

Diet for Ileostomy



**PATIENT
EDUCATION**

Diet for Ileostomy

During ileostomy surgery, the entire colon, rectum, and anus are removed or bypassed. An ileostomy is placed by the surgeon through an opening in the abdominal wall.



The end portion of the ileum (part of your small intestine) is brought through the abdominal wall, forming what is called the **stoma**.

The stoma forms an opening, usually above the groin on the right side of the abdomen. The stoma must be covered with a bag at all

times to collect stool. An ileostomy may be temporary or permanent depending on the surgery.

After surgery, your eating plan will begin with clear liquids. As you recover, you will start eating small amounts of solid foods that are low in fiber. Most people begin to eat more normally 6 weeks after surgery.

Dietary fiber is present in varying amounts in all plant food in the form of soluble and insoluble fibers. After having an ileostomy, you should avoid foods rich in insoluble fiber (bran-enriched breads and cereals, certain fruits and vegetables, legumes, and dried beans) and **eat more foods rich in soluble fiber** (oats, rye, barley, apples, bananas). These recommended diet changes can help reduce unpleasant symptoms of diarrhea, odor, and gas; help

avoid blockage of your stoma; and help your body absorb nutrients from your food as you heal from surgery.

Try eating 4-5 smaller meals each day to ease digestion, prevent high ileostomy output and enhance food absorption to meet your calorie, protein, and nutrient needs. Missing meals can increase gas and watery stools. **Have your largest meal in the middle of day and avoid eating large amounts in the evening.** This can help decrease stool output at night.

The ileostomy output can be watery or pasty, depending upon the foods you eat, the amount of fluid you drink, the medications you take, and other factors. **Aim for at least 8 to 10 cups of liquids a day.** Try waiting 30 minutes after meals or snacks before drinking to avoid flushing food through your system too quickly.

When the ileostomy output is high, meaning you need to empty the ileostomy bag up to 5-8 times per day, **you will need to pay attention to fluid intake and output.** If you have a high output from the ostomy, you will need to use an oral rehydration solution to replace the fluids you are losing.

Sport drinks are often high in sugar, which can actually increase your stoma output. **Avoid sports drinks unless diluted** as shown in the recipe below. Pediatric electrolyte solutions, such as Pedialyte®, are recommended. Another option is to make your own oral rehydration solutions using one of these two recipes:

- 2 cups Gatorade® + 2 cups water + ½ tsp salt
- 1 cup apple juice + 3 cups water + ½ tsp salt



Initially after surgery, your stool will be liquid and watery because of where the ileostomy is located in the intestine. The stool will gradually become thicker over the next few weeks (more like a consistency of pudding or oatmeal).

There are some foods that can help make the stool thicker or thinner, but if changes to your diet do not improve stools, then your doctor may be able to recommend some medications to help.

Adding Variety to your Diet

When you begin to add more variety back into your diet:

- **add only 1 new food every few days**
- **Start with small portions** of foods you tolerated well before surgery. If you eat a food and do not tolerate it well, wait a few weeks and then try it again
- **Keep a log of foods** you choose, and how you feel when eating them.

Foods for an Ileostomy Diet and Meal Planning

Food Group	Notes	Recommended Foods
Cereals, grains	<p>Avoid any products containing whole wheat or whole grain.</p> <p>Read labels: if you have problems with lactose, avoid any foods containing milk, milk powder, or whey.</p>	<p>Grain foods made from white or refined flour, including bread, bagels, rolls; crackers; pasta; and well-cooked barley</p> <p>White rice</p> <p>Cream of wheat or cream of rice cereals</p> <p>Refined grits</p>

Food Group	Notes	Recommended Foods
Cereals, grains (continued)	Avoid products containing bran, seeds, coconut, dried fruits, nuts or granola.	Oatmeal Cheerios®
Fruits	<p>Some fruits may cause blockages.</p> <p>Avoid unpeeled apples, dried fruits, grapes, pineapple, raspberries and blueberries</p> <p>Look for 100% fruit juices. These may need to be diluted with water or used to make oral rehydration solutions to be tolerated well.</p>	<p>Pulp-free fruit juices (except prune juice)</p> <p>Ripe banana</p> <p>Soft honeydew or seedless watermelon</p> <p>Peeled and cooked apple, peaches, pears</p> <p>Drained canned fruits, except pineapple. (Avoid heavy syrup.)</p> <p>Dried fruit cooked in oatmeal or softened in a baked product as tolerated.</p> <p>Later, when your doctor says it is OK to increase fiber try: avocado, oranges or grapefruit without membranes.</p>
Vegetables	<p>Some vegetables may cause gas, blockages, or odors.</p> <p>Avoid corn, leafy greens,</p>	Cooked vegetables or canned vegetables, to include beets, carrots, green beans (canned), raw green peppers,

Food Group	Notes	Recommended Foods
Vegetables (continued)	raw onions, celery, bean sprouts, vegetable skins, cabbage, sauerkraut, tomatoes, cucumbers, peas, Brussels sprouts, raw cauliflower, and broccoli	sweet potato, winter squash, tomato sauce or tomato puree, vegetable juice Chew mushrooms well.
Dairy Foods	<p>If you feel do not feel well after having dairy foods, try lactose-free products.</p> <p>Foods with an asterisk (*) on this list have lactose.</p> <p>Aged cheeses (such as cheddar and Swiss) are lower in lactose.</p> <p>Check labels for calcium content of almond milk and rice milk to make sure they have 30% calcium. These beverages are not high in protein, so include other high-protein foods at meals and snacks to support healing.</p> <p>Soy milk may cause gas and bloating for some people: avoid soy milk if it causes discomfort.</p>	<p>Fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk*</p> <p>Soy milk, rice milk, or almond milk</p> <p>Lactose-free milk</p> <p>Yogurt*</p> <p>Powdered milk</p> <p>Cheese*</p> <p>Buttermilk*</p> <p>Low-fat ice cream*</p> <p>Sherbet*</p> <p>Coconut milk</p>

