

## Colostomy, Ileostomy, Rectal Pouch Diets

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### Purpose

Surgery is often needed to treat certain conditions of the colon (large bowel). Sometimes the surgeon must make an opening on the abdominal wall through which intestinal waste (feces) can pass. This surgery is medically known as colostomy and ileostomy. The opening itself is called a stoma. A lightweight, disposable bag is then worn over the stoma. This condition is often permanent. However, in certain cases it is a temporary detour that can be reversed at a later time.



There are two forms of this surgery where a bag may not be needed. Sometimes a rectal pouch can be created from the small intestine, forming a reservoir for the stool behind the stoma. A tube is put in place so the reservoir can be emptied when needed, usually once a day. This procedure is no longer very common. In another procedure, all of the colon is removed except for the last part of the rectum. A pouch ( Ileal-Anal Pouch) is created from the small intestine and it is attached to the rectum so liquid stool can pass normally through the anus (opening to the outside of the body) about 3 to 7 times a day.

After all of these surgeries, the stool consistency, amount, and frequency will depend on the type and amount of foods eaten. So, this diet is to help patients gain adequate control of their bowel movements.

### Nutrition Facts

Generally, colostomy and ileostomy patients can easily maintain a balanced diet to provide all the vitamins, minerals and calories needed for good health. In those cases where certain foods have to be restricted to control stool patterns or stool consistency, the physician may prescribe a vitamin-mineral supplement.

### Special Considerations

1. Because each patient and type of surgery are different, no standard recommendations can be given for everyone. Most patients return to a fairly normal diet. Still, a trial and error pattern of eating is often necessary to identify those foods that may have an undesirable effect on the patient's stool. Then it is simply a matter of changing how much of these foods are eaten. The lists that follow are a guideline.
2. Eat foods at a regular time each day. Eating 4 to 6 smaller meals may help to promote a regular bowel pattern.
3. Try eating the main dinner meal at noon and a smaller meal in the evening. This helps to reduce the stool output at night.
4. Introduce one type of food at a time to test how it affects bowel function. If it does not produce a good result, stop eating it. However, as the body heals and adjusts, the offending food may become easier to tolerate, so try adding it to the diet again on several occasions before giving up on it.
5. Chew foods completely to help the digestive process. Especially avoid swallowing large pieces of leafy vegetables since they can block the stoma opening on the abdominal wall.
6. Fresh fruit may cause loose stool.
7. Drink 2 to 3 quarts of water a day. This helps to keep the stool fluid, and it also prevents dehydration. Normally, the colon absorbs water and electrolytes (substances such as sodium and potassium) from the stool, so people who have all or part of the colon removed will lose more water. Because electrolytes are also lost, do not restrict salt in the diet.
8. Maintain an ideal body weight. Extra fat in the abdominal wall can make it difficult for the stoma to function properly.
9. Colostomy patients may find that foods which caused problems before surgery continue to do so afterward.



Asparagus      Garlic  
 Eggs              Onions  
 Fish

Foods that Tend to Thicken Stool

Applesauce      Pasta  
 Bananas          Creamy peanut butter  
 Breads            Starchy foods, such as potatoes  
 Cheeses

Foods that Tend to Cause Diarrhea

Apple juice      Prune juice  
 Grape juice      Highly seasoned foods, especially hot peppers

**Sample Menu**

**Breakfast**

- canned peaches  
  *1/2 cup*
- skim milk *1/2 cup*
- white toast *1 slice*
- margarine *1 tsp*
- decaffeinated tea  
  *1 cup*
- lemon juice *1 tsp*
- sugar *2 tsp*

**Lunch**

- baked chicken breast *3 oz*
- steamed white rice  
  *1/2 cup*
- cooked carrots  
  *1/2 cup*
- low-fat vanilla yogurt *1/2 cup*
- margarine *1 tsp*
- decaffeinated coffee  
  *1 cup*
- skim milk *1/2 cup*
- sugar *1 tsp*
- salt *1/8 tsp*

**Dinner**

- chicken noodle soup *1/2 cup*
- saltines *2*
- sandwich *1/2*  
  white bread *1 slice*  
  creamy peanut butter *1 Tbsp*  
  jelly *1 Tbsp*
- applesauce *1/2 cup*
- decaffeinated tea  
  *1 cup*
- lemon juice *1/2 cup*

**This Sample Diet Provides the Following**

Calories	1065	Sodium	1662 mg
Protein	54 gm	Potassium	1512 mg
Carbohydrates	151 gm	Fiber	9 gm
Fat	29 gm		

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