

## Patient information

### **Ileostomy and Diet**

Nutrition and Dietetics Department

#### **What is an ileostomy?**

An ileostomy is a surgical created opening of the abdominal wall. The end of the ileum (the lowest portion of the small intestine) is brought through the abdominal wall to form a stoma.

An ileostomy can be permanent or temporary depending on the reason for surgery. It is usually performed when a diseased or injured colon cannot be treated by other methods. The digestive remnants pass out of the body through the stoma into a pouch (stoma bag) which is worn at all times.

Please note that this advice is not suitable for those with a short bowel or intestinal failure.

#### **Should I be on a special diet?**

After surgery it is important to have a well-balanced diet to support your recovery. If your appetite is poor, aim for more nourishing foods and drinks, and have smaller meals high in energy and protein with snacks in-between. You may also be prescribed nutritional supplements by your dietitian if needed.

Initially after surgery (for six to eight weeks), you should follow a diet which avoids spicy food and is low in insoluble fibre otherwise known as a low residue diet. These foods can leave a 'residue' within the bowel causing issues such as irritation or a blockage if not chewed properly. By following a low residue diet, this will allow you to heal and swelling to settle. See the table below for guidance on appropriate choices;

Food Group	Recommended	Avoid
<b>Breads/Starches</b>	<p>Breads, starches and cereals made from white (refined) flour or Semolina/Cornflour.</p> <p>For example:            White bread            White rolls            White bagels            White wraps            Plain naan bread, plain chapati, poppadoms            White Pittas            White rice            Crumpets            White pasta            Plain noodles            Cous Cous            Gnocchi            Tapioca</p> <p>Plain muffins            Pancakes            Waffles            Plain scones and pastries            Cream crackers            Crisp breads            Rice cakes</p>	<p>Any bread / starch product made from wholegrain / wholemeal flour, bran, rye, nuts, seeds or dried fruits, including wholemeal, granary or malt bread.</p> <p>For example:            Wholemeal / wholegrain breads / barmes / wraps / bagels / pittas            White versions with added fibre e.g. "best of both"            Breads/Starches with added nuts, fruit or seeds.            Whole wheat pasta            Brown rice or wild rice.</p> <p>Fruit muffins, scones, teacakes and pastries            Ryvita            Wholemeal crackers            Rye crispbread            Flapjacks</p>

Food Group	Recommended	Avoid
<b>Cereals</b>	<p>Rice Krispies            Cornflakes            Frosties            Sugar Puffs            Coco Pops            Ready Brek            Porridge</p>	<p>All Bran            Bran flakes            Wheat biscuits            Shredded wheat            Fruit and Fibre            Muesli            Granola and cereals with added fruit or nuts.</p>
<b>Fruit</b>  <b>Please note:</b> you can have any fruit, from both	<p>The following without skins, pips, peels and seeds:</p>	<p>Fruits with stalks, skins, seeds, stones and pips:</p> <p>Berries</p>

the recommended and avoid column, in a smoothie/juice as long as it is smooth without skin, pips, seeds or pulp.	Apples Ripe pears Plums Nectarines Peaches Apricots Melon Bananas  Tinned fruit Fruit juices without pulp	Grapes Kiwi fruit Figs Oranges Rhubarb Pineapple Prunes Coconut Pomegranate Dragonfruit Passion fruit Mango  Dried fruit including raisins, sultanas and prunes.
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Food Group	Recommended	Avoid
<b>Vegetables</b> <b>Please note:</b> you can have any vegetable, from both the recommended and avoid column, in a smoothie/juice as long as it is smooth without skin, pips, seeds or pulp. Strained vegetable juices with no pulp are also allowed.	The following tender, well-cooked vegetables with no skin, seeds or stalks:  Carrot Swede Turnip Butternut squash Parsnip Beetroot Courgette (peeled and deseeded) Potatoes and sweet potatoes with no skin. Skinned and deseeded tomatoes Cauliflower and broccoli florets (no stalks) Avocado Aubergine and courgette (both deskinning) Sieved tomato sauces including passata and tomato puree.  Well-pureed hummus, lentil soup sieved to remove skins.	All vegetable stalks, skins, seeds and peel. Examples include:  Those with skins, seeds or stalks. Sweet corn Broad beans Runner beans Mange tout Sugar snap peas Spinach Mushrooms Peas Peppers Celery Lettuce/Salad leaves Brussels sprouts Cabbage Onions Radishes Artichokes Cauliflower Broccoli Leeks  Skins of jacket potatoes.  Beans, pulses, lentils, chickpeas and pearl barley.  Soup with pieces e.g. minestrone. Vegetable juices with pulp.

