gallbladder disease, celiac disease, and ulcerative colitis are all diseases with problems absorbing nutrients, leading to diarrhea.

**There are other things not listed here that may cause diarrhea. Call your doctor if your diarrhea lasts more than two days.**

## What can you do?

### 1) Clear liquid diet

Clear liquids are good when you have diarrhea. They are anything that you can see through: Jell-O™, clear juice, broth, popsicles or Enlive™ or Boost Breeze™ supplement.

**This diet does not provide enough calories and you should not follow it for more than two days.**

### 2) Weigh yourself

Be sure to weigh yourself daily during bouts of diarrhea. Avoid gaining more than 6 pounds (3kg), but weight loss may show you are dehydrated. Try to estimate and replace the fluids you lose from diarrhea.

### 3) Things to avoid

Avoid milk. It is harder to digest than clear liquids. Don't drink coffee, tea, pop with caffeine or alcohol until the diarrhea stops. These may cause the diarrhea to get worse.

### 4) Bland or soft diet

After two days, try bland foods like crackers, white toast, eggs, chicken, or cream of wheat. Stay away from high-fiber foods like vegetables, fruits and whole grains, to allow your intestines to rest. Avoid fatty, spicy, or heavily-seasoned foods for a few days.