

**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 and click on Patients & Visitors , then Patient Education