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Digestive Health Center

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Gastroparesis

Gastroparesis is the medical term for delayed stomach emptying. It happens when the nerves to control the stomach are damaged or stop working. Gastroparesis may be caused by diabetes, nervous system disorders, or certain drugs. For some people, the cause is unknown. The symptoms are nausea, vomiting, and an early feeling of fullness, weight loss, abdominal bloating and discomfort.

Changing your eating habits can help control gastroparesis. It is recommended to:

- Eat six or more small meals per day
- Avoid foods high in fat and with too much fat added, which slow digestion
- Avoid high-fiber foods, which may form bezoars (a mixture of food residue)
- Chew foods well to start the digestion (ground or puréed meat may be better tolerated)
- Sit up during and after meals
- For persons with diabetes, maintain good glucose control
- Take a multivitamin/mineral supplement

When the symptoms do not allow you to tolerate solid foods, a liquid diet may be required to supply fluid, electrolytes, and energy in a form that allows for minimal digestion and stimulation of the digestive tract.

Clear Liquid Diet

Group Beverages

Recommended

Gatorade®, soft drinks, clear fruit juices, pulp-free juices, coffee or tea

Avoid

All others, nectars, milk, cream, juices with pulp, cocoa

Soups

Bouillon or clear broth

All others

Sweets and Desserts

Clear, fruit-flavored or unflavored gelatin, fruit ice made from clear fruit juice, plain hard candy, sugar honey, sugar subs, frozen popsicles

All others

Miscellaneous

Commercially prepared low-residue, lactose-free nutritional supplements

Gastroparesis Diet

Group Milk and Milk Products

Recommended

Skim milk, foods made with skim milk, low-fat cheese, cottage cheese and yogurt

Avoid

Whole milk, cream (sour, light, heavy, whipping), half and half

Meat and Meat Alternatives

Eggs, peanut butter, poultry, fish, lean ground meat

Fibrous meats (steaks, roasts, chops) dried beans, peas, lentils

Gastroparesis Diet (continued)

Group	Recommended	Avoid
Fruit	Fruit juices, canned fruit without skins, (pears, peaches, applesauce), bananas	Raw or dried fruits, canned fruits with skins (apricots, cherries, plums, blueberries, fruit cocktail, oranges, grapefruit, pineapple, persimmons)
Vegetables	Vegetable juices, cooked vegetables without skins (beets, carrots, mushrooms, potatoes, spinach, squash, strained tomato sauce, yams)	Raw vegetables, cooked vegetables with skins (beans, Brussel sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, corn, eggplant, onions, peas, peppers, pea pods, potato peels, sauerkraut, turnips, water chestnuts, zucchini)
Breads and Grains	Refined breads and cereals, pasta, white rice, low-fat crackers, bagels, English muffins, tortillas, rolls, pretzels (no more than 1 gram of fiber per serving)	Whole grain breads, cereal, pasta, and rice
Soups	Broth or bouillon, soups made from low-fat milk or broth containing pasta, white rice, and allowed vegetables	
Fats and Oils	Any type of fat in small amounts	Fried foods, excessive fat
Snacks, Sweets, and Beverages	Hard candies, caramels, low-fat pudding and custard, frozen yogurt, ice milk, gelatin, popsicles, vanilla wafers, jelly, honey, syrup	High-fat desserts (cakes, pies, ice cream, cookies, pastries)

Sample Menu

Breakfast

Skim milk: ½ cup
 Dry cereal: ½ cup
 White toast: 1 slice
 Margarine: 1 tsp.
 Orange juice: ½ cup

Lunch

Turkey: 2oz.
 Low-fat mayonnaise: 1 tbsp.
 Hamburger bun: whole
 Canned peaches: ½ cup
 Lemonade: 1 cup

Supper

Baked chicken: 2oz.
 Mashed potatoes: ½ cup
 Cooked carrots: ½ cup
 Dinner roll: whole
 Margarine: 1 tsp.
 Skim milk: 1 cup

Mid-morning Snack

Low-fat yogurt: 1 cup

Mid-afternoon Snack

½ sandwich on white bread with allowed foods
 Vegetable or fruit juice: ½ cup

Evening Snack

Pretzels: 1 oz.
 Canned fruit: ½ cup