

GUT HEALTH · FREE QUICK-START TOOL

The Low-FODMAP Cheat Sheet

A traffic-light map of the five fermentable carbohydrate families, with the portion thresholds that decide whether a food is a trigger or a free pass — plus a seven-day single-variety reintroduction grid that turns an elimination diet into an actual diagnosis.

- 5 FODMAP families decoded
- Portion thresholds, not food bans
- 7-day reintroduction grid
- Red-flag screening list
- 4-page A4 printable PDF

CLINICAL RATIONALE — WHY THIS SPECIFIC TOOL

FODMAP stands for fermentable oligosaccharides, disaccharides, monosaccharides and polyols — short-chain carbohydrates that are poorly absorbed in the small intestine, draw water into the lumen, and are rapidly fermented by colonic bacteria into gas.

Restriction is the wrong end point. The diet works as a diagnostic instrument: a short elimination phase (typically 2–6 weeks) to establish a symptom baseline, then systematic reintroduction of one carbohydrate family at a time, then a personalised long-term diet that keeps only the confirmed triggers. Staying strict indefinitely is the failure mode — prolonged restriction is associated with reduced abundance of beneficial *Bifidobacteria* and lower overall microbial diversity, which is the opposite of what a gut protocol is for.

Amount beats identity. Most "high-FODMAP" foods are only high above a threshold. Canned, drained lentils are well tolerated at 46 g and poorly tolerated at 200 g. Firm and ripe bananas differ. This is why the sheet below is organised by portion, not by verdict.

Screen before you restrict. If you have not been tested for coeliac disease, do not cut wheat yet: removing gluten before serology (tissue transglutaminase IgA with total IgA) makes the result uninterpretable.

AUTHORITY / EVIDENCE BASE	WHAT IT ESTABLISHES FOR THIS TOOL
Monash University	Originator of the low-FODMAP methodology; establishes that tolerance is dose-dependent and publishes laboratory-tested portion thresholds for individual foods.
ACG / CAG IBS guidance	Supports a time-limited low-FODMAP trial for IBS symptoms, positioned after first-line dietary and lifestyle advice rather than as a permanent diet.
Randomised crossover trials	Symptom reduction in roughly half to three-quarters of people with IBS on a low-FODMAP diet, with the response varying by individual and by carbohydrate family.
Microbiome research	Prolonged strict restriction lowers beneficial <i>Bifidobacteria</i> — the evidence base for reintroducing rather than staying eliminated.

2–6
WEEKS
elimination phase, no longer

1
FAMILY AT A TIME
the rule that makes reintroduction work

3 + 1
DAY RHYTHM
3 test days, then 1 washout day

50–75%
RESPOND
the realistic expectation in IBS

QUICK START — THE NEXT TEN MINUTES

- 1

Confirm you are allowed to start
Walk the red-flag list at the foot of this page. Any single item means see your clinician before changing your diet.
- 2

Eat green for 14 days
Build every meal from the green column on page 2. Amber foods are allowed only at the stated portion. Nothing from the red column.
- 3

Score honestly, twice a day
Bloating, pain, stool form and urgency on a 0–3 scale, morning and evening. Without the numbers, reintroduction is just guessing.
- 4

Reintroduce one family at a time
Use the page 3 grid. Three test days at a rising dose, then one washout day, never two families in the same week.
- 5

Finish with a short list
Two or three confirmed triggers with the amount that provokes them — plus a much longer list of foods you can now eat freely.

STOP AND SEE A CLINICIAN FIRST IF ANY OF THESE APPLY

Unintentional weight loss · rectal bleeding or black stools · iron-deficiency anaemia · symptoms that wake you at night · persistent vomiting · a palpable abdominal mass · fever · onset of new symptoms after age 50 · a family history of coeliac disease, inflammatory bowel disease or colorectal cancer · symptoms that began after starting a new medication. A low-FODMAP diet is a symptom-management tool; it does not treat these, and using it here can delay a diagnosis that matters.

