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**A Publication
of Atlanta South
Gastroenterology, P.C.**

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The Minimal Fiber Diet

Dietary fiber is the portion of plant material in the diet that cannot be digested. Fiber reaches the colon, where it adds bulk to the stool by absorbing water. This added bulk stimulates intestinal muscle contractions, causing bowel movements to occur more frequently, while the added water makes the stools softer.

Healthy individuals should normally eat a diet rich in fiber. However, there are certain conditions in which it is desirable to reduce both stool bulk and stool water, in order to diminish intestinal muscular activity, to decrease the frequency of bowel movements, and to minimize the amount of stool produced. Such conditions include acute severe diarrhea, attacks of ulcerative colitis or Crohn's ileocolitis, partial intestinal obstruction, severe hemorrhoids, or following certain types of intestinal surgery.



Foods Allowed on Minimal Fiber/Minimal Residue Diet

Breads: white bread only

Cereals: cream of wheat, cream of rice, strained oatmeal, grits

Potatoes/starches: white rice, plain noodles, white potato without skin

Vegetables: tomato juice, vegetable juice, V-8 juice

Fruits: strained fruit juice

Dairy: none (dairy products do not contain fiber but do add bulk to the stool)

Meats: lean only; no tough or fibrous meats; no poultry skins

Liquids: clear broth, bouillon, black coffee, tea, soft drinks, fruit-flavored drinks

Desserts: flavored gelatin, popsicles, angel food cake, jelly, syrup, hard candy

Items which do not appear on this list are not permitted

This diet is not nutritionally adequate, and is intended only for temporary use upon recommendation by your physician. This diet is specifically deficient in calcium, riboflavin, folic acid and pyridoxine. These guidelines were adapted from the Diet Manual of the Georgia Dietetic Association.