

## POST ABDOMINAL SURGERY INSTRUCTIONS

1. Soft/Low Residue diet for first week (see attached guidelines). Try eating six (6) small frequent meals rather than 3 big meals. Excessive sweets tend to make the stools more liquid. Add one new food at a time in small mounts. Drink plenty of fluids. You will likely not have a normal appetite for a while. Drink enough fluids that you feel well hydrated and are urinating normally. See separate information sheet on Diet guidelines.
2. Fibers: Avoid raw vegetables and raw fruits for 1-2 weeks. Gradually increase the fiber in your diet, as this will thicken the stool. Lessen the doses of Metamucil, Konsyl or Citrucel if abdominal cramps or bloating occur.
3. Activity: Avoid activity which causes pain. Walking and climbing stairs are OK. No lifting more than 20 lbs and no vigorous sports for 4-6 weeks, or as directed by your doctor.
4. Resume your home medications. Follow any medication changes that were made in the hospital and given to you when you were discharged.
5. No driving until seen in the office, or until you are taking NO Narcotic (prescription) pain medication and you feel your reaction time is normal.
6. Possible problems
  - a) *Wound problems*: It is okay to shower and get the incision and staples (if you have them) wet. Some drainage from the incision is common; a light gauze pad over the incision can be helpful. If the drainage is cloudy or smells foul or associated with fever > 101.5 degrees, if the incision is getting red and more painful, or if the incision opens up, then please call the office to speak to your doctor's nurse.
  - b) *Medication reactions*: Reactions to pain medicines can occur. The most common symptoms are nausea, vomiting, or itching related to taking the medication. If this occurs stop the medication and contact the office.

*\*Note: All Narcotic pain medications cause some constipation\**

- c) *Urinary difficulties:* Urinary tract infections occasionally occur following abdominal surgery. Pains with urination and/or blood in the urine are symptoms of infection. Bring these symptoms to the doctor's attention at your post-op visit. If your urine is small amounts and very dark, or if you cannot urinate, please call the office.
  - d) *Bowel obstructions (blockage) or ileus (slow bowels):* You may get abdominal cramps, increasing pain, bloating/ swelling of your abdomen, nausea, vomiting, or constipation. Some of these symptoms are quite common after colon surgery, so when these develop, call your physician for advice. If the symptoms are mild, you may restrict intake to liquids only and avoid solid food. If the symptoms are severe or if persist beyond 24 hours, you must call your physician.
  - e) *Irritation around anus from diarrhea:* Use Destin ointment or Skin protective paste. Avoid vigorous wiping after a bowel movement and use moist wipes. Try using a shower nozzle attachment to clean the area. A warm tub bath or sitz bath is also helpful. Pat gently dry afterwards. Baby wipes can be used instead of toilet paper.
  - f) *Steroid withdrawal:* If you had been on Prednisone for a long time previously for ulcerative colitis or other medical problems and have now stopped the medication, you are at risk for steroid withdrawal if the weaning is too fast, or if you are undergoing a stressful situation. The manifestations may be vague with feelings of being rundown, giddy, nausea or severe joint aches. If there is no improvement within 24 hours, call your physician.
  - g) *Infection:* If you get a fever greater than 101.5 degrees, shaking, chills, lower abdominal discomforts, difficulty in passing urine and sometimes drainage of pus from wound, call your physician.
  - h) *Ostomy problems (ileostomy or colostomy):* If you have an ostomy and the output is high volume and watery for greater than 24 hours, please call your doctor's office. You can get dehydrated easily if this happens. If you have no gas or bowel movement from your ostomy for greater than 24 hours and abdominal pain, please call your doctor's office.
7. *Office follow-up:* Call the office on the day after your discharge or the next business day to make follow-up appointment in approximately 2 weeks (as directed at time of discharge from the hospital).

## LOW RESIDUE DIET GUIDELINES

A low-residue diet limits the amount of fiber and other undigested material that passes through your large intestine. As a result, a low-residue diet reduces the size and number of your stools, helping to relieve abdominal pain, diarrhea or flare-ups of certain digestive problems (diverticulitis or active Crohns), and helps in your recovery after bowel (colon) surgery.

### After Colon Surgery:

We recommend a low-residue diet for approximately 2 weeks after your surgery as your colon heals.

