

Diet After Abdominal Surgery

Tips after abdominal surgery:

- ✓ Limit foods that are high in fat.
- ✓ Relax at mealtime and chew food well.
- ✓ Try 6 small meals that are high in calories and protein.
- ✓ Do not fill up on liquids. Try drinking liquids in between meals.

It will take some time to sort out which foods agree best with your body after this type of surgery. For some patients fatty foods are difficult to digest, and may cause diarrhea and abdominal cramping. Some patients are lactose intolerant for a couple weeks after surgery. In general, a trial and error approach towards eating food is recommended. Some patients report that it takes approximately 4-6 weeks until they feel their appetite has returned to normal.

Some patients, after surgery, have a temporary problem in which the stomach does not empty well after eating. This may cause nausea, vomiting, and loss of appetite. It usually resolves on its own within 2-4 weeks after surgery. Liquid nutritional supplements such as Ensure, Ensure Plus, Boost, Boost Plus may benefit patients during this time.

Lower Fat Diet Recommendations

Food Category	Recommendation	May Cause Distress
Beverages	2%, 1%, ½% or skim milk if tolerated, coffee, tea, sports drinks, and juice	Alcohol, chocolate or high fat milks, eggnog, and carbonated beverages
Breads and Cereals	Dry or cooked cereals, English muffin, bagels, whole-grain or enriched breads, rice, and pasta	Pastries, donuts, muffins, and biscuits
Fruits	All fresh or canned fruit	Avocado
Vegetable	All fresh or cooked vegetables, vegetable juice	French fries and fried vegetables
Meat, Poultry, Fish, Beans, Eggs, and Nuts	Lean chicken or turkey breast; beef (round, loin, or tenderloin); pork (tenderloin, loin, chop, Canadian bacon); fish, eggs, cooked dry beans, peanut butter and peas	All fried or highly seasoned meat, poultry, pork and fish
Dairy	Low fat cottage cheese, low fat yogurt, and cheese	Heavy creams, cheese sauce
Condiments	Low fat salad dressing, mustard, catsup, marinara sauce	Gravy, hollandaise sauce, mayonnaise, cheese sauce, white sauce
Desserts/Snacks	Low fat ice cream, sherbet, angel food cake, vanilla wafers, baked chips, pretzels	Use fatty snacks and desserts in moderation