



Nutrition Advice for Gastroparesis

(a.k.a. Slowed Stomach Emptying)

Overview

The word “gastroparesis” (gas-troh-puh-ree-sis) actually means stomach paralysis. Your stomach may not be completely paralyzed, but it is emptying more slowly than it should. This could have several causes including diabetes, viral infections, some medications like narcotic pain medication; or it could be *idiopathic*, meaning the cause is not known. Changes in the way you eat can help your stomach to empty better, and improve the symptoms of gastroparesis.

Tips to Help Your Stomach Empty Better

- 1. Small, frequent meals:** This also helps to decrease nausea, bloating and a feeling of being over-stuffed after eating. Eating more often helps to make sure you are still getting the nutrients you need and eating enough to maintain your weight in a healthy range.
- 2. Fat:** Fat increases the time it takes for food to leave the stomach. For someone with gastroparesis, it causes the stomach to empty even more slowly than it already does.
 - Liquids that contain fat tend to empty from the stomach more easily, and may be a source of needed calories.
 - A food with less than 3 g of fat is considered low fat.
 - Foods that are high in fat include, but are not limited to:
 - ❖ Fried Foods
 - ❖ Foods with added fats like butter, margarine, oil, shortening, etc.
 - ❖ Fatty meats like sausage, bacon, salami, pepperoni, bologna, etc.
 - ❖ High fat condiments like regular salad dressing, mayonnaise or guacamole
 - ❖ Cheese
 - ❖ Nuts and nut butters
 - ❖ Some fruits and vegetables like avocados and olives
- 3. Fiber:** Fiber also increases the time it takes for food to leave the stomach. For someone with gastroparesis, it too causes the stomach to empty even more slowly than it already does.
 - A moderate to high fiber food is one that has 2.5-5 grams of fiber per serving. Try to choose foods with less than 1-2 g of fiber.
 - In general, high fiber foods include fruits and vegetables, dried beans and legumes and whole grains.
- 4. Chew foods well.**
- 5. Drink liquids with meals.**
- 6. Sit upright or walk after meals.**

7. **Use more liquids foods:** If a low fat and low fiber diet isn't working for you, or if you are having a particularly troublesome day try to consume most of your calories from liquids. The following foods are recommended on a liquid-based diet:

- Milk
- Milkshakes
- Instant breakfast
- Meal replacement shakes
- Yogurt
- Pudding
- Custard
- Pureed foods
- Soups
- Smoothies

Low Fat and Low Fiber Food Suggestions

*This list is not meant to be comprehensive, but to give ideas on foods that may be tolerated.

Group	Recommended Foods
Dairy	All types of milk Low fat cheeses
Protein	Low fat meats (look for the words round or loin in the name) Poultry without skin Low fat fish (e.g. Tilapia, cod, tuna canned in water) Eggs
Grains	White bread, rice, pasta, crackers Cream of wheat or rice Low fiber cereals
Fruits and Vegetables	Canned Fruits and Vegetables <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When choosing canned vegetables look for “No Salt Added” or rinse before cooking to remove about 40% of the salt content • When choosing canned fruits look for varieties canned in 100% juice, water or light syrup Juice (100%) Cooked well *Some fresh fruits and vegetables may be tolerated when the peel is avoided. Examples include potatoes and apples