
The Keystone Approach Low-Starch Diet Printable Guide

Chapter 5 of *The Keystone Approach* (2018 edition) breaks down the low-starch diet into three levels: basic, intermediate, and advanced. Summary tables for each level are provided below.

Remember that the three levels of the low-starch diet focus on the choice of carbohydrate-containing foods—namely fruits, vegetables, seeds, nuts, and to some extent dairy and grains. Regardless of which level you follow, the remainder of your diet should emphasize lean animal proteins and healthy fats, such as avocado and olive oil.

Level 1: The Basic Low-Starch Diet.

This introductory level is based on removing the “worst offenders.” These are foods that are almost entirely starch or sugar, have very low nutrient density, and can potentially damage the gut barrier (such as wheat, oats, potatoes, and corn). Level 1 is the recommended starting point for those with rheumatoid arthritis or mild psoriasis and for anyone who needs a more gradual approach to reducing starch.

There are four components to the level 1 low-starch diet:

1. eliminating gluten-containing grains,
2. eliminating other starchy foods that can directly damage the gut barrier or trigger inflammation (such as corn, soy, and potatoes)
3. reducing “safe starches” to no more than two servings per day
4. avoiding added sugar.

ALLOWED	AVOID
All fruits Vegetables (except corn and nightshades) Well-cooked legumes (except soy and peanuts) White rice Nuts and seeds Dairy Meats Fish Eggs Olive oil Avocado oil	Grains other than rice Corn Soy Peanuts Quinoa Nightshades (potato, tomato, peppers) Added sugars

Level 2: The Intermediate Low-Starch Diet.

In addition to eliminating grains and legumes, level 2 removes the starchiest vegetables, nuts, and seeds, along with high-lactose dairy. This level still includes some starch in the form of fruits and vegetables with low to moderate starch levels such as bananas, winter squash, and carrots. It also includes some nuts and seeds. This level is the recommended starting point if you have inflammatory bowel disease, psoriatic arthritis, juvenile arthritis, or moderate or severe psoriasis.

Fruits on the Intermediate Low-Starch Diet

BEST (Low starch and lower fructose)	LIMIT (high fructose or fructans)	LIMIT (2-5 g starch per 100 g)
Avocado	Apples	Banana (less starch when ripe)
Blueberries	Apricot	Citrus peel for baking
Cantaloupe	Cherries	Custard apple
Clementine	Dates	Durian
Dragon fruit	Figs	Sapodilla
Grapes	Grapefruit	Unripe pear
Honeydew melon	Guava	
Kiwi fruit	Mango	
Lemon	Nectarine	
Lime	Peach	
Lychee	Plums	
Orange	Prunes	
Paw paw/papaya	Raisins	
Pineapple	Ripe pear	
Pomegranate	Watermelon	
Raspberries		
Rhubarb		
Rockmelon		
Starfruit		
Strawberries		
Tangerine		

Vegetables and Legumes on the Intermediate Low-Starch Diet

ALLOWED Low starch (under 0.5 g starch per 100 g)	ALLOWED Moderate starch (0.6–2 g starch per 100 g)	LIMIT (2–5 g starch per 100 g or F: high fructan)	AVOID (more than 5 g starch per 100 g or *nightshade)
Artichoke heart Arugula/rocket Asparagus Bok choy Cabbage (all varieties) Carrots Cauliflower ^T Celeriac ^T Celery Collard greens Cucumber Endive Kale Kohlrabi Fennel Lettuce Mushrooms Pak choi Radicchio Radish Shallots Snow peas Spinach Spring mix Spring onion Scallion Summer squash Turnip Watercress Zucchini	Beansprouts, mung Beetroot Brussels sprouts Collard greens Green beans Mustard leaves Pumpkin ^T Rutabaga ^T Snow peas Spaghetti squash ^T Sugar snap peas Swede ^T	Acorn squash ^T Asparagus ^F Broccoli ^F Butternut squash ^T Frozen peas Garlic ^F Leek ^F Onion ^F	Beans (other than green string beans) Black eyed peas Chickpeas Corn Eggplant* Lentils Parsnip Peppers* Plantains Potato Split peas Sweet potato Taro Tomato* Yam Yucca/cassava

T: starchy if unripe. Test with iodine. F: high fructan (individual tolerance varies). *: nightshade

Nuts and Seeds on the Intermediate Low-starch Diet

ALLOWED (low starch)	LIMIT (2–5 g starch per 100 g)	AVOID (more than 5 g starch per 100 g)
Brazil nuts Coconut flour Coconut milk without additives Desiccated coconut Flax seeds Macadamias Pecans Pine nuts Sesame seeds Tahini paste Walnuts	Almonds Chia seeds Chocolate Cocoa Hazelnuts Hemp seeds Pistachios	Cashew nuts Chestnuts Peanuts Pumpkin seeds Quinoa Sunflower seeds Tigernuts

Miscellaneous Foods and Additives on the Intermediate Low-starch Diet

ALLOWED	BEST AVOIDED
Baking soda Bicarbonate of soda Cellulose Coffee Collagen peptides Cream of tartar Gelatin Guar gum Gum arabic Herbs Hypromellose Magnesium stearate Pectin Spices Tea	Arrowroot Carrageenan Chicory Dextrose Fructooligosaccharides Inulin Maize Maltodextrin Xanthan gum

Level 3: The Advanced Low-Starch Diet

The advanced version of the low-starch diet is intended for those with ankylosing spondylitis, who typically find that they need to keep starch intake very low to control inflammation. This level builds upon the intermediate level by also removing moderately starchy fruits, vegetables, nuts, and seeds. The net result is a greater focus on animal proteins and low-carbohydrate vegetables such as salads and leafy greens. This level may also be needed by some people with psoriatic arthritis, particularly in cases involving the spine or sacroiliac joints.

Advanced Level Low-Starch Diet

ALLOWED VEGETABLES (0–0.2 g starch per 100 g)	ALLOWED FRUITS (2 servings per day)	ALLOWED NUTS, SEEDS (2 tablespoons per day)	ALLOWED OTHER
Arugula	Avocado	Chia seeds	Baking soda
Cabbage	Blueberries	Coconut (milk, fresh, flour, or desiccated)	Brown rice syrup
Celery	Cantaloupe	Flax seeds	Coffee
Courgette	Clementine	Macadamia nuts	Collagen peptides
Cucumber	Dragon fruit	Pine nuts	Gelatin
Endive	Grapes	Walnuts	Herbs
Fennel	Honeydew melon		Tea
Kale	Kiwi fruit		
Kohlrabi	Lemon		
Lettuce	Lime		
Mushrooms	Orange		
Radicchio	Papaya		
Radish	Paw paw		
Scallions	Pineapple		
Spinach	Raspberries		
Spring mix	Rhubarb		
Spring onions	Rockmelon		
Summer squash	Starfruit		
Watercress	Strawberries		
Zucchini	Tangerine		