

Colostomy dietary guidelines

Patient education

Coloplast®
Professional

You should not need to change your diet unless your doctor prescribes a special diet for you. Certain foods produce more gas and odour than others and over time you will learn how those foods effect you.

Gas

Gas is created when carbohydrates you have eaten react with the healthy bacteria in your large bowel. It may take five or six hours from the time you eat gas-producing foods until gas passes from your colostomy.

You can buy products that may decrease gas, although always check with your physician before taking new medications.

To prevent excess gas: avoid skipping meals, sip rather than gulp liquids, avoid using a straw, avoid chewing gum with your mouth open and avoid smoking. Snoring or breathing through your mouth when sleeping may cause your ostomy pouch to fill with air.

Odour

The only time you should experience odour is when emptying your colostomy pouch. You can put special drops in your emptied pouch to help lubricate and reduce the odour involved in the emptying process. One example is Brava® Lubricating Deodorant by Coloplast.

You can also take medications by mouth to help control odour. Check with your physician or NSWOC to see if they are appropriate for you.

Another suggestion is to carry a room deodorizer in your pocket or purse to help decrease odour when using a public rest room.

Diarrhea

Loose, runny stools can be caused by antibiotics, food intolerance, some medications or a “flu-like” illness. If you have diarrhea, you may want to switch to a bland, constipating diet that includes rice, pasta, cheese, bananas and applesauce.

Diarrhea causes you to lose water, sodium and potassium, so drink plenty of extra fluids including a 250 mL glass every time you empty your pouch. Sports drinks may help to replace the sodium and potassium. If your diarrhea continues, your physician may want to prescribe an anti-diarrheal medication.

Constipation

You may become constipated just as you did prior to your surgery. In addition, pancaking may occur when the stool does not fall to the bottom of the pouch and remains around the stoma. This can lead to leakage under the barrier. To avoid both constipation and pancaking, eat a diet that is high in fiber, fruits, vegetables and grains (breads and cereals).

Drink 6 to 8 250 mL glasses of fluid a day, with your physician's approval. In some cases, your physician may have you take a mild laxative to relieve constipation. Check with your physician before taking any laxatives.

Gas producing foods:

- Beer
- Carbonated beverages
- Broccoli
- Cabbage
- Beans
- Onions
- Brussel sprouts
- Cucumber
- Eggs
- Bell peppers

Foods that cause unusual stool odour:

- Fish
- Eggs
- Garlic
- Beans
- Turnips
- Cheese
- Cabbage family vegetables
- Mushrooms

Foods that thicken stool:

- Pudding
- Creamy peanut butter
- Baked apples/applesauce
- Pasta
- Rice
- Cheese
- Bread
- Potatoes
- Bananas
- Crackers
- Steel cut oats
- Oat bran

Foods that may reduce odour:

- Yogurt
- Fresh parsley
- Buttermilk

Foods that may loosen stool:

- Alcohol of any type
- Prune juice
- Caffeinated tea/coffee/pop
- Chocolate
- Legumes (kidney beans, baked beans, chickpeas, lentils)
- Spicy hot foods
- Black licorice

Additional information

NSWOC: _____

Physician: _____

Ostomy supplier: _____

Phone number: _____

Address: _____

Special instructions

The recommendations and information in this material should not be considered a substitute for personal medical advice or diagnosis.