

Dietary advice for people with a high output stoma

Advice on what to eat and drink when you have a high output stoma.

Your name: _____

Your dietitian: _____

Dietitian contact number: **0118 322 7116**

What is a high output stoma?

When you have surgery that results in a stoma being formed from the duodenum or jejunum (the first parts of the small intestine or bowel) it may often leave you with a high output stoma. As a result of this, only a very small part of your bowel is able to absorb fluid and nutrients. High stoma output can also occur if you have your entire small bowel with an ileostomy (stoma formed on the last part of the small bowel when the large intestine has been removed).

As a result of a high stoma output your body is not able to absorb vital nutrients, electrolytes and secretions from your digestive system efficiently. Losing large volumes of fluid from your stoma can lead to severe dehydration and a disturbance in electrolyte levels.

Fortunately, this is only a temporary condition that should improve over time or resolve with further surgery.

If the total output from your stoma is more than 1500ml in a 24 hour period, it would be considered as a high output stoma.

Fluids

You may be asked to do the following:

- Follow a fluid restriction. Your fluid restriction includes all drinks e.g. tea coffee, water, fruit juice, alcohol. It also includes liquid foods such as soup, custard, gravy, ice cream, jelly and yoghurt.
- Your fluid restriction is _____ per day
- If you are dehydrated you may need to drink a salty solution (double strength diarolyte) in addition to your fluid restriction to make you feel better. To make this you need to add 1 sachet of diarolyte to 100ml of water.
- Aim to drink ____ml of diarolyte daily. To make this, use __ sachets of diarolyte in ____ml water.
- Try to drink this throughout the day. The drink may be more palatable if it is cold so keep in the fridge, some people find it easier to drink through a straw and flavoured with cordial.
- Avoid fluids around mealtimes.
- Take anti-diarrhoeal medication 30-60 minutes before meals and at night as prescribed.

- Include nutritious fluids in your diet, which will be part of your fluid restriction, such as Ensure plus drinks, Complan, Build Up etc as these are good sources of vitamins and proteins. The dietitian can advise you if you need these, and how many to take.

Alcohol

Some types, such as beer, can increase stoma output. Excessive amounts are not good for health, therefore it is recommended that men have less than 3-4 units and women less than 2-3 units per day, with 2 alcohol free days per week.

Food

- Sprinkle a little salt on your meals – ½-1 teaspoon per day to replaced salts lost from your stoma.
- Try cooking meals with salt.
- Eat salty foods such as:
 - cheese
 - bacon
 - ham
 - sausages
 - smoked fish (kippers)
 - shellfish
 - canned fish (tuna, sardines, salmon)
 - meat and fish pastes
 - tinned foods such as spaghetti and ravioli
 - meat extracts (Oxo, Bovril)
 - yeast extracts (Marmite)
 - salted crisps
 - salty biscuits
- Choose low fibre carbohydrates such as:
 - white bread
 - chapattis
 - rice crispies
 - cornflakes
 - potatoes (no skins)
 - green bananas
 - yam
 - dishes made with maize, millet or cornmeal
 - white pasta
 - white rice
- Eat slowly and chew your food well.
- Avoid eating and drinking at the same time.

Fibrous foods

Foods that are high in fibre are difficult to digest and may an increased stoma output. Ensure that your food is well cooked and chew it properly.

Meal pattern

Your meal pattern is very individual and may be affected by your social circumstances. The following tips may help you to maintain an acceptable stoma function:

- Develop a regular meal pattern.
- Have smaller more frequent meals – especially in the first few weeks.
- Ensure that you chew your food thoroughly.
- Eat slowly.
- Avoid heavy meals and snacks before bedtime.
- Avoid alcohol and caffeine drinks before bedtime.

Commonly asked questions

Can I eat spicy foods?

Chilli and curry may upset your stoma function, so you may wish to try milder flavours in the first few weeks, after this time introduce more spicy foods if you wish.

What causes a lot of wind?

At first your stoma may pass more wind (flatus) than usual which will soon reduce, especially once you start a more varied and regular diet. Wind is a normal by product of digestion, but it may be increased if you swallow air while eating or by fibrous foods. Most people with high output stomas do not suffer with wind problems in the long term, as food is not sitting in the gut for long enough to ferment and for bacteria to produce gas. Peppermint water, peppermint tea or capsules may help to reduce wind or the associated pain.

Try the following to reduce wind:

- Eat regular meals in a relaxed environment
- Eat slowly and chew food carefully
- If having fizzy drinks, pour them into a glass, stir and stand for 10 minutes before drinking.

Avoid:

- Taking drinks through a straw
- Chewing gum
- Long periods without food
- Smoking
- Talking or drinking when eating.

Foods and drinks that may increase wind passed by your stoma:

- | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| • Beans | • Cucumber | • Peas |
| • Beer | • Eggs | • Spinach |
| • Broccoli | • Fruit | • Sweetcorn |
| • Brussels sprouts | • Green vegetables | • Fatty foods |
| • Cabbage | • Mushrooms | • Rich creamy foods |
| • Carbonated drinks | • Nuts | |
| • Cauliflower | • Onions | |

Reduce wind caused by fibrous foods by:

- Always using low fibre carbohydrates/starchy foods (white rice and pasta, white bread, refined breakfast cereals).
- Reduce your intake of pulses, vegetables, fruits, nuts and seeds.
- See our low fibre diet sheet for more information on a low fibre diet.

Which foods cause a higher liquid stoma output?

Some foods, especially when eaten in large quantities, can make your stoma output more liquid. Having less of the quantity of the following may thicken up your stoma output:

- High fibre foods
- Spicy foods
- Alcohol
- Drinks containing caffeine
- Fruit juices
- Fried foods

What should I do if my output increases?

If your stoma output suddenly increases, it could be due to a variety of things, such as a stomach bug, stress, antibiotics or spicy foods. It is important to continue to take fluids as usual, and replace lost fluid with double strength diarolyte and add salt to your diet.

If your condition persists for more than 2 days, seek medical advice.

Foods that may help thicken up your stool include:

- Applesauce
- Bananas
- Buttermilk
- Cheese
- Marshmallows
- Boiled milk
- Noodles
- Smooth creamy peanut butter
- Rice
- Tapioca pudding
- Toast
- Yoghurt

Is it normal to find food particles in my stoma bag?

Yes, sometimes food such a sweetcorn and some medication will pass through the gut unaltered. Ensure that you chew your food properly.

What if I become constipated?

Constipation does not occur if you have a high stoma output; if your output stops or slows down significantly you should seek medical advice immediately.

Notes

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Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

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