<b>Meat/Poultry/Fish/Alternatives</b>	<p>All meat and fish products are allowed.</p> <p>Tofu Meat alternatives Soya mince</p> <p>Smooth patés</p>	<p>Well-cooked/tough meat Bones and gristle should be avoided.</p>
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<b>Food Group</b>	<b>Recommended</b>	<b>Avoid</b>
<b>Milk and Dairy Products</b>	<p>All types of milk cows, goats, sheep's, soya, rice, oat and cream.</p> <p>Yoghurts with no fruit or pips. All cheese and cream cheese.</p> <p>Butter and margarine.</p> <p>Custard</p>	<p>Yoghurts containing nuts, cereal, seeds or fruit.</p> <p>Cheeses that contain nuts, dried fruit or seeds.</p>
<b>Sweet Treats</b>	<p>Plain and Milk chocolate (without dried fruit and nuts)</p> <p>Boiled sweets</p> <p>Cakes made with white flour (without dried fruit or nuts)</p> <p>Plain biscuits e.g. Rich tea</p> <p>Jelly (without fruit) Toffee, Jelly sweets, Marshmallows and Smooth nougat</p> <p>Ice-cream</p> <p>Milk puddings Yogurt coated rice cakes</p>	<p>Cakes made with wholemeal or wholegrain flour or with dried fruit and nuts.</p> <p>Wholemeal and wholegrain biscuits e.g. Digestives Biscuits containing dried fruit e.g. fig rolls</p> <p>Cereal bars containing dried fruit and nuts</p> <p>Jelly made with fresh berries Chocolate with nuts and dried fruit</p>
<b>Savoury Treats</b>	<p>Crisps Plain bread sticks Cheese straws Mini cheddars or TUC® sandwich biscuits Smooth dips e.g. smooth guacamole</p>	<p>Nuts Popcorn Bombay Mix Dips that contain whole tomatoes, cucumbers, onions e.g. salsa, tzatziki Hash browns made with onion</p>

Food Group	Recommended	Avoid
<b>Condiments</b>	Seasoning and spices Honey Smooth nut butters. Lemon curd, marmalade and jam without seeds or rind. Tomato ketchup, tomato puree, passata, mayonnaise and salad cream. Cooking oils Gravy, marmite and Bovril	Jam and marmalade with seeds or rind Coleslaw, relishes and horseradish Pickles and chutneys Crunchy nut butters.

After six to eight weeks after your operation, and if your stoma has settled, you may be able to start to reintroduce some foods containing insoluble fibre. Please ensure that such foods are well cooked and well chewed to aid their digestion. Increase fibre gradually and introduce one food at a time.

### What should my diet consist of?

Please aim for a varied and well-balanced diet for good health. Try to develop a regular eating pattern. Aim to take your time when eating and chew your food well. Late evening meals may increase nighttime ileostomy output and so you may benefit from not eating too much too late in the day.

**Protein rich foods** are essential for health and repair of body tissue. This is especially important following surgery. Aim to include two-three portions of these foods each day;

- Meat; beef, pork, bacon, lamb, liver, kidney
- Poultry; chicken, turkey
- Fish
- Eggs
- Nut products such as smooth nut butters (please avoid chunky nut butters for the first six-eight weeks)
- Meat alternatives; textured vegetable protein, quorn, tofu
- Dairy products; milk, cheese, yoghurt

**Starchy foods** (also referred to as carbohydrates) should be the basis of our meals as they contain energy, vitamins and fibre. See guidance on options above under breads/starches and cereals.

**Fruits and vegetables** provide fibre, vitamins and minerals which are essential for good health. See guidance above.

**Fats** can provide valuable energy to the diet and allow the uptake of fat-soluble vitamins (A, D, E & K). A small amount of fat is in healthy balanced diet. Monounsaturated fats and

polyunsaturated fats are deemed healthy fats and include foods such as olive oil-based spreads, avocados and oily fish. These are preferred over saturated fats which are deemed unhealthy. Saturated fat containing foods include butter, lard, ghee, fat on meats, fried foods and processed foods such as cakes, biscuits and pastries.

