

# Nutrition and Ileostomy

## What is an Ileostomy?

An ileostomy is created when part of the small intestine, the ileum, is brought through the abdominal wall. This creates an opening, called a stoma. The stoma becomes the exit for all bowel movements and gas. This handout provides information on diet after ileostomy.

## Diet after Ileostomy

After surgery, your stoma will be swollen. A low residue diet will be prescribed to prevent a blockage at your stoma while swelling decreases. This diet should be followed for about 6 weeks after surgery. A low residue diet limits foods high in fiber.

## General Guidelines

- **Choose soft, peeled fruits.** Good options include canned fruits, pureed fruits, peeled cooked fruits, pulp-free fruit juices, or soft fruits such as ripe bananas or melons. Avoid dried fruits and raw fruits with skins, membranes, or seeds.
- **Select well-cooked vegetables without skins or seeds.** Choose soft, cooked or canned vegetables, pureed vegetables, pulp-free vegetable juice, or peeled potatoes. Avoid raw and stringy vegetables.
- **Pick refined grains.** Opt for white bread, refined cereals, white rice and white pasta. Avoid whole grains, brown rice, bran, and breads with nuts or seeds.
- **Choose soft, tender meats and protein foods.** Good protein choices include ground meats and poultry, flaky fish, eggs, creamy nut butters, dairy products, and tofu. Avoid meats that are tough, chewy, or in casings, whole nuts and seeds, and beans.
- **Eat slowly and chew foods well.** Chew foods to the consistency of applesauce to avoid blockages and better absorb nutrients.
- **Eat small, frequent meals.** Aim to eat six small meals per day instead of three large ones. Small, frequent meals will help prevent bloating and help you absorb your meals better.
- **Drink plenty of fluids.** People with ileostomies are at risk for dehydration. Aim for at least 8-10 cups of fluids daily.
- **Take a multivitamin with mineral daily.** You may not get all the vitamins and minerals you need while following a low residue diet. Until your diet returns to normal, take a chewable multivitamin with minerals such as Centrum Chewable, Trader Joe's High Potency Chewable Vitamin, or Natures Plus Adult Chewable Multivitamin & Mineral.

## A Guide to Food Choices for the First 6 Weeks

Food Groups	Foods to Choose	Foods to Avoid
<b>Grains and Starches</b>	White breads, crackers, rolls, bagels, biscuits, tortillas, pastas, pancakes, and waffles Low fiber cereals White rice, couscous, polenta Pretzels Products with 2 grams or less of fiber per serving-read food labels.	Whole grain or whole wheat breads, crackers, rolls, bagels, tortillas, pastas High fiber cereals Brown rice, wild rice, quinoa, barley, bulgur, buckwheat, popcorn Any products baked with nuts or seeds Products with more than 2 grams of fiber per serving-read food labels.
<b>Vegetables</b>	Canned or well-cooked vegetables without skins or seeds such as carrots, beets, asparagus tips, winter squash, sweet potatoes, yams, white potatoes, broccoli florets, processed tomato products without skin or seeds Pureed vegetables without skin Pulp-free vegetable juices	Any raw or undercooked vegetables. Fibrous vegetables such as artichokes, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, corn, cucumber, lettuce and salad greens, mushrooms, raw onions or onion rings, bean sprouts, peas, peppers, potato skins, radishes, tomatoes, spinach, collard greens, kale, Swiss chard, beet greens
<b>Fruits</b>	Canned fruits, except pineapple, Cooked and peeled fruits Pureed fruits and pulp-free juices Raw fruits without skins and seeds such as ripe bananas and honeydew	Fresh fruit with skins or seeds such as apples, apricots, berries, cherries, figs, grapes, grapefruit, oranges, pineapple Fruit juices with pulp, prune juice Dried fruits
<b>Dairy and Milk Substitutes</b>	Cheese, yogurt, cream cheese, cottage cheese, pudding, milk, almond milk, rice milk, soy milk, non-dairy creamer	Yogurt with pieces of fruit or seeds, Cheese with nuts or seeds High fat dairy if poorly tolerated
<b>Protein</b>	Ground or well-cooked poultry, beef, lamb, ham, pork, fish Eggs, tofu, seitan Creamy nut butters	Tough, fibrous meats with gristle Legumes including beans and lentils Meats in casings or with whole spices Veggie patties with beans, whole grains, or corn Nuts, crunchy nut butters, seeds
<b>Fats and Oils</b>	Butter, vegetable oils, mayonnaise	Deep fried, greasy foods

<b>Other</b>	Seedless jam and jelly, ketchup, mustard, honey, syrup, sugar, ground herbs and spices	Coconut, pickles, relish, olives, ground mustard, chili sauce with pieces of skins or seeds, marmalade, jams, or jellies with seeds Spicy foods if poorly tolerated
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## Transitioning Back to a Regular Diet

About 6 weeks after your surgery, swelling of your ostomy site should be reduced. You can then begin to add foods back into your diet. Try small portions from the list of foods that are in the avoid column in this handout. Try just one new food each day and watch for symptoms. Start with foods that you were able to eat without problems before surgery. Continue to chew well. If you tolerate these foods, continue to add foods one at a time until you are back to your normal diet. If any foods cause bloating, cramping, or nausea, take note. Avoid those foods. After 2-3 more weeks you can try them again in small amounts. Generally, there are no foods you need to permanently avoid. In time you should be able to tolerate a regular diet. Some people continue to have discomfort after eating certain types of foods. Avoid foods and beverages if they are problematic for you.

## Helpful Tips for Life with an Ostomy

- Eat on a regular schedule. Regular meals will help you absorb nutrients from food. An empty stomach can also increase gas production and watery stools.
- Eat your largest meal in the middle of the day to avoid high ostomy output at night.
- Gas is a normal part of digestion. Your body will release gas about 2-4 hours after eating gas-producing foods.
- There are things you can do to limit gas production. Avoid chewing gum. Do not use a straw. Sip beverages, do not gulp. Eat slowly and chew well. Do not smoke or use chewing tobacco. These things can cause you to swallow air and may lead to gas production.
- Odor is also a normal part of digestion. Before eliminating foods you enjoy, consider trying odor-controlling products such as ostomy deodorant.
- Some foods may change the color of your stool.
- If you are losing weight, try an oral nutrition supplement such as Boost, Ensure, Kate Farms Nutrition Shake, Orgain Nutrition Shake, or OWYN Complete Nutrition Shake. If you have diarrhea or high ostomy output, choose lower sugar versions such as Boost Glucose Control, Glucerna, Ensure Max Protein, or Protein Powders.

- If you do not like supplements, try snacks. For example, five saltine crackers with 2 ounces of cheddar cheese, four graham crackers with 2 tablespoons peanut butter, or ½-cup cottage cheese with canned peaches.

## Foods that May Affect Ostomy Output

May Produce Odor		May Help Control Odor	
Asparagus	Cheese	Buttermilk	Tomato juice
Beans	Eggs	Cranberry juice	Yogurt
Broccoli	Fish	Parsley-fresh	
Brussel sprouts	Garlic		
Cabbage	Mushrooms		
Cauliflower	Onions		

May Increase Stool		May Help Thicken Loose Stool	
Alcohol	Prunes, prune juice	Applesauce	Pretzels
Beans	Raisins	Bananas	Saltine crackers
Caffeinated beverages	Raw vegetables	Cheese	White bread
Fried food	Spicy foods	Creamy peanut butter	White pasta
Fruits with skins	Sugary beverages and foods	Marshmallows	White rice
Lactose, Milk	Whole grains	Oatmeal	Yogurt
		Potatoes- peeled	

May Block Stoma		May Help Loosen Stool if Constipated	
Apple peel	Grapefruit	Any warm or hot beverages	Cooked vegetables
Celery	Mushrooms	Coffee –warm or hot	Fresh fruits
Coconut	Nuts	Cooked fruits	Fruit juices
Coleslaw	Oranges		Water
Corn	Pineapple		
Dried fruits	Popcorn		
Grapes	Salads		

May Produce Gas	May Change Stool Color
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Alcohol	Cauliflower	Asparagus	Iron supplements
Beans	Chewing gum	Beets	Red Jell-O
Broccoli	Cucumber	Food colors -red	
Brussel sprouts	Dairy products		
Cabbage	Eggs		
Carbonated beverages	Onions		
	Peas		