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Nutr Hosp. 2017 Jun 5;34(3):667-674. doi: 10.20960/nh.703.



A low fermentable oligo-di-mono-saccharides and polyols (FODMAP) diet is a balanced therapy for fibromyalgia with nutritional and symptomatic benefits

Marum AP¹, Moreira C, Tomas-Carus P, Saraiva F, Guerreiro CS.

Author information

Abstract

INTRODUCTION: Fibromyalgia is a chronic rheumatic disease producing widespread pain, associated to a major comorbidity -irritable bowel syndrome. Low FODMAPS diet (low fermentable oligo-di-mono-saccharides and polyols diet) has been effective in controlling irritable bowel syndrome symptoms. Overweight is an aggravating factor for fibromyalgia. We studied effects of low fermentable oligo-di-mono-saccharides and polyols diets on fibromyalgia symptoms and weight status.

METHODS: A longitudinal study was performed on 38 fibromyalgia patients using a four-week, repeated assessment as follow: M1 = first assessments/presentation of individual low fermentable oligo-di-mono-saccharides and polyols diet; M2 = second assessments/reintroduction of FODMAPs; M3 = final assessments/nutritional counselling. The assessment instruments applied were: Fibromyalgia Survey Questionnaire (FSQ); Severity Score System (IBS-SSS); visual analogic scale (VAS). Body mass-index/composition and waist circumference (WC) were also measured. Daily macro-micronutrients and FODMAP intake were quantified at each moment of the study.

RESULTS: The studied cohort was 37% overweight, 34% obese (average body mass-index 27.4 ± 4.6 ; excess fat mass $39.4 \pm 7\%$). Weight, body mass-index and waist circumference decreased significantly ($p < 0.01$) with low fermentable oligo-di-mono-saccharides and polyols diet, but no significant effect on body composition was observed. All fibromyalgiasymptoms, including somatic pain, declined significantly post-LFD ($p < 0.01$); as well for severity of fibromyalgia [Fibromyalgia survey questionnaire: M1 = 21.8; M2 = 16.9; M3 = 17.0 ($p < 0.01$)]. The intake of essential nutrients (fiber, calcium, magnesium and vitamin D) showed no significant difference. The significant reduction in FODMAP intake (M1 = 24.4 g; M2 = 2.6g; $p < 0.01$) reflected the "Diet adherence" (85%). "Satisfaction with improvement of symptoms" (76%), showed correlating with "diet adherence" ($r = 0.65$; $p < 0.01$).

CONCLUSIONS: Results are highly encouraging, showing low fermentable oligo-di-mono-saccharides and polyols diets as a nutritionally balanced approach, contributing to weight loss and reducing the severity of FM fibromyalgiasymptoms.

KEYWORDS: FODMAP. Fibromyalgia. Irritable bowel syndrome. Pain. Diet. Shortchain. Carbohydrates.

PMID: 28627205

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