**Fluids and salt.** It can take time for your ileostomy to adapt and you may experience a loose, liquid output for several weeks. During this time you may be losing more fluid and salt than normal and therefore be at risk of becoming dehydrated. To prevent this you should aim to have an adequate fluid and salt intake:

- Aim for at least eight-ten cups of fluid per day (1.5-2 litres) including water, tea, coffee and squashes.
- Add extra salt to your meals to help your body absorb this fluid

It is important to look out for signs of dehydration:

- Decreased urine output
- Dry mouth
- Dark-coloured urine
- Muscle cramps
- Nausea or vomiting

If your stoma output increases to over 1 litre repeatedly you may have a high output ileostomy. Increased output can be a result of a variety of things, such as a stomach bug, stress, antibiotics, or spicy foods. In such cases, you should seek medical advice from your colorectal team, GP, stoma nurse or dietitian. You may be asked to take extra salt rather than extra fluid to prevent dehydration. You could try adding extra salt to food, eating foods which are naturally salty (cheese, bacon, smoked fish), tinned foods like spaghetti or ravioli, salted crisps/crackers. Salty drinks may also be beneficial for example oxo or Bovril. If you become dehydrated please consult a medical professional who may recommend oral rehydration solutions (Dioralyte or St Mark's Electrolyte mix)

## **Common stoma issues**

### **Wind:**

Immediately after your surgery you may pass more wind, but this usually reduces quite soon after.

### **How can I reduce the wind from my bag?**

- Eat regular meals in a relaxed environment
- Eat slowly and chew foods carefully
- Let fizzy drinks go flat
- Avoid drinking through a straw
- Avoid chewing gum
- Avoid long periods without food

- Avoid smoking
- Avoid talking or drinking when eating
- Go for low fibre alternatives such as white bread, rice and pasta
- Reduce your intake of pulses and vegetables, fruits especially skins, nuts and seeds
- Peppermint water, or tea may help

### **Odour:**

Certain foods cause more odour than others (asparagus, baked beans, broccoli, sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, cucumber, eggs, fish, garlic, green vegetables, onions, peanut butter, some spices, and strong cheese). You may wish to avoid some of these foods if your stoma odour is of concern to you. Vinegar added to fish dishes may help eliminate the traditional fishy odour and parsley is a natural odour eater. You can also try ostomy deodorant sprays and drops – ask your stoma nurse for more information.

### **Stoma bag output:**

Your output should be like porridge in consistency.  
Certain foods may help thicken your output:

- Cheese
- Smooth peanut butter
- Banana
- Pasta
- White rice
- Bagels, bread, toast

You are unlikely to get constipated when you have an ileostomy. If this should occur then please seek assistance from your GP.

### **Feedback**

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future.

Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your outpatient appointment, you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

### **Further information**

#### **Contacts and support**

**Dietitians Royal Liverpool Hospital**

**Tel: 0151 706 2120**

**Dietitians Aintree Hospital**

**Tel: 0151 529 3473**

**Stoma nurses Royal Hospital**  
**Tel: 0151 706 2132**  
**Stoma nurses Aintree Hospital**  
**Tel: 0151 529 3736**

**Resources:**

**Crohn's and Colitis UK (see eating and drinking): living with a stoma;**  
<https://crohnsandcolitis.org.uk/info-support/information-about-crohns-and-colitis/all-information-about-crohns-and-colitis/surgery-and-complications/living-with-a-stoma>

**Coloplast; what food and drink you can have with a stoma;**  
<https://www.coloplast.co.uk/Stoma/people-with-a-stoma/living-with-a-stoma/food-and-beverage/>

**Nutrition with an ostomy;** <https://colorectalcaner.org/resources-support/resources/living-well-colorectal-cancer/ostomy/nutrition-ostomy>

**Support groups;**  
**Inside Out Stoma Support Group**

**Ileostomy and internal pouch association**  
**Tel; 0800 0184 724**  
<https://iasupport.org>

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