

SCD DIET

The SCD combats bacterial and yeast overgrowth by restricting the energy they require to live while keeping the host well fed. The concept is simple:

1. There are three types of sugars: simple sugars (monosaccharides), disaccharides (such as lactose and sucrose), and polysaccharides (starches).
2. When you eat food, the body must breakdown all sugars into monosaccharides before they can be absorbed. Monosaccharides are the only sugars that can be absorbed by the body.
3. If the body cannot breakdown the sugars or is slow in doing so, the microbial flora in your gut feeds on these sugars.
4. If the body cannot absorb monosaccharides or is slow in doing so, the microbial flora in your gut feeds on these sugars.
5. An overgrowth of fermenting bacteria in your digestive tract leads to illness.

This is what occurs with lactose intolerance. Lactose intolerance is characterized by a lack of the enzymes necessary to digest lactose. Your body is unable to break lactose down into monosaccharides. Lactose, a disaccharide, cannot be absorbed and serves as food for the microbial population in the gut. Under this scenario, too much lactose in the diet results in an overgrowth of fermenting bacteria and leads to stomach discomfort, gas, and diarrhea. Now extend this scenario to include all disaccharides and polysaccharides. All foods with complex carbohydrates would result in illness. This is where the SCD comes in. The diet circumvents the problem stated in step #3 stated above.

The diet requires eating foods that contain monosaccharides or foods that have no carbohydrates at all. The result is a diet that supplies the body with healthy food and starves the microbial flora. The SCD also encourages the use of [fermented foods](#), especially homemade yogurt, and probiotics. The consumption of fermented foods and probiotics replaces the starving microflora with beneficial bacteria. Given enough time, the diet changes the nature of the microbial flora and gives the body the nutrients and environment needed to heal. The diet does not address the problem stated in step #4 above. If the intestines cannot absorb monosaccharides, then these too will lead to a microbial overgrowth. In this case, a restricted low carbohydrate diet would be needed.

Why has the medical community, as a whole, resisted the SCD?

The reasons are many and complex, but the most common answer is that the SCD requires more studies to further prove its effectiveness. Restricted diets require more time and energy to implement than writing a prescription. Most doctors are already overworked and stressed for time. Moreover, doctors are often resistant to change and fearful of malpractice suits when a treatment is not commonly accepted. However, the SCD does not exclude medications or conventional treatments and does not carry dangerous side effects as medications do. It seems very unlikely that a doctor who prescribes conventional treatments and suggests a nutrition plan that includes the SCD would ever be liable. Regardless of the reasons, most of the arguments against the SCD

seem moot when you are dealing with human lives. We envision a day where every person afflicted with IBD is informed about the SCD.

Is the diet safe?

The diet has existed for more than 60 years with thousands upon thousands of success stories associated with it. The SCD is far more nutritious than the standard American diet. The SCD is not a drug. Even so, there is a cost/benefit ratio with the diet. The greatest benefit is a life free of disease. The largest costs are in time preparing for your foods, in cravings for your favorite processed foods, and in money for good quality whole foods. Most SCDers find that better health is worth the effort. One complaint is the cost of the food, but one should think of the money you will be saving from costly medical bills. Another popular complaint is that you could never live without (insert food here, such as pasta, corn, bread, soda, etc). However, the SCD offers a variety of substitutes that you will grow to love even more than your current favorites. A good site with recipes is: www.scdrecipe.com

Is the SCD a low carb diet and what kinds of foods are allowed?

The SCD is not a low carbohydrate diet. It can be followed in a low-carb fashion, but likewise, it can also be very high carb. It depends on what foods you eat. If the SCD is low anything, it would be a low processed food diet. It requires a lot of food preparation the old fashioned way. We have compiled a list of allowed and disallowed foods on the SCD. Again, we highly recommend reading the book to get further details and references as to why the diet works. If you are unsure about a particular food, **DO NOT EAT IT**. Strict adherence is necessary to obtain relief from symptoms.

Disallowed Foods

Sugars

Do not eat sugar, molasses, sucrose, high fructose corn syrup, fructose, or any processed sugar.

Veggies

All canned vegetables are not permitted.

All grains are not permitted, such as: corn, wheat, wheat germ, barley, oats, rye, rice, buckwheat, [soy](#), and others.

Some legumes are not allowed: chick peas, bean sprouts, soybeans, mungbeans, faba beans, and garbanzo beans.

Starchy foods are not permitted, such as: potatoes, yams, and parsnips.

Seaweed and seaweed byproducts, such as agar and carrageenan, are not allowed.

Meats

All canned meats are forbidden.

Most processed meats are not permitted. Make sure processed meat doesn't contain any harmful additive such as corn, corn products, starch, and sugars.

Dairy

All variations of milk are not allowed: whole, skim, 1%, 2%, chocolate, etc.

Some cheeses contain high lactose content and are restricted: Ricotta, Mozzarella, cottage cheese, cream cheese, feta, and processed cheeses and cheese spreads.

Commercial yogurt contains a high amount of lactose and is not allowed.

Heavy Cream, buttermilk, and sour cream are not allowed.

Misc.

Other foods that are not permitted include: bread, pasta, other starchy foods, canola oil, commercial mayonnaise (because of additives), ice cream, candy, cocoa, chocolate, carob, whey powder, margarine, commercial ketchup, baking powder, mixed nuts, and FOS (fructooligosaccharides) products.

Allowed Foods

Quantities are not restricted.

Sugars

Honey is the only allowed sugar product. Not everyone can tolerate it, so use with caution.

Veggies

Most vegetables, fresh or frozen and raw or cooked, are allowed including:

asparagus, broccoli, cauliflower, artichokes, beets, Brussell sprouts, cabbage, carrots, celery, cucumbers, eggplant, zucchini, summer squash, rhubarb, peppers, garlic, lettuce, spinach, mushrooms (unless you have *candidiasis*), onions, turnips, and watercress. Be careful of raw vegetables when diarrhea is present.

Legumes

Dried navy beans, lentils, peas, split peas, and unroasted cashews, peanuts in a shell, all natural peanut butter, lima beans, and string beans.

Meats

All unprocessed meats such as: beef, pork, chicken, turkey, quail, ostrich, fish, shellfish, lamb, venison, rabbit, and eggs.

Some processed meats are allowed, but many require writing letters to manufacturers to

verify the absence of restricted foods. Many processed meats contain sugar, starch, corn products, and other disallowed foods

Dairy

All natural cheeses except those listed above are allowed: cheddar, colby, swiss, havarti, dry curd cottage cheese, etc...

Homemade yogurt that has been fermented for a minimum of 24 hours is allowed and encouraged.

Fruits

Most fruits are allowed such as: avocados, apples, tomatoes, olives, apricots, ripened bananas, coconuts, dates, berries, cherries, citrus fruits, peaches, pears, tropical fruits, and grapes.

Nuts

Almonds, Brazil nuts, walnuts, chestnuts, filberts, and pecans.

Misc:

The following foods are allowed: olive oil, coconut oil, soybean oil, corn oil, weak tea, weak coffee, unflavored gelatin, mustard, vinegar, saccharin, and juices with no additives.