

Eating for Gastroparesis

Tips to help control gastroparesis

Gastroparesis, also called delayed gastric emptying, is a disorder in which the stomach takes too long to empty its contents. Gastroparesis happens when nerves to the stomach are damaged or stop working.

Possible Symptoms of Gastroparesis

- Heartburn
- Nausea
- Vomiting undigested food
- Feeling full quickly when eating
- Weight loss
- Bloating
- Erratic blood sugar levels
- Poor appetite

Tips to Help Control Gastroparesis

- **Eat 6 small meals a day.** Each meal should be 1 to 1.5 cups of food.
- **Avoid high-fat foods.** Fat in the diet slows digestion.
- **Avoid high-fiber foods.** Choose more refined grains (such as pasta or white bread) and cooked fruits and vegetables.
- **Avoid foods and beverages that increase reflux,** such as alcohol, carbonated drinks, chocolate, mint, and acidic foods.
- **Chew foods well before swallowing.** Well-chewed or liquid foods may be easier to digest than solid foods.
- **Drink beverages between meals.** Avoid drinking beverages during meals to prevent air bubbles in your stomach.
- **Limit chewing gum or sucking on candies.** Both of these can cause air bubbles to form in your stomach.
- **Sit up for 2 to 3 hours after eating** - do not lie down or recline.

Diabetes and Gastroparesis

If you have diabetes, you have a higher risk for gastroparesis. Gastroparesis causes your body to absorb food slower and at unpredictable times. This can cause unpredictable changes in blood sugar.

You can help improve your symptoms by getting your blood sugar under better control. This may involve checking your blood sugar more often and working with your diabetes educator and doctor to find an insulin schedule that works best for you.

What can I eat if I have gastroparesis?

Knowing what to eat when you have gastroparesis may feel overwhelming. To make it easier, follow the chart on page 3 for food qualities and types of food to eat if you have gastroparesis. Follow the chart on page 4 for food qualities and types of food to avoid if you have gastroparesis.

If you have questions about any of the recommendations, including how to make changes to your current diet, please talk with your dietitian.

Food Qualities and List of Foods to Choose

Food Group	Food Qualities to Choose	Foods to Choose	
Grains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than 3 grams of fiber per serving • Made with white or refined flour • Soft 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saltines • Graham crackers • White bread • Cold cereal • Grits (fine ground) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White rice • Cream of rice • Cream of wheat • Pretzels
Protein	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lean meat (less than 5% fat) • Well-cooked • Very tender • Moist • Finely chopped 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuna • Eggs • Turkey • Tofu • Salmon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lean ground beef (less than 5% fat) • Creamy nut butters (1 tbsp serving) • White fish • Chicken
Dairy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-fat (less than 2% fat) • Low-lactose • Fortified with vitamins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lactose-free milk • Rice milk • Skim, 1%, or 2% fat milk • Almond, soy, or cashew milk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sherbet • Low-fat yogurt • Liquid nutritional supplements (with less than 3g of fiber per cup)
Vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than 3 grams of fiber per serving • Well-cooked • Canned • No skin or hulls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carrots (1/2 cup) • Mashed potatoes • Green beans (3/4 cup) • Iceberg lettuce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetable juice (strained) • Spinach, cooked (3/4 cup) • Squash, cooked (1 cup)
Fruit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than 3 grams of fiber per serving • Well-cooked • Canned • No skin or hulls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cantaloupe • Bananas • Peach or pear cups in water • Honeydew 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watermelon (2 cups) • Applesauce, no skin • Fruit nectar (1/2 cup)
Fats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liquid oils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canola oil • Olive oil 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avocado oil • Sesame oil
Beverages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low sugar • High in electrolytes • Follow your provider's recommendations on water intake 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear broths • Pedialyte • Jell-O 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slim Fast • Popsicles • Sports drinks mixed with water

