

## LOW FODMAP DIET

### Information Sheet

#### WHAT ARE FODMAPS?

FODMAP is an acronym that stands for **Fermentable Oligosaccharides, Disaccharides, Monosaccharides And Polyols**. FODMAPs are a group of carbohydrate-based molecules found in many different foods that we eat.

FODMAP containing foods are rapidly fermented in the gut, and can produce gaseous distension of the bowel that can lead to symptoms, particularly in people with irritable bowel syndrome (IBS).

Examples of some foods high in FODMAPs include (but are not limited to):

##### Excess Fructose

- Honey, apples, mango, pear, watermelon, high fructose corn syrup

##### Fructans

- Garlic, leek, onion, rye, barley, inulin

##### Lactose

- Milk, ice cream, custard, condensed and evaporated milk, milk powder, yoghurt

##### Galacto-Oligosaccharides (GOS)

- Legumes (eg. baked beans), lentils, chickpeas

##### Polyols

- Apples, apricots, nectarines, pears, prunes, mushrooms, sorbitol (420), mannitol (421)

#### WHAT IS THE LOW FODMAP DIET?

The low FODMAP diet is a dietary approach that has been shown to be effective in managing the symptoms of IBS.

The low FODMAP diet is aimed at identifying 'trigger' foods that may cause symptoms of IBS.

#### WHAT IS A LOW FODMAP DIET USED FOR?

A low FODMAP diet is a useful strategy to manage symptoms associated with IBS.

IBS is very common and affects up to 30% of the population. The symptoms of IBS vary widely between people, but typically include an altered bowel habit and abdominal discomfort/bloating. Although there is no specific diagnostic test for IBS, a positive diagnosis of IBS can be made by your Gastroenterologist or General Practitioner with careful history-taking and tests to exclude other possible causes of your symptoms.

#### ARE FODMAP FOODS UNSAFE TO EAT?

No. FODMAPs are naturally occurring carbohydrates found in many foods. They are often quite healthy for the gut and many people can eat these foods without problem.

However, for people who suffer from IBS, FODMAPs can be a 'trigger' for symptoms. Eating FODMAPs will not cause damage to your bowel, but it may trigger uncomfortable symptoms, which is why eliminating them from the diet can be an effective strategy for managing IBS.

#### HOW COULD THE LOW FODMAP DIET HELP?

A low FODMAP diet should be trialled under the guidance of a Dietitian. Careful supervision is very important to avoid any risk of error with the diet or nutritional deficiencies. It involves following a strict low FODMAP diet for between 2-6 weeks, followed by a challenge phase for 4-6 weeks, when foods are introduced sequentially to identify exactly which foods cause symptoms.

By following this process, a Dietitian can assist you in identifying whether there are any problematic foods in your diet that you may need to avoid.

#### HOW TO BOOK AN APPOINTMENT WITH A DIETITIAN?

If you have not already made an appointment with a Dietitian regarding management strategies for IBS, you can contact Lumen Gastroenterology on **08 8267 1766**. An appointment with an independent Accredited Practising Dietitian can be facilitated.

#### FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT LOW FODMAP DIET?

For further information please discuss with your doctor.

More information can also be found through the **Gastroenterological Society of Australasia (GESA)** leaflets:

<http://www.gesa.org.au/resources/patients/low-fodmap-diet/>

**This information is intended for patients of Adelaide Gastroenterology as a guide only. Please ask your doctor if you have any questions relating to this information.**