

Diverticular disease of the colon

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A diverticulum is an outpouching of the colon wall, most frequently in the sigmoid but can occur in the whole colon. Low fibre content of the diet contribute to segmentation of the bowel generating high pressure resulting in protrusion of mucosa. The incidence of diverticular disease is as high as 60% in patients over the age of 70 years. A third have symptoms of pain mainly in the lower left side of abdomen. Serious complication such as inflammation, perforation or bleeding may require hospitalisation.

Diagnosis is confirmed with a barium x-ray or a colonoscopy examination. The treatment of diverticular disease is essentially conservative and a high fibre diet (25-30gm/day) is recommended to prevent further progression.

Surgery which involves removal of the affected bowel is indicated for those who suffer from incessant pain of recurring inflammation and for complications. This can be carried out laparoscopically.

Daily recommended fibre 25-30gm

Fruits

Apple, raw, with skin	1 medium = 3.3 grams
Peach, raw	1 medium = 1.5 grams
Pear, raw	1 medium = 5.1 grams
Tangerine, raw	1 medium = 1.9 grams

Vegetables

Asparagus, fresh, cooked	4 spears = 1.2 grams
Broccoli, fresh, cooked	1/2 cup = 2.6 grams
Brussels sprouts, fresh, cooked	1/2 cup = 2 grams
Cabbage, fresh, cooked	1/2 cup = 1.5 grams
Carrot, fresh, cooked	1/2 cup = 2.3 grams
Cauliflower, fresh, cooked	1/2 cup = 1.7 grams
Romaine lettuce	1 cup = 1.2 grams
Spinach, fresh, cooked	1/2 cup = 2.2 grams
Tomato, raw	1 = 1 gram

Starchy Vegetables

Baked beans, canned, plain	1/2 cup = 6.3 grams
Kidney beans, fresh, cooked	1/2 cup = 5.7 grams
Potato, fresh, cooked	1 = 2.3 grams

Grains

Bread, whole-wheat	1 slice = 1.9 grams
Brown rice, cooked	1 cup = 3.5 grams
Cereal, bran flake	3/4 cup = 5.3 grams
Oatmeal, plain, cooked	3/4 cup = 3 grams
White rice, cooked	1 cup = 0.6 grams