Medical disclaimer. This cheat sheet is published by Health Secrets for educational, informational and personal habit-tracking purposes only. It is not medical advice, is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease, and does not replace care from your own clinician. In an emergency call 911. **FTC disclosure.** Health Secrets may

REFERENCE

Know the five families, then read the map

FODMAPs are five chemically distinct families, and you react to some of them and not others — which is the whole reason reintroduction exists. Learn where each family hides first, then use the traffic-light map below to build the 14-day baseline.

FAMILY	TYPICAL SOURCES	THE PRACTICAL CATCH
Fructans (oligosaccharides)	Wheat, rye, barley, onion, garlic, leek, inulin and chicory root (added to "high-fibre" and "prebiotic" products), artichoke	The most common trigger family, and the one most often hidden — onion and garlic powder appear in stocks, marinades, spice blends and most restaurant food.
Galacto-oligosaccharides, GOS (oligosaccharides)	Lentils, chickpeas, split peas, red kidney beans, cashews, pistachios	Highly dose-dependent. Canning and draining leaches a large share of the GOS into the liquid, which is why canned legumes are better tolerated than home-cooked.
Lactose (disaccharide)	Cow, goat and sheep milk; soft and fresh cheeses; yoghurt; ice cream; whey and milk solids in processed food	Hard, aged cheeses and butter contain almost none. Lactose-free dairy is chemically identical in every way that matters and is the simplest substitution on this sheet.
Excess fructose (monosaccharide)	Apple, pear, mango, watermelon, honey, agave, high-fructose corn syrup, apple juice	"Excess" is the operative word: fructose is well absorbed when it is balanced by an equal amount of glucose. Table sugar is roughly 50/50 and is usually tolerated.
Polyols (sorbitol, mannitol, xylitol, maltitol)	Cauliflower, mushroom, avocado, stone fruit (peach, plum, nectarine, cherry), sweet potato; and every "sugar-free" gum, mint and protein bar	The family people miss. Sugar-free confectionery is the classic trap — the polyol load in a handful of sugar-free mints can exceed a whole meal of fruit.

Label trap 1 · inulin and chicory

Listed as inulin, chicory root extract, oligofructose or FOS, and added to "high-fibre", "prebiotic" and "keto" products — a concentrated fructan load in a food that reads as healthy.

Label trap 2 · onion and garlic powder

In stocks, bouillon, marinades, rubs, dressings and nearly all restaurant food. Onion-free and garlic-free stock is the single highest-yield swap available to you.

THE TRAFFIC-LIGHT FOOD MAP

GROUP	GREEN LIGHT — BUILD MEALS FROM THESE	AMBER — ONE PORTION ONLY	RED — ELIMINATE FOR THE BASELINE
Grains & starch	White, brown and basmati rice (1 cup) · oats (1/2 cup dry) · quinoa (1 cup) · rice and corn pasta · sourdough spelt bread (1 slice) · potato	Wheat bread (1 slice only) · couscous (1/4 cup) · rye crispbread (1 slice)	Wheat, rye and barley in normal portions · pasta · biscuits · anything with inulin or chicory root added
Vegetables	Carrot · cucumber · tomato · green beans · aubergine · rocket · spinach · kale · capsicum · courgette · pumpkin (1/2 cup) · spring onion, green tops only	Sweet potato (75 g) · cauliflower (75 g) · celery (less than 5 cm of stalk) · beetroot (1/2 cup)	Onion and garlic in any amount · leek, white part · mushroom · artichoke · asparagus · shallot
Fruit	Blueberries (1/4 cup) · kiwifruit (2) · mandarin · orange · strawberry (1/4 cup) · firm banana (1 medium) · cantaloupe (1 cup)	Ripe banana · grapes (1 cup) · pineapple (1 cup) · passionfruit (2) · avocado (30 g, about 1/8)	Apple · pear · mango · watermelon · peach, plum, nectarine, cherry · dried fruit of any kind
Protein	Eggs · firm tofu (170 g) · tempeh · canned lentils, drained (46 g) · canned chickpeas, drained (1/4 cup) · all meat, poultry and fish, unmarinated	Canned chickpeas (1/2 cup) · home-cooked lentils (1/2 cup)	Silken tofu · large servings of home-cooked legumes · cashews and pistachios · any meat in a marinade, rub or sauce containing onion or garlic
Dairy & alternatives	Lactose-free milk and yoghurt · hard cheeses (cheddar, parmesan, pecorino) · butter · ghee · almond milk · rice milk · coconut yoghurt	Regular yoghurt (1 small pot) · feta (40 g)	Cow, goat and sheep milk · ricotta, cottage and cream cheese · ice cream · custard · whey, casein and milk-solids ingredients
Fats, nuts, sweeteners	Olive oil · sesame oil · macadamia (20 g) · peanut (28 g) · walnut (30 g) · chia and flax · maple syrup · rice malt syrup · table sugar · dark chocolate (2–3 squares)	Almonds (10 nuts) · hazelnut (10 nuts)	Cashews · pistachios · honey · agave · high-fructose corn syrup · every sugar alcohol in sugar-free gum, mints and bars

