
Nutrition for Fibromyalgia

Fibromyalgia is a complex syndrome characterized by deep and widespread pain, fatigue, and other functional symptoms. Currently, there is not a medically prescribed diet specific to fibromyalgia. However, research is growing and below are some nutrition tips:

Optimize the Gut Microbiome

The most unique, diverse, and robust microbiomes develop from daily intake of fiber-rich, whole foods.

- Eat fiber-rich foods at each meal (leafy greens and vegetables, berries and whole fruit, nuts and seeds, whole grains, beans, and lentils)
- Foods rich in polyphenols – berries, green tea, flax seed, black olives, capers, and red onion. Spices with polyphenols – cloves, rosemary, oregano, turmeric
- Eat 2 to 3 forkfuls of fermented foods daily (if tolerated) such as sauerkraut, kimchi, kefir, and unsweetened yogurt
- Minimize added sugar and artificial sweeteners
- Keep food and symptom journals to identify potential food sensitivities
- Minimizing stress supports the microbiome. Eat in a calm, relaxed place and sit down while you eat. Chew food well and eat slowly. Try not to eat on the run.

Support the Body's Natural Detoxification Process

- Include foods high in fiber and rich in antioxidants at every meal (vegetables, berries and whole fruits, nuts and seeds, whole grains, beans and lentils, herbs, and spices)
- Eat cruciferous vegetables daily (arugula, bok choy, Brussel sprouts, broccoli, cabbages, cauliflower, collard greens, daikon, radishes, kale, kohlrabi, and turnips)
- Keep yourself hydrated with water and herbal or green tea
- Avoid artificial sweeteners – especially aspartame, acesulfame K, saccharin, and sucralose

Avoid Nutritional Deficiencies

Deficiencies in certain nutrients may increase muscle pain. Ensure you're eating foods rich in the following nutrients.

- **Vitamin D:** Best obtained from safe sun exposure or a supplement
- **Folate:** Dark leafy greens, asparagus, Brussel sprouts, nuts, beans, and peas

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- **Selenium:** Brazil nuts (limit to 1 to 2 Brazil nuts per day to avoid selenium toxicity), yellowfin tuna, turkey, and chicken
 - **Magnesium:** Dark leafy greens, pumpkin seeds, sesame seeds, halibut, pollock, avocados, bananas, berries, whole grain, seaweed
 - **Zinc:** Oysters, beef, pork chop, chicken especially dark meat, pumpkin seeds, cashews, chickpeas
 - **Omega-3:** Flax seed or flax seed oil, chia seed, salmon, herring, anchovies, mackerel, sardines, oysters, canola oil, and English and black walnuts
 - **Lean protein:** Eggs, poultry, seafood, grass-fed beef, beans, lentils, nuts, and seeds

Nutritional Considerations for Worsening Symptoms

The below foods may need to be modified or restricted. Talk to your nutrition provider to determine if this is right for you.

- **Red meat:** Limiting portions, selecting lower fat cuts, and choosing grass-fed beef may reduce the impact of red meat on inflammation and pain
- **Dairy products:** Trial non-dairy alternatives. If you choose to consume dairy, fermented dairy (yogurt, kefir) may be better tolerated
- **Gluten:** Found in wheat, rye, and barley and might contribute to higher levels of pain in some individuals. Talk to your nutrition provider about assessing for a gluten sensitivity.
- **Excess added sugar and alternative sweeteners**
- **Food additives:** Including monosodium glutamate (MSG), hydrolyzed protein, protein isolates/concentrates, yeast extract, and aspartame

Other Lifestyle Factors

- **Mind-body practices:** Yoga, Tai Chi, meditation, and Qi Gong
- **Exercise:** Stress relief and muscle strength