



Eating After Your Ileostomy

Information for patients and families

Read this booklet to learn:

- how you should eat and drink after your ileostomy surgery
- important tips to remember
- a list of foods that will be easier for you to digest
- a list of foods that may cause problems



Name: _____

Date: _____

Registered Dietitian: _____

Phone: _____

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Why should I watch what I eat and drink after my ileostomy?

Eating and drinking the right way after your ileostomy surgery will:

- keep your stoma from blocking
- make sure your body is hydrated (getting enough fluids)

What do I need to remember?

For the first 6 to 8 weeks after your surgery:

- Avoid high fibre foods.
- Chew all of your food well.
- Eat small amounts at one time.
- Eat at regular times (for example: every 3 to 4 hours).
- Add new foods one at a time.
- Drink a lot of fluid each day.

Why do I need to avoid high fibre foods?

Fibre is usually digested in the large bowel (colon). For 6 to 8 weeks after ileostomy surgery, it may be hard for you to digest fibre. Too much undigested fibre may cause your stoma to become blocked.

After 6 to 8 weeks, you can gradually start to eat small amounts of high fibre foods. Chewing all of your food well will help with your digestion.

What should I eat?

Eating foods from different food groups is important for your health. Canada's Food Guide lists 4 main food groups that provide your body with the nutrients it needs. These groups are:

- vegetables and fruit
- milk products
- grain products
- meat and other high protein foods

You can find more information about [Canada's Food Guide](http://hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php) at the website:

<http://hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php>

A food that you had trouble digesting before surgery may still bother you after surgery. If you have a problem with a food, try it again in 1 to 2 weeks. You may be able to digest it better then.

What should I drink?

You will need to drink about 8 to 10 cups of fluid each day. This will keep your body hydrated. You may need to drink more if your ostomy output (the amount of waste coming out of your stoma) is high.

The charts on the next pages list foods that can help you know which foods will be easier and harder for you to digest. Foods listed under **Harder to digest** may cause your stoma to become blocked. You may eat them eventually, but remember to:

- begin eating them gradually, starting 6-8 weeks from the date of your surgery
- add new foods one at a time
- eat them in small amounts at first
- chew your food well

Food choice guide for patients with ileostomies

Food Type	Easier to digest (lower fibre)	Harder to digest (higher fibre)
Vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canned or well-cooked vegetables without skins and seeds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potato (white or yellow) ▪ Carrots ▪ Winter squash (butternut, acorn, spaghetti, pumpkin) ▪ Summer squash ▪ Zucchini ▪ Eggplant ▪ Green and yellow beans ▪ Cauliflower ▪ Broccoli ▪ Sweet peppers ▪ Beets ▪ Turnips ▪ Tomato sauce ▪ Onions ▪ Garlic ▪ Vegetable juice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raw vegetables • Any vegetable skins and seeds • Potato skins • Bamboo shoots • Bean sprouts • Sauerkraut • Corn • Artichokes • Celery • Okra • Mushrooms • Brussels sprouts • Green peas • Lettuce, salad greens • Spinach, kale, swiss chard, beet greens, cabbage • Any vegetable prepared with nuts or seeds

Food Type	Easier to digest (lower fibre)	Harder to digest (higher fibre)
Fruit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh, cooked or canned (in natural juice or water) fruit, without any: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ skins ▪ seeds ▪ or membranes • Bananas • All fruit juices except apple, prune and pear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any fruit skins, seeds or membranes • Dried fruit (raisins, prunes) • Oranges • Grapefruit • Coconut • Canned or fresh pineapple • Candied fruit/fruit peel • Berries • Rhubarb • Avocado • Prune juice, apple juice, pear juice
Milk products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milk: Skim, 1%, 2%, homo • Milkette or coffee cream • Yogurt without fruit seeds or skins • Ice cream without nuts and fruit • Puddings <p>Limit milk products if you are lactose intolerant.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yogurt with fruit seeds and skins like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ raspberry ▪ strawberry ▪ blueberry

