

What is the Specific Carbohydrate Diet (SCD)?

- Grain-free , limited dairy, honey as the only allowed sweetener
- This diet is also called “Nutrition in Immune Balance Therapy” (NIMBAL), a name given by a physician at Seattle Children’s Hospital who uses the diet with patients.
- Like any other IBD therapy, you will work with your medical team to decide ways to measure if and how well SCD works for you

Diet claim: “Certain types of carbohydrates trigger gut inflammation, which are excluded on the SCD.”

Strength of evidence: There is weak evidence for SCD leading to or maintaining remission, from a small number of studies. There is only 1 large well-designed study for SCD in Crohn’s disease. This study indicates ~half of patients achieved improvement in symptoms, ~35% of patients had improved fecal calprotectin (a measure of inflammation), and ~5% had improved c-reactive protein (a measure of inflammation).

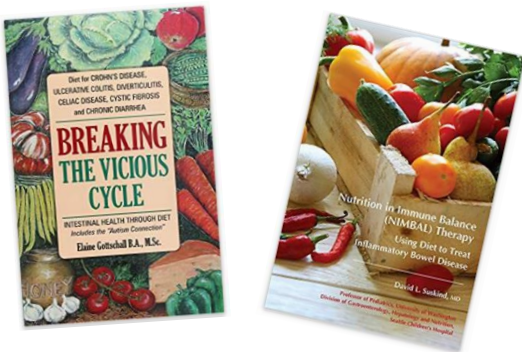


Image source: amazon.com

IOIBD recommendations met by this diet:	
x	5+ fruits and vegetables daily
x	Omega 3 oils from foods
x	Limits trans fats
	Limits red meat
	Limits processed meat
	Limits saturated fats from high fat dairy, palm oils, & coconut oils
x	Limits additives
	Limits artificial sweeteners

IOIBD: International Organization for the study of IBD

SCD Resources

- Nutrition in Immune Balance Therapy: www.nimbal.org
- Crohn’s & Colitis Foundation of America: <https://crohnscolitisfoundation.org/>
Navigate to: “Patients and Caregivers” -> “Diet and Nutrition” -> “Special IBD Diets”
- Crohn’s & Colitis Foundation Canada: <https://crohnsandcolitis.ca/>
Navigate to: “Living with Crohn’s and Colitis” -> “Diet and nutrition” -> “Types of diets in IBD” -> “Specific Carbohydrate Diet” for helpful information
- <https://breakingtheviciouscycle.info/>

Disclaimer: This document is not intended to take the place of the care provided by your health care team.

Sample menu

~2000 calories (18% carbohydrate/23% protein/54% fat/16% saturated fat/5% alcohol)

Breakfast	2 nut butter pancakes (2 eggs, 2 TB almond butter, 1 tsp butter), ½ cup blueberries, 12 fl oz coffee with 2 TB ghee
Snack	1 cup of homemade SCD yogurt (made from whole milk) 6 strawberries
Lunch	Chicken avocado salad (3 oz chicken, ½ avocado, 2 cups lettuce, 1 cup spinach, 1 oz shredded cheddar cheese, 4 grape tomatoes, 1 TB homemade vinaigrette dressing) 12 fl oz water
Dinner	5 oz salmon 1 cup butternut squash ½ cup steamed broccoli 12 fl oz water 5 fl oz red or white wine
Snack	½ cup mixed nuts 1 cup cantaloupe 12 fl oz water
Other	Some people may need to take a calcium or iron supplement or multivitamin to meet their needs while on the SCD.

Note: If a person has active disease, a stricture, a surgically modified GI tract, or sensitivity to roughage while in remission, they may need to modify or replace high insoluble fiber, rough texture, and large particle size fiber (such as lettuce or nuts) with more suitable choices. Talk to your dietitian for individualized meal planning guidance.

What may feel hard:

- Making foods from scratch, including yogurt
- Avoiding all grains
- Following a vegetarian/vegan version of this diet
- Higher fat intake may worsen loose stools for some
- Higher saturated fat intake may raise LDL cholesterol
- Avoiding packaged, frozen, & canned foods and soda
- Dining out
- Fitting the diet to your cultural food practices
- The strict nature of this diet could pose a risk for those who have, are recovering from, or have a history of disordered eating

What may feel easy:

- Enjoying some caffeinated and alcoholic drinks
- A wide variety of meats are allowed
- The structure of this diet helps some patients feel more at ease with making food choices

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Washington University in St. Louis

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