

Kindly written by Alison Roberts, Salts Community Stoma Care Nurse

## STOMA SOLUTIONS

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STOMA CARE

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Eating well, living well

ILEOSTOMY

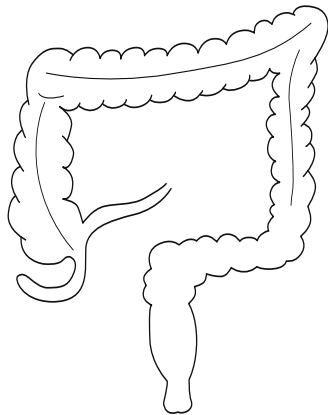
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Excellence in stoma care

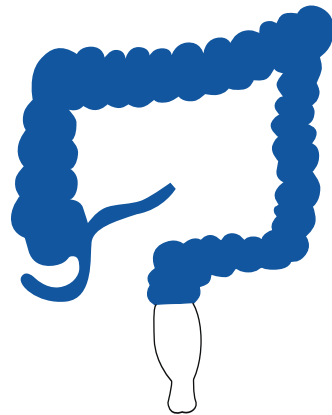
# Guidelines on diet for people who have an ileostomy

Everyone is individual, whether they have a stoma or not, so these hints and tips are only a guide and are intended to help you after having an ileostomy.

Following your operation, your large bowel or colon will have been removed or bypassed. The main function of the large bowel is to absorb moisture and so, when you have an ileostomy, the stool you pass will contain more moisture and have the consistency of porridge.



The large bowel



All of the large bowel is removed

It is important to eat a variety of foods to keep you healthy:

- Include fruit and vegetables daily.
- Have foods rich in protein – e.g. meat, fish, eggs, cheese, milk or yoghurt.
- Foods classed as carbohydrates – e.g. bread, potatoes, pasta, rice and breakfast cereals – should make up at least half of your meal.



- Include milk and dairy foods two to three times per day as they are rich in calcium – choose lower-fat varieties as a healthy option.

## GENERAL ADVICE

- 1 Some people find that smaller, regular meals suit them better and prefer not to eat late at night. Eat regularly (at least 3 times per day) as this helps to ensure your stoma functions efficiently and helps avoid wind.
- 2 Always chew food well and eat slowly – this helps digestion.
- 3 Vary your foods. Experiment and try everything in small amounts, gradually increasing quantities. If something disagrees with you, avoid it for a couple of weeks and then try a small amount again.
- 4 Some people find that they are unable to tolerate foods that are rich in fat – e.g. cream, pastry, full cream milk, cheese and chocolate. Alternatives would be semi-skimmed or skimmed milk, lower-fat cheeses and low-fat spreads.
- 5 Drink plenty of fluids – approximately 2 litres each day. This can include tea and coffee, but water and squash are preferable.



## Problems that you may encounter now that you have an ileostomy

### WIND

**Foods that may increase wind** – beer, sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, cucumber, eggs, green vegetables, onions, spicy foods, beans, fizzy drinks, milk.

**Non-food causes of wind** – chewing gum, eating with mouth open, talking while eating, drinking with a straw, smoking, eating irregularly.

### Tips

- Eat at regular intervals throughout the day and try to avoid long gaps between meals.
- Eat with your mouth closed and don't talk!
- Allow fizzy drinks to go flat.
- Don't use a straw for drinking.



- Eat live yoghurt – 1 carton per day. The natural kind seems more effective. If this is too sour, add a teaspoon of honey or jam, mix with jelly or freeze and eat as ice cream.
- Be aware that, if you eat beetroot, it may cause a reddish colour stool.

### ODOUR

**Causes** – beans, broccoli, cheese, cucumber, eggs, onion, fish.

### Tips

- Buttermilk
- Live yoghurt
- Peppermint oil capsules (available from chemists and health food shops)



### LOOSE STOOLS

**Possible causes** – alcohol, cabbage, chocolate, fish, fruit (not banana), green veg, prunes/prune juice, lettuce, nuts, oily foods, onions, spicy foods, caffeinated drinks, citrus fruit juices, sorbitol (a low calorie sweetener).

### Tips

- Apple sauce
- Cheese
- Smooth peanut butter
- Tapioca
- Over-ripe bananas
- Marshmallows
- Boiled rice
- Pasta
- Gelatine based products, such as jelly and jelly babies



Some foods can swell in the bowel and may cause mechanical problems or a blockage. If this happens, your ileostomy output will lessen or stop, or may contain large amounts of watery fluid. You may also experience pain. You should seek the advice of your Stoma Care Nurse or Doctor if you think this may be happening to you.

**Foods that may increase the risk of this happening are** – nuts, coconut, celery, mushrooms, sweetcorn, Chinese food, dried fruit, raw fruit skins, pith, pips and stones.

These foods should be eaten slowly, chewed well and taken with ample fluids after a meal, rather than with the meal.

If you experience diarrhoea, it is important to reduce the risk of dehydration. Similarly, if you are on holiday in a hot climate or do strenuous exercise, this can lead to dehydration.



