

The Specific Carbohydrate Diet

Nutritional therapy in pediatric Crohn's disease is an effective treatment for active inflammation. The most studied dietary therapy is enteral nutrition therapy (ENT), which is effective in 80% of children.

Because of the success of ENT, many dietary therapies focus on removing specific complex carbohydrates from the diet. The specific carbohydrate diet (SCD) removes all grains, milk products (except for highly fermented yogurt), and sugar from the diet.

SCD was developed by pediatrician Dr. Sidney Haas in the 1920s as a treatment for celiac disease. In 1994, Elaine Gottschall published "Breaking the Vicious Cycle" after her daughter's inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) improved with use of the SCD.

Currently, there are many testimonials by individuals who use this diet to manage their IBD, and recently

the scientific community has started to study the diet as a treatment for IBD. This research is still in the early stages, but results show potential benefit to patients.

How does the diet work?

IBD occurs because a person's immune system, the part of the body that usually fights infections, attacks the intestines because of "bad" bacteria living there. Diet can change the type of bacteria in a person's intestines from "bad" to "good." This might be how the diet helps reduce inflammation.

Is this diet right for my child?

Potential risks and benefits must be weighed for any kind of treatment. What may be the right choice for one child is not always the right choice for another—this includes SCD. Please consult with your physician and dietician when considering this diet.

Allowed foods on the SCD

- Meats (non-processed), poultry, fish, shellfish, eggs
- Most dried beans and seeds
- Homemade yogurt fermented for at least 24 hours
- Dry-curd cottage cheese and cheese aged for more than 30 days, such as cheddar, Colby, and Swiss
- Most fresh or frozen non-starchy vegetables
- Fresh, raw, cooked, frozen, or dried fruits with no added sugar
- Most nuts and nut flours
- Most oils, mustard, cider or white vinegar
- Teas, coffee, and juices with no additives or sugars
- Honey as a sweetener

Prohibited Foods on the SCD

- Sugar, molasses, maple syrup, sucrose, and processed fructose, including high-fructose corn syrup or processed sugars
- All grains, including corn, wheat, wheat germ, barley, oats, and rice; this includes bread, pasta, and baked goods made with grain-based flour
- Canned vegetables with added ingredients
- Some beans and legumes
- Seaweed and seaweed byproducts
- Starchy tubers such as potatoes, sweet potatoes, and turnips
- Canned and most processed meats
- Canola oil and commercial mayonnaise (because of the additives)
- All milk and milk cream products
- Candy, chocolate, sugar alcohols, artificial sweeteners (except saccharin), and products that contain additives or preservatives

Resources

Books

- Breaking the Vicious Cycle: Intestinal Health Through Diet, by Elaine Gloria Gottschall, 1994
- Nutrition in Immune Balance (NIMBAL) Therapy, by David Suskind, 2015

Cookbooks

- Eat Well Feel Well
- Recipes for the Specific Carbohydrate Diet, by Raman Prasad
- Two Steps Forward One Step Back, by Tucker Sweeney
- Lucy's Specific Carbohydrate Diet Cookbook, by Lucy Rosset

- SCD Lifestyle Surviving to Thriving, on SCDLifestyle.com
- Against all Grain, by Danielle Walker

NOW ON

<https://gikids.org/files/documents/digestive-topics/english/IBD-Specific-Carbohydrate-Diet.pdf>

Diet Websites

- www.breakingtheviciouscycle.info
- www.pecanbread.com
- www.scdrecipe.com
- www.wellbees.com
- **Digestive Wellness**
(for ready-made foods and supplies)

→ Locate a Pediatric Gastroenterologist

IMPORTANT REMINDER: This information from the North American Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition (NASPGHAN) is intended only to provide general educational information as a definitive basis for diagnosis or treatment in any particular case. It is very important that you consult your doctor about your specific condition.

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