

Fructose Malabsorption Summary Fact Sheet

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Fructose malabsorption is a condition where the small intestine is impaired in its ability to absorb fructose (a naturally occurring sugar).

When fructose is not absorbed properly in the small intestine, it can travel through to the large intestine where bacterial fermentation can cause symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome. These include bloating, wind, pain, nausea, diarrhoea and/or constipation.

Although fructose is present in one form or another in virtually every fruit, and in many vegetables and grains, not every food source of fructose needs to be avoided by people with fructose malabsorption.

The most commonly consumed "problem" foods are:

Fruits: Apple, pear, mango, watermelon, quince, paw paw, lychee, guava, pomegranate.

In excess, the following are problematic: dried fruit, fruit juice, tomato paste.

Vegetables: onion, spring onion, leek, asparagus, artichoke, Jerusalem artichoke, witlof, chicory, radicchio, endive and dandelion greens.

Others: honey, coconut cream and large quantities of wheat. Fructose, fruit juice sweeteners (apple juice concentrate, pear pastes) and high fructose corn syrups are ingredients that are concentrated in fructose and are a problem in large amounts. Consuming large quantities of even "safe" fruits can cause symptoms.

People with fructose malabsorption find wheat, not gluten, is a problem food when consumed in large amounts, and so can generally eat rye, barley and oats. People feeling better on a wheat-free diet should be investigated for coeliac disease firstly, and then have investigations for fructose malabsorption. Some people can have both coeliac disease and fructose malabsorption. Fructose does not cause damage to the small intestine like gluten does in people with coeliac disease.

For more information regarding fructose malabsorption [click here](#).