

Eating following colonic stent insertion



Who is this leaflet for?

This leaflet is for patients who have had a colonic stent inserted. These are inserted into your large bowel, also called the colon. Your gastroenterologist or Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) will inform you of precisely where in the colon your stent has been placed. Adjusting your diet and drinking plenty of fluids can help reduce the chances of your stent becoming blocked. The side effects of a blocked stent may include abdominal pain, nausea and vomiting.

How can diet help?

Adapting your diet can help encourage a stool that passes more easily through the stent and so minimises the risk of stent blockage. The guidance below aims to help soften stools, encourage a smaller stool and avoid larger pieces of food such as skins, which can enter the large bowel unchanged – these foods tend to be those that contain fibre, but could also be tough pieces of meat or gristle.

Why is fibre important?

There are two types of fibre; soluble and insoluble. Most cereals, grains, fruit and vegetables are a mixture of both types. For example the skin, seeds and stalk of an apple are insoluble, but the flesh of the apple is more soluble fibre. Aim to reduce or avoid insoluble fibre, as well as tough or stringy foods such as tough gristly meat or bacon rind.

- **Soluble fibre – try to eat more**

Soluble fibre may help maintain a regular bowel movement as it forms a gel within the gut, making stools softer and easier to pass. Good sources of soluble fibre include oats and the flesh of some fruit and vegetables.

- **Insoluble fibre – try to eat less**

Insoluble fibre makes your stools bulkier and may make it more difficult for them to pass through your stent. It tends to be found in skins, pips and seeds as well as wholegrains, pulses and nuts. Some of these foods can be included in certain forms/amounts; see foods to include and avoid in this leaflet.

Some foods (for example beans) can be a mixture of soluble and insoluble fibres. If you decide to include beans, have only a small portion and consider pureed beans. When pureed, skins contribute to your overall insoluble fibre intake, creating a larger stool but without the added risk of the skins accumulating in your stent.

Food Group	Include	Avoid
Bread, cereals, rice, pasta, noodles, grains	Breads, cakes and biscuits made with white flour Rolled oats and Ready Brek™ Refined breakfast cereals eg Rice Krispies, Cornflakes, Special K™ White rice, pasta, couscous Sago, tapioca, semolina White flour, cornflour, custard powder	Breads, cakes and biscuits made with wholemeal or granary flour Breads, cakes and biscuits made with wholemeal or granary flour Breads, cakes and biscuits with fruit, seeds or added nuts. Wholegrain breakfast cereals or any with fruit, nuts or coconut Eg Muesli, Bran flakes, All Bran, Weetabix™ Crunchy muesli bars Brown rice or brown pasta Wholemeal flour, wheat germ
Vegetables	Ensure all vegetables are peeled and well cooked Potato, squash, pumpkin and courgette Well-cooked root vegetables (eg carrots, swede, parsnip) Soft cauliflower and broccoli florets Tomato and cucumber with skins and seeds removed Asparagus tips (not stalks) Strained vegetable juice Tomato puree, paste, passata Avocado Fresh herbs	Raw vegetables and salad leaves Peas and sweetcorn Mushrooms Onions

Food Group	Include	Avoid
Fruit	Ensure fruit is ripe, peeled and deseeded Banana Papaya, mango and melon Well-cooked fruit Tinned fruits fruit juice	Fruit with skin, pips or of a very 'fibrous' texture (eg pineapple, rhubarb) Dried fruit Berries Citrus
Milk, yoghurt, cheese	Most milk and dairy products	Products containing dried fruit, nuts, coconut or chunky fruit pieces Stringy cooked cheese
Meat, fish, poultry, eggs, nuts, legumes	Any tender/soft lean meat, chicken (no skin) and fish Tofu or soya-based meat alternatives Eggs Smooth nut butters Houmous	Pulses e.g. Baked beans, Lentils, soy beans, kidney beans – small blended portions may be acceptable Nuts and seeds Fish bones Skin/fat on meat, poultry, sausages Gristly/tough meat
Miscellaneous	All fats including butter, margarine, oils, salad dressings, mayonnaise Seedless and rindless jams and marmalade Sugar, honey, syrups Boiled sweets and chocolate with no fruit, nuts or coconut Alcohol Crisps Gravy, salt, pepper, dried herbs, Spices	Popcorn Coconut Crunchy peanut butter Chocolate with nuts and fruit Chutney and pickles Jam or marmalade with seeds or rind

Top tips

- Chew all food thoroughly and take your time over eating.
- Cooked fruit and vegetables will be more easily digested.
- Always peel fruit and vegetables.
- Avoid any food that is tough and/or stringy, eg tough gristly meat.
- Some foods could be processed to a puree, but the skins will still contribute to your insoluble fibre intake.
- Include soluble fibre, but limit insoluble fibre.

What should I drink?

Drink plenty of fluids to stay well hydrated. This will reduce the risk of hard stools associated with constipation. All fluids (except alcoholic drinks) count towards your fluid intake (water, tea, coffee, squash, fruit juices, milk, soup).

What if I am vegetarian?

If you are vegetarian or already follow a restricted diet, you may need to discuss your diet further with your CNS or a dietitian.

Sample meal and snack ideas

Breakfast

- Cornflakes, coco-pops, rice krispies or frosted flakes with milk and sugar
- Eggs – boiled, poached or scrambled, with butter and white toast
- White toast, crumpets or plain bagels with butter and seedless jam, honey, chocolate spread, smooth peanut butter, cream cheese, Bovril or Marmite
- Croissants or Pain au Chocolat

Lunch and evening meal

- Tender meat, poultry or fish with mashed, baked, or boiled potatoes (no skin), or white rice. Small portion of well cooked vegetables if wanted: carrots, parsnip mash, swede, turnip, peeled courgettes, sweet potato and/or cauliflower florets. Gravy if liked.
- Pasta with smooth tomato or creamy sauces and cheese.
- Tinned spaghetti hoops with added chesse on white toast.

- Sandwiches with white bread, butter, mayonnaise or salad cream and chicken/turkey, cheese or egg.
- Egg on toast as above.
- Baked potato (without skin) with tuna, prawn or egg mayonnaise.

Puddings and snack ideas

- Jelly.
- Yoghurt.
- Sponge cakes, swiss rolls, battenberg, iced buns.
- Scones with cream and seedless jam.
- Custard.
- Rice pudding.
- Ice cream.
- Plain chocolate or sweet biscuits.
- Smooth yoghurt or fromage frais.
- Soft and peeled fruits eg Melon, ripe peaches, nectarines, apricots and pears.
- Stewed or tinned fruits without skins or pith.
- Cheese and cream crackers (no wholemeal varieties).
- Sweets eg toffee, boiled sweets, jellied sweets.
- Croissants, pain au chocolate or brioche.
- Crisps.

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