

Ostomy Diet

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If you have just had an ostomy you may not be sure what foods you can eat. There are no specific dietary guidelines for ostomates; however, the general rule of thumb is to choose foods that you can tolerate. Many with ostomies continue to follow a well-balanced diet and drink plenty of fluids.

Establishing Tolerability

A tolerable food is one that is able to be eaten without causing any abdominal distress or cramping. Foods that cause loose or frequent stools or gas and cramping would be considered not tolerable.

After your operation, it will be important to avoid foods that tend to cause people the most problems. Foods can be introduced one at a time to determine if you can tolerate them. A food journal is great to make note of how your body reacts. If you notice problems with a food, avoid it for a few weeks and try it again. If you still have problems with it, you may have to eliminate it from your diet altogether.

Loose Stools

Fluid should not be restricted when you have high volume loose stools, or diarrhea. Actually you should increase your fluid intake to replace some of the fluid and minerals lost. Increasing fluid consumption will also help to relieve constipation if that is a problem. If you have excessively loose stools that persist, make sure to notify your doctor.

Meeting Needs

In general, if you are eating a well-balanced, varied diet rich in fruits and vegetables, you most likely do not need to take a multi-vitamin. There are guidelines however based on age and gender that may warrant a supplement. If you are eliminating a lot of fresh fruits and vegetables from your diet because of problems, you may not be meeting your needs for vitamins such as vitamin C and folate. Your dietitian or doctor can help you make a decision on what to do next.

One exception is for people who have had an ileal resection and for some an ileostomy. For these people, a monthly vitamin B-12 injection will most likely be necessary.

Tips for Tolerance

Chew food thoroughly (especially foods high in fiber)

Eat slowly and avoid swallowing air

Don't skip meals

Avoid foods that you cannot tolerate

FOODS THAT MAY BE INCOMPLETELY DIGESTED (HIGH IN FIBER)	
Broccoli	Onions (raw)
Beans	Pineapple
Cabbage	Popcorn
Carrots (raw)	Potato skins
Celery	Raisins
Chinese vegetables	Raw fruits
Coconut	Seeds and skins
Corn	Spinach
Nuts	Whole grains

FOODS THAT MAY CAUSE GAS	
Apples (raw) Beans Beer Broccoli Cabbage Carbonated beverages Chewing gum	Corn Milk Nuts Onions Turnip Iced beverages
FOODS THAT MAY CAUSE ODOR	
Alcohol Asparagus Beans Cabbage Eggs	Fish Garlic Onions Vitamins **TIP: Parsley may help to decrease odor
FOODS THAT MAY LOOSEN STOOLS	
Fresh fruits and vegetables Foods higher in fiber Coffee	Prune juice Red wine Beer
FOODS THAT MAY THICKEN STOOLS	
Applesauce Bananas Cheese Milk (boiled)	Peanut butter Pretzels Rice Tapioca