

Patient information

An Introduction to Dumping Syndrome Following Upper Gastrointestinal (GI) Tract Surgery

Therapies

You may experience symptoms after your operation which may include bloating, nausea, diarrhoea, weakness, sweating and a rapid heartbeat. This is called **dumping syndrome**.

Some of these symptoms may occur quickly after a meal (early dumping) and some may occur two to three hours after a meal (late dumping).

Early dumping:

This is caused by sugar passing too rapidly into the intestine. The body then adds lots of fluid to dilute this which can give a sense of fullness, cramping and occasionally diarrhoea. The movement of fluids can cause a temporary drop in blood pressure which can cause faintness, weakness or tiredness.

Late dumping:

This is caused by lots of sugar going into the intestine and then into the bloodstream. This causes the body produce a “rush” of the hormone insulin to lower the blood sugar levels. As a result your blood sugar may drop quickly which then can cause weakness, hunger, a rapid heart rate or you may feel sweaty or faint.

If you are experiencing dumping syndrome:

- Try eating small amounts more often.
- Try not to have concentrated sources of sugar (see list of sugary foods on the next page).
- Adding fibre as you can manage it may help but you may want to discuss this with your dietitian.
- Rest or lie down for 15 minutes after each meal to slow down the movement of food. Some people find this helps with some symptoms.
- Try avoiding very hot or very cold foods or liquids as these may make symptoms worse.

These symptoms may subside two to three months after the surgery when your body has adapted.

Try to avoid these sugary foods	Try low sugar foods like these instead
Sugar, glucose, fructose.	Artificial sweetener (Canderel, Hermesetas, Sweetex, Slendasweet, Splenda, supermarket own brands).
Sugar coated cereals.	Plain cereals not coated in sugar with no added sugar. Use an artificial sweetener if necessary.
Marmalade, jam, honey, syrup.	Reduced sugar jams, marmalade and pure fruit spreads.
Full sugar cordials or squashes and sweetened fruit juices.	Sugar free or no added sugar cordials and unsweetened fruit juices.
Fizzy drinks (lemonade, cola, tonic, some flavoured waters).	Diet, slimline, low calorie drinks, soda water, diet cola, lemonade, sugar free tonic, sugar free flavoured water.
Boiled sweets, puddings, desserts and ice creams.	“no added sugar” / “reduced sugar” instant desserts: Angel Delight, Instant Whip, sugar free jelly, low sugar rice pudding-tinned or made with sweetener, low sugar custard, plain ice cream.
Chocolate, sugar, sweets, cakes.	Currant loaf, tea cakes, scones, malt loaf, low sugar cakes, cakes made with sweetener.

Avoid too much fluid with meals:

- If you drink with meals try to keep it to small amounts (i.e. no more than a teacup). This will help slow down the movement of foods through the gut.
- Try to drink liquids an hour before or an hour after meals instead.

The important thing to remember is that these symptoms should settle down with time. If you have questions or concerns always contact your Dietitian who will be able to advise you on how to control your symptoms

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:

The 'Little and Often' Upper GI Support group meets monthly at Broadgreen Hospital for more details contact:

- Upper GI Dietitians
Tel: 0151 706 4704
Text phone number: 18001 0151 706 4704
Email: Ahn-tr.uppergidietitians@nhs.net
- Barry Moorefield, OPA North West Coordinator
OPANW1@virginmedia.com

CORE: fighting Gut and Liver disease
www.corecharity.org.uk

Oesophageal Patients Association (OPA)
Telephone: 0121 704 9860
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