

Food guidelines following Surgery to the Bowel

For the first 2-3 weeks after your operation people often find they experience 'diarrhoea' or looser and more frequent bowel motions. Because of this it is advisable to follow a fibre restricted plan for a short while. After this 'settling in' period once your bowel motions are more formed and frequency is returned to once or twice a day you can gradually increase the variety of foods and fluids in your diet. If a particular food seems to be causing a problem, avoid it and re-introduce it at a later date.

Important Points to follow for the first 2-3 weeks after your surgery:

1. Eat slowly and chew your food thoroughly.
 - never swallow any food that cannot be chewed to a fine puree in the mouth.
 - chewing stimulates the flow of saliva and juices that are needed for digestion
 - ensure your dentures fit well to assist chewing
2. Space your meals evenly through the day and check their size so that you do not eat too much food at any one time.
3. Make sure that you drink enough fluid each day - at least 8 cups. Preferably drink fluids between meals rather than with your food.
4. Avoid all seeds, pips, skins and coarse stalks, pith and membranes on citrus fruits, and gristle of meat.
5. Identify and avoid foods which may cause gas or bloating. These are often fatty foods, foods high in sugar, foods from the cabbage family, garlic and onions.
6. Do not be afraid to select a variety of foods so that your meals provide all the choices you need for maintaining good nutrition and desirable weight.

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