HOW TO READ THE PORTIONS

Portions are typical single-serving figures of the kind published by Monash University, given as a practical starting point rather than a laboratory result for your body. Ripeness and cultivar shift the numbers, and combination meals add up — three safe portions in one sitting can become an unsafe total load.

Label trap 3 · sugar alcohols

Sorbitol, mannitol, xylitol, maltitol, isomalt and erythritol in anything labelled sugar-free. Erythritol is absorbed higher up the gut and is usually the best tolerated of the group.

Label trap 4 · whey, casein, milk solids

The lactose carriers in protein powders, crisps, chocolate, instant soups and processed meat. Lactose-free dairy and whey isolate avoid them entirely.

THE DIAGNOSTIC PHASE

Reintroduction: one family, three days, one washout

This is the step that makes the elimination phase worth doing. Test one carbohydrate family for three consecutive days at a rising dose, score every day, then take one clean washout day before the next family. Two families in the same week produces results you cannot interpret.

WEEK	FAMILY UNDER TEST	DAY 1 / DAY 2 / DAY 3 DOSE	WASHOUT
Week 1	Fructans — wheat	Bread: 1 slice, then 2 slices, then 3 slices on consecutive days	Day 4 washout on green - column food only
Week 2	Fructans — onion	Cooked onion: 1/4 tsp, then 1/2 tsp, then 1 tsp stirred into a green - column meal	Day 4 washout
Week 3	GOS — legumes	Canned, drained chickpeas: 1/4 cup, then 1/2 cup, then 3/4 cup	Day 4 washout
Week 4	Lactose	Regular milk: 1/4 cup, then 1/2 cup, then 1 cup; or yoghurt at the same volumes	Day 4 washout
Week 5	Excess fructose	Apple: 1/4 of a medium apple, then 1/2, then 1 whole; or honey at 1, 2 and 3 tsp	Day 4 washout
Week 6	Polyols — sorbitol	Avocado: 30 g, then 60 g, then 1/2 fruit; or 1 peach at the same rising scale	Day 4 washout
Week 7	Polyols — mannitol	Cauliflower: 75 g, then 150 g, then 225 g; or mushroom on the same scale	Day 4 washout, then personalise

YOUR SEVEN - DAY GRID

DAY	FOOD & FAMILY	PORTION	BLOATING 0–3	PAIN 0–3	STOOL 1–7	NOTES (TIMING, URGENCY, WIND, SLEEP)
Test 1						
Test 2						
Test 3						
Washout	Green column only	—				
Verdict	Family result: ☐ tolerated at all doses ☐ tolerated up to ____ ☐ reacts at ____ ☐ inconclusive, retest in 4 weeks					

SYMPTOM SCORING KEY

0	None	No symptom you would notice
1	Mild	Noticeable, does not change what you do
2	Moderate	Uncomfortable, changes your plans or your appetite
3	Severe	Stops activity, or wakes you at night

Stool form is scored 1–7 on the Bristol Stool Form Scale (see the Bristol & Fermentation Log for the full key). Score twice a day, morning and evening, at the same times — recall over 24 hours is unreliable.

HOLD, RETREAT, OR CONTINUE

- ☐ **Continue** — score stays at 0–1 on all three test days. Move to the next family after washout and keep this food in your diet.
- ☐ **Hold** — a score of 2 or 3 on any day. Stop that family, return to green - column food, and restart the same family in two weeks at a lower starting dose.
- ☐ **Retreat** — symptoms persist on washout days. You are not back to baseline; stay on green - column food until you are, then start the ladder again.
- ☐ **Escalate** — any red - flag symptom at any point, or symptoms worse than before you started. Stop and book a clinician appointment.