Food Type	Easier to digest (lower fibre)	Harder to digest (higher fibre)
Grain Products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White, seedless rye, Italian, French, Vienna breads • Refined whole wheat • Pretzels, soft or hard rolls, bagels, tortillas, pita, naan bread, roti • English muffins • Biscuits, plain or saltine crackers • Waffles, pancakes • Ready-to-eat cereals that do not contain coarse grains, bran, dried fruit, nuts or seeds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rice Krispies ▪ Corn Flakes ▪ Cheerios ▪ Crispix ▪ Special K • Oatmeal, cream of wheat • White pasta, noodles, white rice, barley, couscous • Congee (plain or flavoured) • Rice pudding, tapioca pudding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coarse whole grain breads including 7 or 12 grain and flaxseed breads • Bread rolls or crackers which have dried fruit, nuts or seeds • Coarse bran breads • Bran cereals and multi-grain cereals with dried fruit, nuts and whole grains: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All Bran ▪ Bran Buds ▪ bran flakes ▪ Muesli ▪ Fruit ‘n Fibre ▪ Red River Cereals • Steel-cut oats • Multi-grain or whole wheat pastas • Brown or wild rice • Popcorn

Food Type	Easier to digest (lower fibre)	Harder to digest (higher fibre)
Meat and other high protein foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beef, lamb, veal, pork, poultry, fish • Luncheon meats (without seeds or whole spices) • Sausage patty • Hard and soft cheeses, cottage cheese • Eggs • Smooth peanut butter and smooth nut butters • Tofu and tempeh 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lobster, shrimp and crab • Mussels, clams, scallops, squid, octopus • Luncheon meats with whole spices or seeds • Meats with casings like sausages or hot dogs • Crunchy peanut butter or other crunchy nut butters • Legumes such as lentils, dried beans, dried peas, soybeans • Nuts and seeds
Soups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broth, broth based soups with noodles • Cream soups • Meat soups • Soups made with recommended vegetables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid soups made with vegetables, fruits, grains, or meats from the high fibre foods list.
Fats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Margarine and butter • Olive oil or vegetable oil • Gravy • Coffee creamer • Cream cheese • Pesto 	

Food Type	Easier to digest (lower fibre)	Harder to digest (higher fibre)
Sweets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sugar, honey, syrup • Jelly, gelatine • Hard candy • Smooth chocolate without nuts, seeds or dried fruit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marmalades and jams with seeds • Candies, chocolates and sweets with dried fruit or nuts
Drinks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tea or coffee (decaffeinated drinks may be easier to tolerate) • Postum, cocoa, ovaltine • Alcohol, wine and beer in small amounts (they can cause you to lose fluids) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carbonated (bubbly) drinks like pop or soda
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Condiments • Meat sauces • Spices (ground) • Potato chips without skins • Vinegar <p>Having extra salt can help you keep fluids in your body. Speak with your dietitian if you were on a low salt diet before surgery.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relishes, pickles and olives • Chili sauce or oils with pieces of chili pepper skins or seeds

What if I have a high ostomy output?

A high ostomy output is more than 1000 millilitres a day. **Don't try to reduce your output by drinking less. This can make you dehydrated.**

If you have a high ostomy output, use these tips. They will help you manage your output:

- Have small meals regularly (every 2 to 3 hours) to help absorb your meals better and meet your nutrition needs.
- Chew your food very well.
- Separate fluids and solids. Wait 30 minutes before and after a meal before drinking fluids.
- Reduce or stop drinking fluid milk.
- Eat more low fibre foods or foods with water-soluble fibre to thicken the output (for example, white rice, white bread, oatmeal, applesauce, bananas).
- Eat fewer high fibre foods (for example, wheat bran breads and high fibre cereals).
- Limit caffeine intake (for example, coffee and tea).
- Limit foods and drinks that are high in sugar.
- Mix juices and sweetened drinks with an equal amount of water before drinking.

Contact your dietitian or doctor if your high output does not get better or you feel you may be dehydrated.