



Healthy eating when you have a pelvic pouch

Now that you have a pelvic pouch, you may be wondering about what foods to eat. This handout will give you choices and suggestions about how and what to eat with your new pouch. Your doctor or dietitian will work with you to answer questions and address concerns you may have about eating.

Over the next several months, your pouch will be changing by increasing its size and the amount of food it can hold. This will gradually lead to a decrease in the number of bowel movements each day and thickening of stool output. Every person's body is different and you will learn which foods you tolerate best.

By choosing certain foods, when you eat and how you eat them, you can modify your stool output to:

- decrease watery stools
- thicken stool output
- decrease irritation

As your pouch adapts, your stool output will change. What you eat can affect the number and consistency of stools you have.

After surgery, there will be 2 phases in your diet:

Phase 1 – Right after surgery.

Phase 2 – Adaptation over time.

Phase 1: Right after surgery (about 1 to 6 weeks)

After surgery your doctor will gradually increase your diet from:

clear fluid → full fluid → low residue

In order to decrease irritation and stress on the pouch, the solid foods you eat will be low in residue. Low residue means avoiding foods such as high fibre foods, stringy foods, and foods with skin and membranes.

Drinking apple juice may cause a more watery output, so best to be careful how much you drink and you may need to avoid it for now!

Eat small amounts at first to let your pouch get used to food. As you feel ready, slowly increase the amount you eat.

Phase 2: Adaptation over time (up to 1 year after surgery)

During this phase you will be experimenting with different foods and drinks. You will slowly be increasing the types of foods you eat and determining how these foods affect your stool output.

The goal is for you to eventually eat a regular diet with only a few changes suited to you.

There are many suggestions about diet in this handout. These suggestions are to help you get started with your new pouch. This information was collected from a combination of resources. The suggestions come from people with pouches and what we have learned from the literature.

If you have any suggestions to add, please let your dietitian know.

Guidelines while your pouch adapts

What you can do	Reason
<p>For the first 4 to 6 weeks, eat a low residue diet. Limit foods that may produce a lot of gas or watery stools (see list on page 4).</p>	<p>Reduces stress on new pouch and decreases anal irritation.</p>
<p>Try not to overeat at one time. Have at least 3 meals or more spread throughout the day.</p>	<p>Prevents becoming full and bloated. Helps you meet your nutrition needs and eat enough calories.</p>
<p>Always chew your food very well.</p>	<p>Helps you to digest your food.</p>
<p>Drink at least 8 cups of decaffeinated fluid each day. Separate liquids from solids. It may be helpful to wait 30 to 45 minutes after a meal before drinking fluids.</p>	<p>Keeps you hydrated. Helps the solids pass more slowly through your intestine. This helps your body to absorb the nutrients.</p>
<p>Include foods in your diet that may help thicken your stools (see list on page 4).</p>	<p>The foods listed on page 4 may pass through your intestine more slowly or form a gel-like substance. This helps to thicken your stools.</p>
<p>Try new foods one at a time. If a food is not tolerated, try it again at a later date. It is important to have as much variety in your diet as possible.</p>	<p>Increases the variety of foods in your diet and helps you determine which foods you can and cannot tolerate.</p>
<p>If you have frequent bowel movements during the night, try eating larger meals earlier in the day and limiting the amount of fluids taken later in the day. Some people find pouch output to be high in the afternoon and increases more towards the evening.</p>	<p>Helps limit number of bowel movements during the night.</p>
<p>Record the effect different foods and beverages have on your stool output. Remember, your tolerance to various foods may change over time so occasionally retry these foods.</p>	<p>Helps you to determine which foods are best for you.</p>

Foods that may have an affect on your stool output

Below are some lists of foods you may find helpful as you adjust to your pouch. Creating your own personal food lists will help you track which foods you tolerate well and which foods you do not.

Foods that may thicken stools	Foods that may pass undigested through your system or increase anal irritation
applesauce bananas barley BeneFibre® boiled milk breads, white cheeses marshmallows Metamucil® (psyllium) oatbran, oatmeal pasta peanut butter, smooth potatoes pretzels rice pudding, boiled rice, white, boiled tapioca	coconut corn fruit, dried nuts olives peas pickles pineapple popcorn skins and seeds of fruits and vegetables spicy foods/sauces vegetables, raw whole grains
Foods that may cause gas	Foods that may increase the number of stools and/or diarrhea
beer broccoli brussel sprouts cabbage carbonated beverages cauliflower cucumbers onions peas, beans and legumes radishes	alcoholic beverages apple juice caffeine-containing beverages (such as coffee, tea, cola) chocolate grape juice prune juice prunes spicy foods/sauces