THE END POINT IS A SHORT LIST, NOT A LONG ONE

A successful seven - week run usually leaves two or three confirmed triggers with the amount that provokes them — and restores everything else. If you finish with a long list of "problem" foods, the more likely explanations are an elimination phase that was too short, doses that were too small to test, or symptoms driven by something other than FODMAPs. That is the conversation to take to a dietitian.

Ready for the Complete Step-by-Step Blueprint?

This cheat sheet gives you the immediate tools to take action today. But long-term health requires a complete, structured daily system — one that tells you **what to do on the days this sheet does not cover**, in what order, and how to adjust when your body does not respond the way the chart says it should.

HEALTH SECRETS

The 14-Day Gut-Friendly Meal Planning System

A 14-day, food-first meal system built on plant diversity and a four-stage fiber ladder — no cleanses, no restriction, no guesswork.

Clinical Practice Series · 53 pages · A4 print + fillable

The 14-Day Gut-Friendly Meal Planning System

Transition from restrictive diets into comfortable, high-fiber, diverse eating without bloating or cleanses.

53 pages

Fillable PDF + Web Edition

Clinical Practice Series

\$19 one-time

WHAT IS INSIDE THE FULL EDITION

- 1 **14 complete daily meal plans** — breakfast, lunch, dinner and a snack for each day, with fibre grams, prep time, batch-cook notes and like-for-like swaps.
- 1 **A 52-food fibre reference table** — grams per portion with the tolerance note each food needs during reintroduction.
- 1 **The 4-stage fibre ladder** — soluble, semi-soluble, insoluble and prebiotic, sequenced so a sensitive gut adapts upward instead of reacting.
- 1 **Full reintroduction protocol and dining-out guide** — where onion and garlic powder and emulsifiers hide on a menu, and what to order instead.

THIS FREE TOOL VERSUS THE COMPLETE SYSTEM

What this free cheat sheet already gives you

- ☐ The five FODMAP families and where each one hides
- ☐ A traffic-light food map with single-serving thresholds
- ☐ A seven-day single-variety reintroduction grid

What only the 53-page edition has

- ☐ What to actually eat for 14 days, meal by meal, with fibre grams
- ☐ The graduated fibre ladder that ends the restriction for good
- ☐ Batch-cooking, pantry and weekly grouped shopping blueprints
- ☐ Symptom, Bristol and tolerance trackers wired to the ladder rungs

Get the Complete Guide

AT [HEALTHSECRETS.COM/PRODUCTS/THE-14-DAY-GUT-FRIENDLY-MEAL-PLANNER](https://healthsecrets.com/products/the-14-day-gut-friendly-meal-planner)

<https://healthsecrets.com/products/the-14-day-gut-friendly-meal-planner>

READER-ONLY COUPON

READER20

Use code **READER20** for 20% off your full guide at checkout.

A4 print + fillable

Print it at home or complete every field on screen.
No app, no account required.

Board-certified clinical review

Written to published guidance. No miracle claims,
no proprietary detox language.

One-time payment

\$19 once, no subscription, instant download after
checkout.

Medical disclaimer. Health Secrets publishes educational, informational and habit-tracking tools only. Nothing in this cheat sheet or in the paid edition is medical advice, a diagnosis, or a treatment plan, and neither is intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease. Always confirm changes to diet, supplements, exercise or medication timing with your own physician or licensed clinician. In a medical emergency call 911. **FTC disclosure.** This page promotes a Health Secrets product that we publish and sell; Health Secrets may also earn a commission from qualifying purchases made through links on our website, at no extra cost to you. Recommendations are editorial and evidence-led. Hardware and equipment referenced anywhere in this library is listed without affiliate tags at healthsecrets.com/shop. **Privacy.** You received this cheat sheet because you asked for it at healthsecrets.com; unsubscribe from any email at any time.
© 2026 Health Secrets · Im-01-low-fodmap-cheat-sheet · edition 1.0 · Board-certified clinical review · healthsecrets.com