

J-Pouch Nutritional Guidelines

Managing your bowels after your ileostomy is removed

Follow the guidelines in this handout when choosing foods to eat after having your ileostomy removed.

Your body 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.

Planning Meals and Choosing Foods

- **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 you go to bed (4 hours is better at first). Urgency usually occurs about 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.
- **Slowly add new foods:** Add only 1 new food at a time. See how your body reacts to it before trying another one. If you do not handle it well, wait a while before you try it again.
- **Foods to limit:** Limit these foods. They 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.



Drink plenty of fluids to help prevent problems.

- 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.
- **Stay hydrated:** Drink plenty of fluids in warm weather and when you exercise. Plan ahead and carry water with you. 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. 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 or vegan, ask your doctor about taking B12.

How Foods Affect Your Stool

This table shows how certain 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

Questions?

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

Weekdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., call Surgical Specialties Nurse Line: 206.598.4549.

After hours and on weekends and holidays, call 206.598.6190 and ask to page the Resident on call for General Surgery.