



J-Pouch Nutritional Guidelines

To help manage bowels after your ileostomy is removed

After your ileostomy is removed (this procedure is called *takedown*), you will need to change your diet to regulate your bowels. Even though each person has their own special dietary needs, it is always important to eat a well-balanced diet.

One of the benefits of your operation is that you can increase your food choices and slowly return to a regular diet. You will need to try 1 new food at a time to see how your body reacts to it before trying another one.

Planning Meals and Choosing Foods

You will slowly adapt to your J-Pouch. You will have fewer stools, and they will become firmer. With time, you should be able to eat many different foods. How long it takes to add new foods varies from person to person.

General Guidelines

- **Meals:** To regulate your bowels, eat small meals throughout the day at first. Then, reduce your number of meals to 3 a day. Do not skip a meal because that may cause more gas. Eat your last meal of the day at least 2 hours before bedtime (4 hours is better at first). Urgency usually occurs 30 minutes to 2 hours after a meal.
- **To prevent a bowel obstruction:** Reduce the fiber in your diet, and slowly increase it as you can handle it. Drink plenty of fluids and be sure to chew well. If you are having too much gas, lower the fiber content in your diet. Psyllium mucilage (Metamucil) thickens stool. Oatmeal, pectin, and barley may also thicken stool.
- **Adding new foods:** Add only 1 new food at a time. If you do not handle it well, wait a while before you try it again.
- **Foods to limit:** These foods may increase your *reservoir output* (the amount of waste that collects in your pouch):
 - Alcohol, beans, corn, oranges, leafy greens, nuts, tomatoes, and spicy foods.
 - Foods that contain caffeine, like chocolate and coffee. These stimulate the bowel.
 - Very sweet foods and drinks. These increase how much fluid is drawn into your bowel, and this causes diarrhea.
 - Foods that contain lactose, such as milk and other dairy products. Avoid these if you are lactose intolerant.

Questions?

Weekdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., call the Surgical Specialties Nurse Advice Line at 206-598-4549.

After hours and on weekends and holidays, call 206-598-6190 and ask for the resident on call for General Surgery to be paged.

- **Stay hydrated:** Plan ahead and drink plenty of fluids in warm weather and when you exercise. This is especially important if you get the flu or have diarrhea.
- **Supplements:** If you eat a wide variety of foods, you do not need to take vitamins and minerals.
 - If you want to use supplements, chewables or gel caps are a good choice since your body will absorb them better.
 - You should not need extra sodium and potassium. People usually get enough of these minerals from the foods they eat.
 - Very few people need extra vitamin B12. If you are a strict vegetarian, ask your doctor about taking B12.

Effects of Different Foods

This table shows how different foods affect your digestion and your stool.

Effect	Foods
Causes gas	Beans, beer, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carbonated beverages, cauliflower, and onions
Hard to digest, not digested fully	Celery, coconut, corn, dried fruit, green peppers, lettuce, mushrooms, nuts, olives, peas, pickles, pineapple, popcorn, raw vegetables, seeds, spinach, and skins of fruits and vegetables
Thickens stool	Applesauce, bananas, breads, pasta, and other starches, cheese, and creamy peanut butter
Thins stool	Alcoholic drinks, grape juice, very spicy foods, and prune juice
Reduces stool odor	Buttermilk, parsley, and yogurt
Causes stool odor	Asparagus, eggs, fish, garlic, and onions

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
MEDICAL CENTER
UW Medicine

Surgical Specialties Center

Box 356165

1959 N.E. Pacific Street, Seattle, WA 98195
206-598-4477