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Meats, poultry, fish, eggs, nuts, and cheese (Protein Foods)	<p>When trying nuts, fish, and eggs, start with small amounts. These foods may cause odors.</p> <p>Use a moist heating method for meats and poultry: Use water, broth, or a healthy oil to cook meat or poultry.</p> <p>Avoid charred food.</p> <p>Avoid clams, oysters & mussels as they may get stuck in the stoma.</p>	<p>Very tender, well-cooked meats and poultry</p> <p>Fish</p> <p>Smooth nut butter (limit to tolerance)</p> <p>Eggs (scrambled eggs are easiest to digest)</p>
Fats	<p>Start with very small amounts. Limit fats and oils to less than 8 teaspoons a day. Fats may cause symptoms or discomfort.</p> <p>Butter (and some other spreads) may contain lactose.</p>	<p>Olive oil and canola oil are good choices for heart health.</p>
Beverages	<p>Carbonated beverages may cause gas.</p> <p>Avoid full-strength sports drinks and sodas with high sugar content.</p>	<p>Regular or decaffeinated coffee, tea, hot chocolate*, carbonated or non-carbonated beverages, plain water, diluted fruit juice</p>

Food Group	Notes	Recommended Foods
Desserts, snacks	<p>Avoid any products made with whole-grain flour, bran, seeds, nuts, coconut, or dried fruit.</p> <p>Avoid seeds, popcorn, trail mix.</p> <p>Read ingredient labels: Avoid milk ingredients if you are sensitive to lactose (such as milk, whey, casein, cheese, butter, malt, or yogurt).</p>	Plain cakes and cookies, pies made with allowed fruits, plain sherbet, fruit ice, gelatin, custard, frozen fruit pops, jelly, plain hard candy, marshmallows, frozen yogurt, tapioca, pretzels, snack foods (such as chips).

Helpful Tips

- ✓ **Thickening foods:** Some foods may thicken your stool and help you manage loose stool or diarrhea. Try adding one of these foods to meals or snacks:
 - foods containing soluble fiber, such as barley and oats
 - natural applesauce, bananas, potatoes without skin
 - pasta, white rice, low fiber breads (such as white, potato, or oatmeal bread), saltines, pretzels
 - smooth yogurt, cheese, tapioca
 - smooth natural peanut butter
 - marshmallows, fluff
 - coconut milk, coconut coffee creamer
 - bulking agents as instructed by your doctor, such as psyllium (Metamucil®), methyl cellulose (Citrucel®), and calcium polycarbophil (FiberCon).

- ✓ **Foods that may block the stoma:** Some foods are poorly or incompletely digested and may block the stoma. These foods include:
 - corn
 - coconut
 - vegetable skins or husks, fruit skins
 - salad greens, spinach, celery
 - coleslaw
 - mushrooms if not well chewed
 - seeds and nuts
 - tough fibrous meats,
 - clams, oysters, mussels
 - sausage casings
 - popcorn
- ✓ Chew all foods thoroughly and slowly
- ✓ Consume liquids 30-60 minutes after meals to help with nutrient absorption.
- ✓ Eat at regular intervals and avoid skipping meals.
- ✓ It/s better to eat 4-5 smaller meals a day than 2-3 larger ones.
- ✓ **Foods high in salt** (sodium) can help replace electrolytes that you lose if you have diarrhea (watery stools) or high ileostomy output. High sodium choices include:
 - table salt
 - pretzels
 - cheese
 - crackers
 - tuna
 - broths and soups
 - tomato and V8 juice
 - soy sauce

Sample Meal Plan

Breakfast	<p>1 scrambled egg 1 English muffin or 1 piece white toast 1 teaspoon margarine, for English muffin 1/2 cup unsweetened applesauce</p> <p>30 minutes after breakfast, drink... 1/2 cup (4 ounces) cranberry-grape juice diluted with 1/2 cup (4 ounces) water 1-1/2 cups (12 ounces) herbal tea</p>
Lunch	<p>3-4 ounces shaved/very thin sliced roast beef with juices ½ cup mashed potatoes made with lactose-free milk or chicken broth. May add a small amount of olive oil or very small amount of butter for flavor 1/2 cup green beans, well cooked 1 cup peaches canned (drained or in own juice).</p> <p>30 minutes after lunch, drink... 1 cup (8 ounces) fat-free, or lactose-free milk</p>
Afternoon Snack	<p>8 ounces smooth yogurt 1 ripe banana</p> <p>30 minutes after snack, drink... 1 cup (8 ounces) diluted fruit juice Pedialyte, or oral rehydration solution (ORS), if needed</p>
Dinner	<p>2 ounces pretzels Turkey sandwich (2 ounces turkey, 1 ounce Swiss cheese, 2 slices white bread)</p> <p>30 minutes after dinner, drink... 1-1/2 cups (12 ounces) water or Gatorade/Pedialyte or Oral Rehydration Solution (see recipe on page 4).</p>
Evening Snack	<p>6 saltine crackers 1 ounce Swiss cheese</p> <p>30 minutes after snack, drink... 1 cup (8 ounces) fat-free, or lactose-free milk</p>

If you have any questions, please call the
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716-845-2398