

**O S T O M Y   S E L F - M A N A G E M E N T :  
F O O D   A N D   Y O U R   S T O M A**

**PATIENT/FAMILY INFORMATION SHEET**

**Do I need to be on a special diet after ostomy surgery?**

For the first *six to eight weeks* after surgery, your physician may instruct you to follow a low residue (low fiber) diet to give the bowel adequate time to heal. Follow this diet on a temporary basis only. In general, using pureed or tender cooked vegetables, ripe, canned or cooked fruits (without skin or seeds), and well-cooked tender meats, reduces dietary fiber.

- Drink a liter of fluids each day to prevent constipation.
- Buy breads and cereals made from refined wheat and rice.
- Avoid whole-grain products with added bran.
- Remove skin from vegetables and fruits before cooking.
- Avoid any food with seeds, nuts, raw or dried fruit and popcorn.
- Limit milk and milk products to 2 cups daily.

When recommended by your physician (generally six to eight weeks after surgery), high fiber foods may be added to the diet. Add one at a time each week to allow you to establish your tolerance. You will need to experiment to find out what foods you can and cannot eat. Chew, chew, chew again!

## What are the effects of certain foods?

After a period of time, you will become familiar with the effects of certain foods on stool consistency and odor. You will learn which foods need to be avoided to reduce gas.

• Foods that thicken stool...	Bananas, rice, bread, potatoes, creamy peanut butter, applesauce, yogurt, pasta, pretzels, and marshmallows.
• Foods that loosen stool...	Dried or string beans, chocolate, raw fruits, spiced foods, fried or greasy foods, leafy vegetables, alcoholic drinks, and prunes.
• Foods that color stool...	Beets and red Jell-O.
• Foods that cause odor...	Fish, eggs, asparagus, garlic, some spices, beans, turnips, and foods in the cabbage family (cabbage, onion, broccoli and cauliflower) and alcohol.
• Foods that cause gas...	Dried or string beans, beer, carbonated beverages, cucumber, foods in the cabbage family, spinach, corn, and radishes and highly spiced foods.
• Foods that may resolve gas...	Cranberry juice, buttermilk and yogurt.

*For more Patient Fact Sheets, see the Greenwich Hospital web site at [www.greenhosp.org](http://www.greenhosp.org) and click on Patients & Visitors , then Patient Education*