- Choose generally soft foods that are easy to chew and swallow; chew these foods well.
- Avoid tough meats, greasy foods, and highly spicy foods.
- Avoid carbonated beverages- they will increase bloating.
- Eat 4-6 small meals and snacks throughout the day.
- Check with your doctor at the post-operative visit to transition to a regular diet.
- Here are lists of foods that are recommended and foods to avoid, though every patient is different.

| FOOD GROUP                                      | FOODS ALLOWED  | FOODS TO AVOID  |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Beverages</b>                                | Water, coffee, tea, decaffeinated coffee and tea, cocoa, fruit flavored drinks without pulp, hydration and sports drinks.  | Any beverages containing foods not allowed; alcoholic beverages, carbonated beverages   |
| <b>Breads &amp; Cereals</b>                     | Refined white, light wheat or rye bread and rolls; saltines, or soda crackers. All refined, cooked and ready-to-eat cereals (corn, oats, wheat and rice) such as Wheathearts, Malt-O-Meal, Cornflakes®, Special K®, Cheerios®, Post Toasties | Rolls with nuts, seeds, coconut or fruit not allowed; bread containing cracked wheat particles or whole seeds, whole grains; coarse, dry cereals; any with bran or raisins.<br><br>All others not listed as allowed. Graham crackers, corn bread. |
| <b>Desserts</b><br><u>Avoid too many sweets</u> | All plain; puddings, junket, custard, tapioca, gelatin desserts, fruit whips, smooth ice cream, fruit ice, sherbet, yogurt, cake and cookies. Pie made with allowed fruits.  | Rich pastry or cakes. Those with nuts, seeds, raisins, coconut, dates or fruits not allowed on list.  |
| <b>Eggs</b>                                     | All  | Egg dishes prepared with ingredients not allowed.   |
| <b>Fats</b><br><u>Use in moderation</u>         | Butter, margarine, cooking oil, cream, milk salad dressings and mayonnaise, as tolerated. Bacon, plain gravies.  | Nuts, olives. All others.   |

| FOOD GROUP                              | FOODS ALLOWED  | FOODS TO AVOID   |
|---|--|--|
| <b>Fruits &amp; Fruit Juices</b>        | Fruit juice without pulp. Canned: applesauce, cherries, fruit cocktail, peaches, fresh: bananas, cherries, grapefruit, melon, nectarine, peaches, plum   | Prune juice; Canned: pineapple, pears Fresh: apples, apricot, avocado, berries, mango, pear, dried dates, figs, prunes, raisins  |
| <b>Meat or Meat substitute</b>          | Tender, broiled, stewed or creamed, roast beef, veal, lamb, pork, ham, poultry, fish, chopped clams, oysters, sweetbreads, liver, kidneys; cream cheese, cottage, American, cheddar, Swiss or jack cheese, smooth peanut butter.   | Fried meats, fish or poultry; meats highly seasoned or containing whole spice; sausage, frankfurters, strong cheeses or those containing seeds. Dried beans or peas, chunky peanut butter. All others not listed as allowed.             |
| <b>Milk &amp; Dairy</b>                 | All. Yogurt, milkshakes, pudding, Carnation Instant Breakfast, Liquid nutritional supplements.   | None except those with seeds, nuts or fruits not allowed. For low residue, limit milk to 2 cups per day.   |
| <b>Potatoes &amp; Substitutes</b>       | White and sweet potatoes (no skins); refined rice, macaroni, spaghetti, noodles  | All others.  |
| <b>Soups</b>                            | Creamed soups with pureed or whole allowed vegetables; strained vegetable soups or chowders, meat or fish broths.  | Highly seasoned soups or those containing ingredients other than on allowed list.  |
| <b>Vegetables &amp; Vegetable Juice</b> | Cooked or canned artichoke hearts, asparagus, beets, carrots, chard, green and wax beans, bean sprouts, mushrooms, pimiento, pumpkin. Fresh and cooked tomato (no seeds or skins), stewed, pastes, purees. Tomato juice.<br><br>Limit vegetables to 2 servings per day and less than 2 gm fiber per serving. | All other raw, strongly flavored vegetables (cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, summer squash, okra, Brussels sprouts, parsnips, rutabagas, turnips, onions, corn, baked beans). All others not listed as allowed.                          |
| <b>Miscellaneous</b>                    | Sugar, jelly, honey, syrup, plain candy. Salt, pepper, flavoring extracts, herbs and seasonings not listed to avoid; milk gravies and cream sauces; barbecue sauce, mustard, ketchup.  | Any on not allowed list; jam, marmalade, fruit preserves, plain chocolate. Chili pepper, curry powder, cloves, seed spices, coconut, horseradish, popcorn, pickles, salsa, relish, chutney, all seeds such as poppy, sesame and caraway. |