



FOOD TO HEAL • 009

Galacto-oligosaccharides (GOS)

Support your gut health with a diet rich in GOS

Galacto-oligosaccharides (GOS)




Galacto-oligosaccharides (GOS) are a type of prebiotic made up of galactose sugars linked together in chains. The human body can't digest them, so they pass through the digestive tract and act as food for our good gut bacteria.

Eating GOS can support the growth of these bacteria and can improve digestive health. Everyone's gut is different, so start small and see what feels good for you.



GOS rich foods*

You can increase your intake of GOS by including the following foods in your diet.

| | Pulses (½ cup) | Soy | Nuts + Grains |
|---|--|---|---|
| Best  | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Borlotti beans, canned• Chickpeas, boiled• Green lentils, boiled• Lima beans, boiled• Navy beans, boiled• Red kidney beans, boiled or sprouted• Split peas, boiled | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Soy flour, dehulled (⅓ cup)• Soy protein, textured (⅓ cup)• Soybeans, boiled (½ cup) | |
| High  | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adzuki beans, boiled or canned• Butter beans, canned• Chickpeas, sprouted• Mixed beans, canned• Mung beans, boiled• Red lentils, boiled | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Soy yoghurt, plain (140g) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pistachios or cashews, activated (¼ cup)• Wheat bran cereal (85%) (½ cup)• Wheat germ (1 tbsp) |
| Moderate  | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chickpea, canned• Lentil, canned | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Soy protein chicken strips (look for "soybean" in ingredients as soy protein strips are not as high) (100g) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Amaranth, uncooked (¼ cup)• Muesli (½ cup)• Pistachios (¼ cup)• Quick oats (½ cup)• Oat flour (½ cup)• Wheat bread, wholegrain, wholemeal, or multigrain (1 slice) |

*Please note the GOS content may vary depending on factors such as growing conditions, ripeness, and processing methods.

How to add GOS to your diet:

- Add chickpeas, mixed beans, or mung beans to salads for an extra GOS boost.
- Try 'meatless Monday' and swap a meat dish for dahl, chickpea curry, split pea soup, or Mexican beans and rice.
- Choose a wheat bran cereal for breakfast and top with soy yoghurt plus and activated cashews and pistachios.

Increasing fibre intake:

1. Gradually increase fibre intake to allow the digestive system to adjust.
2. Stay well-hydrated as consuming more fibre without sufficient water may cause gastrointestinal blockage.
3. Expect some mild symptoms such as gas and bloating as a sign your gut microbiome is adjusting to the increased fibre intake. It is not necessarily a sign of intolerance.
4. If you get gut symptoms, slightly reduce your fibre intake for a few days before slowly increasing as tolerated.

Recipe ideas

Soy flour pancakes (serves 4)

Ingredients:

- 1 cup soy flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 2 tsp corn starch
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- 1 egg
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 300 ml soy milk (made from soybean)

Method:

1. Whisk all ingredients in a large bowl (add a little water if the batter feels too thick).
2. Heat a frying pan over low-medium heat and add the oil.
3. Pour ½ cup batter into the pan.
4. Flip the pancake when you see bubbles form.
5. Cook until golden brown on both sides.
6. Serve with your favourite toppings.



Chickpea curry (serves 6)



Ingredients:

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tsp coriander seeds
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 2 tsp garam masala
- 15 to 20 fresh curry leaves, or 30 dried curry leaves
- 1 large onion, diced
- 6 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tsp ginger, minced
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- 2 medium tomatoes, diced
- 800g boiled chickpeas (boiled will contain more GOS than canned)

- 400ml can coconut milk
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 3 tbsp tahini
- ½ cup water
- 2 tsp salt

Spices:

- 1 tsp curry powder
- 1 tsp coriander powder
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp ground nutmeg
- ½ tsp ground turmeric
- ½ tsp ground black pepper

Method:

Tip: if anything starts to stick or brown too much, add a splash of water to deglaze.

1. Heat the olive oil in a Dutch oven over medium-high heat and wait for oil to heat up.
2. Add cumin and coriander seeds, tossing frequently for around 1 minute.
3. Add curry leaves and stir for 15 seconds.
4. Add onions and ½ tsp salt. Cook until they are slightly tender.
5. Add garlic and ginger, stirring frequently for 1-2 minutes.
6. Add the spices and tomato paste, stirring frequently for 90 seconds.
7. Add tomatoes and the rest of the salt. Cook until tomatoes are soft (around 5 minutes).
8. Add chickpeas, tahini, coconut milk, and water. Cover the pot with a lid and simmer for around 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.
9. Stir in the garam masala.
10. Remove from heat and add the lemon juice.

Foods rich in galacto-oligosaccharides (GOS) can help your beneficial gut bacteria thrive, supporting a healthy microbiome and better digestion. Small, steady changes really do add up—start with one simple swap and build from there.