

Diet & Food List

Why Diet Matters During SIBO Treatment

Every time you eat something highly fermentable, you're giving the surviving SIBO bacteria a meal that helps them recover between bacteriocin attacks. The dietary changes aren't the treatment — they're about not feeding the bacteria you're actively trying to kill.

SIBO bacteria ferment FODMAPs (Fermentable Oligosaccharides, Disaccharides, Monosaccharides, And Polyols). When bacteria consume these fermentable carbohydrates in your digestive tract, they produce gases as a byproduct — this is the fermentation that causes bloating, reflux, and the inflammatory cascade.

The simplest rule: eat protein, low-FODMAP vegetables, rice, and good fats. Avoid anything that makes you noticeably more bloated within 1-2 hours of eating — your body is already telling you what feeds the bacteria.

These foods are low in fermentable carbohydrates, meaning they won't feed the bacteria you're trying to kill. This isn't a forever diet — it's a 2-month treatment window. After SIBO is cleared, foods get reintroduced gradually.

Protein

Protein doesn't feed SIBO bacteria. Eat as much as you want.

- Beef (all cuts)
- Lamb
- Chicken (all cuts)
- Turkey
- Pork (all cuts)
- Duck
- Kangaroo
- Bacon (check for added sugars/honey glaze — plain is fine)

- Eggs (any style)
- Salmon
- Tuna
- Prawns
- Barramundi
- Snapper
- Cod
- Sardines (tinned in olive oil)
- Anchovies
- Mussels
- Oysters
- Squid/calamari
- Firm tofu (silken tofu is higher FODMAP)

Avoid: Marinated meats with garlic/onion, processed meats with added sugars (check salami, sausages, deli meats for hidden ingredients), battered/crumbed anything (wheat coating)

Vegetables

Cook your vegetables where possible — raw can be harder to digest during treatment.

- Carrots
- Zucchini/courgette
- Spinach
- Kale
- Lettuce (all types)
- Rocket/arugula
- Cucumber
- Capsicum/bell pepper (all colours)
- Tomatoes
- Green beans
- Bok choy
- Bean sprouts
- Choy sum
- Eggplant
- Potato (white — moderate portions)
- Parsnip (small portions)
- Pumpkin (small portions — large amounts are moderate FODMAP)
- Bamboo shoots
- Chives (use instead of onion for flavour)
- Spring onion (green part only — the white bulb is high FODMAP)
- Ginger root (fresh — also a prokinetic bonus)
- Chilli

- Radish
- Turnip
- Olives
- Seaweed/nori
- Fennel bulb (small portions)
- Sweet potato (small portions — moderate FODMAP in large amounts)

Avoid: Onion (all types), garlic, asparagus, artichoke, cauliflower (large amounts), broccoli (large amounts — very small portions may be tolerated), mushrooms, sugar snap peas, leeks, beetroot (large amounts), celery, sweetcorn

Fruit

Keep fruit to 1-2 servings per day maximum. Even low-FODMAP fruits contain some natural sugars that bacteria can ferment if you overdo it.

- Blueberries
- Strawberries
- Raspberries
- Cranberries
- Kiwi fruit
- Oranges
- Mandarins/clementines
- Lemons
- Limes
- Grapes (small handful)
- Rockmelon/cantaloupe
- Honeydew melon
- Pineapple
- Passionfruit
- Papaya/pawpaw
- Dragonfruit
- Rhubarb
- Banana (firm/slightly unripe — ripe bananas are higher FODMAP)
- Coconut (fresh, small amounts)

Avoid: Apples, pears, watermelon, mango, cherries, peaches, nectarines, plums, apricots, dried fruit (all types), fruit juice, canned fruit in syrup

Grains and Starches

White versions are generally better tolerated than wholegrain during SIBO treatment because they're absorbed higher up in the small intestine.

- White rice
- Brown rice (if tolerated)
- Quinoa
- Oats (plain, small portions — some people tolerate these, some don't; test and see)
- Rice noodles
- Rice cakes/crackers
- Buckwheat (despite the name, not wheat — it's a seed)
- Polenta/cornmeal
- Corn tortillas
- Tapioca
- Arrowroot
- Potato (also listed under vegetables — versatile)
- Sourdough spelt bread (the long fermentation reduces FODMAPs — but only genuine long-fermented sourdough, not the fake stuff from Coles)

Avoid: Wheat bread, regular pasta, couscous, rye bread, wheat cereals, wheat flour wraps, wheat-based crackers, muesli bars, wheat noodles

Dairy

The SIBO yogurt is your main dairy. Other dairy depends on lactose content.

- SIBO yogurt (36-hour fermentation has consumed the lactose)
- Butter
- Ghee
- Hard aged cheeses: parmesan, cheddar, Swiss, Gruyère, pecorino, aged gouda
- Brie (low lactose)
- Camembert (low lactose)
- Feta (small portions)
- Cream cheese (small portions)
- Lactose-free milk (if you need milk for anything)
- Pouring cream (low lactose — mostly fat)

Avoid: Regular milk, soft fresh cheeses (ricotta, cottage cheese), ice cream, custard, regular yogurt (commercial, not your 36-hour fermented SIBO yogurt)

Fats and Oils

Fat doesn't feed SIBO bacteria. Use liberally.