Food Qualities and List of Foods to Avoid

Food Group	Food Qualities to Avoid	Foods to Avoid	
Grains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grain products with more than 2 grams of fiber per serving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barley Brown rice Quinoa Bran or buckwheat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Popcorn Oats Whole grain or whole wheat products Granola and high-fiber cereal
Protein	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fried meats Raw meat or seafood High fat (more than 5% fat) High fiber (more than 2g per serving) Tough or crunchy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sausage and hot dogs Shellfish Pork chops Nuts Bacon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steak Beans and lentils Crunchy nut butters Roast beef Sushi
Dairy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dairy products with more than 2 grams of fiber per serving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coconut and pea milk Whole-fat milk products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All cheese products (cheese slices, shredded cheese, cottage cheese)
Vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vegetables with more than 2 grams of fiber per serving Raw Undercooked Skin or hulls Seeds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asparagus Bean sprouts Broccoli and cauliflower Brussel sprouts Cabbage Corn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green peas Lima beans Mushrooms Okra Onions Parsnips Green peppers Pickles Potato skins Raw spinach Salsa Olives
Fruit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fruits with more than 2 grams of fiber per serving Raw Skin or hulls Seeds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acidic fruits or juices Oranges Grapefruit Tomatoes Avocados Berries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coconut Dried fruit Mandarin oranges Pineapple Fresh fruit (except ones listed in recommended table)
Fats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fats that are solid at room temperature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Butter and Ghee Shortening Coconut milk and oil 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pizza Lard and bacon fat Mayonnaise
Beverages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High sugar (more than 5% daily value per serving) High caffeine (more than 7mg per serving) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coffee Soda and other carbonated beverages Milkshakes and ice cream 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sweet tea Caffeinated tea (such as green or black tea) Alcoholic beverages

Sample 1-day Meal Plans

Below are 2 example meal plans designed to provide meal and snack ideas for people with gastroparesis.

Example Meal Plan 1:

Breakfast	1 slice white toast, 1 egg scrambled in 1 tsp canola oil, 1 cup peach nectar
Morning Snack	Smoothie (1/2 banana, 1/2 cup low-fat Greek yogurt, 1 cup 2% milk)
Lunch	2 oz. canned chicken mixed with 1 tsp mayonnaise, served with 9 saltine crackers and 1/2 cup applesauce
Afternoon Snack	1 slice white toast with 1 tbsp smooth peanut butter
Dinner	2 oz. baked fish, 1/2 cup mashed potatoes, 3/4 cup green beans sautéed in 1 tsp olive oil
Evening Snack	1 packet instant breakfast mixed with 1 cup 2% milk

Example Meal Plan 2:

Breakfast	1 cup cooked cream of rice or Cheerios softened in 1/2 cup 1% milk, 1 egg scrambled in 1 tsp canola oil
Morning Snack	1/2 cup fruit canned in its own juice, 1/4 cup low-fat cottage cheese
Lunch	1 cup broth-based soup (such as chicken noodle or chicken and rice soup), served with 6 saltines softened in soup and 1/2 cup applesauce
Afternoon Snack	4 oz. plain yogurt, 1 small banana
Dinner	3 oz. baked fish or chicken (cut into small pieces), 1/2 cup mashed potatoes, 1/2 cup carrots sautéed in 1 tsp olive oil
Evening Snack	1 can low-fat liquid nutritional supplement

Smoothies

Smoothies and shakes are a simple way to get extra calories and nutrients into your diet. Read below for guidelines and recipes for making smoothies.

Smoothie Guidelines

- Do not use raw eggs. Use pasteurized products such as Eggbeaters.
- Bananas contain soluble fiber, which affects gastroparesis less than insoluble fiber.
- Look for products and smoothies that have less than 3 grams of insoluble fiber per serving.
- Use low-fat options. If you cannot eat dairy, use dairy alternatives such as almond or soy milk and yogurt.
- Adding protein powder or milk powder can boost protein. Try unflavored 100% whey protein powder or a plant-based protein powder. If using plant-based protein, make sure it has less than 2 grams of fiber per serving.
- You can make your own smoothies at home, or buy prepared ones from the store. Prepared smoothies include: Carnation Instant Breakfast, Boost Breeze, Ensure Clear, and BonJoy.
- Your dietitian may recommend electrolytes to prevent dehydration. Electrolyte solutions include: Nuun Tablets, Pedialyte, Pedialyte popsicles, Elecrolyt, and Liquid IV.