- Extra virgin olive oil (bonus: supports gut motility)
- Coconut oil
- Butter/ghee
- Avocado oil
- Macadamia oil
- Animal fats (tallow, lard, duck fat)
- Avocado (limit to $\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{3}$ at a time — larger portions are moderate FODMAP)

Avoid: Vegetable/seed oils (canola, sunflower, soybean) — not because of FODMAPs but because they're inflammatory and you're trying to reduce inflammation

Nuts and Seeds

Good for snacking but keep portions moderate — some become moderate FODMAP in large amounts.

- Macadamias
- Walnuts
- Pecans
- Peanuts (technically a legume but low FODMAP)
- Peanut butter (natural, no added sugar)
- Pine nuts
- Pumpkin seeds (pepitas)
- Sunflower seeds
- Sesame seeds
- Chia seeds (small amounts)
- Linseeds/flaxseeds (small amounts)
- Brazil nuts (2-3 max)
- Almond butter (small amounts)
- Almonds (limit to 10-12 — larger amounts are moderate FODMAP)

Avoid: Cashews, pistachios — both are high FODMAP. Large quantities of any nut.

Herbs, Spices and Seasonings

Use these heavily for flavour since you're losing onion and garlic.

- Salt and pepper

- Ginger (fresh or dried)
- Turmeric (anti-inflammatory bonus)
- Cumin
- Paprika (sweet and smoked)
- Coriander/cilantro (fresh and ground)
- Basil (fresh and dried)
- Oregano
- Rosemary
- Thyme
- Parsley
- Mint
- Dill
- Cinnamon
- Chilli flakes/cayenne
- Mustard (plain, check for no garlic/onion)
- Lemongrass
- Saffron
- Fenugreek
- Chives (great onion substitute)
- Garlic-infused olive oil (FODMAPs don't transfer into oil — gives garlic flavour without the FODMAPs)
- Tamari or soy sauce (small amounts — check for wheat in soy sauce; tamari is wheat-free)
- Fish sauce
- Apple cider vinegar
- Rice wine vinegar
- Lemon/lime juice

Avoid: Onion powder, garlic powder, stock cubes/powder with onion or garlic (most contain them — check labels), BBQ sauce, tomato sauce/ketchup (usually contains onion/garlic and sugar), most pre-made marinades and sauces

Drinks

- Water
- Herbal teas: peppermint, ginger, chamomile, rooibos
- Black coffee (1-2 cups max — caffeine can stimulate motility which is good, but too much irritates the gut)
- Green tea
- Bone broth (homemade without onion — use chives and ginger for flavour)
- Lactose-free milk or almond milk (check no inulin/chicory root added — read ingredients)
- Coconut water (small amounts)

Avoid: Beer, regular milk, fruit juice, soft drinks, diet soft drinks (artificial sweeteners), energy drinks, kombucha (fermented — can worsen symptoms during treatment), soy milk made from whole soybeans (soy protein isolate milk is fine)

Sweeteners (if needed)

- Maple syrup (pure, small amounts)
- Rice malt syrup
- Table sugar/raw sugar (small amounts — sucrose is better tolerated than fructose)
- Dark chocolate (70%+ cocoa, small amounts — check no inulin added)
- Stevia

Avoid: Honey, agave, high-fructose corn syrup, sugar alcohols (sorbitol, mannitol, xylitol, erythritol, maltitol), sugar-free anything (check labels)

Quick Meal Ideas

Breakfast: Eggs any style with spinach, tomato, and capsicum cooked in butter or olive oil. Side of SIBO yogurt.

Breakfast 2: Rice porridge (congee) with ginger, poached egg, and chives.

Dinner: Salmon or chicken with white rice, steamed carrots, zucchini, and green beans. Dress with olive oil, lemon juice, salt, and herbs.

Dinner 2: Stir-fry with beef/chicken, capsicum, bok choy, bean sprouts, ginger, chilli, tamari. Serve over rice noodles.

Dinner 3: Lamb chops with roasted pumpkin (small portion), potato, and carrots. Rosemary and olive oil.

Dinner 4: Tuna steak or barramundi with quinoa, roasted eggplant, and a simple salad (rocket, cucumber, tomato, olive oil, lemon).

Snack (if needed between meals — remember meal spacing): Small handful of macadamias or walnuts. Or peanut butter on a rice cake.

The Onion and Garlic Problem

These are in almost everything pre-made. During these 2 months, cook from scratch as much as possible. Use these substitutes:

- **Instead of onion:** Chives, green part of spring onion, asafoetida powder (Indian spice, tiny pinch gives onion-like flavour)
 - **Instead of garlic:** Garlic-infused olive oil (Cobram Estate makes one available at Coles/Woolworths), fresh ginger, chives
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About Your Apples

Apples are unfortunately one of the highest FODMAP fruits — they contain excess fructose and sorbitol, both of which SIBO bacteria ferment aggressively. For 2 months, swap to blueberries, strawberries, or kiwi. After treatment, apples can come back.

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