Smoothie Recipes

Try the recipes on pages 7 and 8 to add protein and calories to your diet. Smoothies can make a great morning, afternoon, or evening snack.

Banana Rice Smoothie	Peachy Cinnamon Smoothie
<p>Blend until smooth: 1/2 cup cooked cream of rice, chilled 1 frozen banana 1 cup 1% milk or milk alternative 1 tablespoon honey (pasteurized) 1 teaspoon vanilla extract</p> <p>Per 10-oz. portion: 8 g protein, 0 g insoluble fiber</p>	<p>Blend until smooth: 1 cup peaches canned in their own juice 1/2 cup low-fat yogurt 1/2 cup 1% milk or milk alternative 1 tablespoon honey (pasteurized) Pinch of cinnamon 3 ice cubes</p> <p>Per 10-oz. portion: 8 g protein, 0 g insoluble fiber</p>
Blueberry Smoothie	Banana Flip Smoothie
<p>Blend until smooth: 4 ounces silken tofu or 2 scoops of protein powder 1 banana 1/4 cup frozen blueberries 1 cup 1% milk or milk alternative</p> <p>Per 10-oz. portion: 20 g protein, 3 g insoluble fiber</p>	<p>Blend until smooth: 1 banana 1 package vanilla Instant Breakfast 1 cup 1% milk or milk alternative 1/4 cup fruit nectar 1 cup low-fat peach yogurt 1 teaspoon vanilla extract</p> <p>Per 10-oz. portion: 12 g protein, 1 g insoluble fiber</p>
Carrot Smoothie	Sherbet Shake
<p>Blend until smooth: 1 cup carrot juice 1 cup plain low-fat yogurt 1 banana 1/2 cup Eggbeaters (pasteurized) 3 ice cubes</p> <p>Per 10-oz. portion: 28 g protein, 3 g insoluble fiber</p>	<p>Blend until smooth: 1 cup any flavor sherbet 1/2 cup 1% milk or milk alternative</p> <p>Per 10-oz. portion: 5 g protein, 0 g insoluble fiber</p>

Strawberry Smoothie	Tropical Banana Smoothie
<p>Blend until smooth: 1 cup 1% milk or milk alternative 6 ounces low-fat strawberry yogurt 4 ounces silken tofu or protein powder 1/4 cup strawberries (fresh or frozen) 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract</p> <p>Per 10-oz. portion: 24 g protein, 3 g insoluble fiber</p>	<p>Blend until smooth: 2 ripe bananas 1/2 cup peaches canned in their own juice 1 cup mango or guava nectar 1/2 cup 1% milk or milk alternative 3 ice cubes</p> <p>Per 10-oz. portion: 7.5 g protein, 2 g insoluble fiber</p>
Tutti-Fruity Shake	Raspberry Rice Smoothie
<p>Blend until smooth: 1/2 cup low-fat vanilla ice cream or milk-alternative ice cream 1 package vanilla Instant Breakfast 1/2 cup fruit canned in its own juice 1/2 cup 2% milk or milk alternative</p> <p>Per 10-oz. portion: 12.5 g protein, 0 to 2 g insoluble fiber</p>	<p>Blend until smooth: 1/2 cup cooked, cooled white rice 1 banana 1/4 cup frozen raspberries 1/2 cup plain low-fat yogurt 2 cups 1% milk 1 tablespoon honey (pasteurized)</p> <p>Per 10-oz. portion: 20 g protein, 2 g insoluble fiber</p>

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

Outpatient Consult line: Call 206.635.8346 weekdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Your provider's name and number:
