



Eating and drinking with an ileostomy

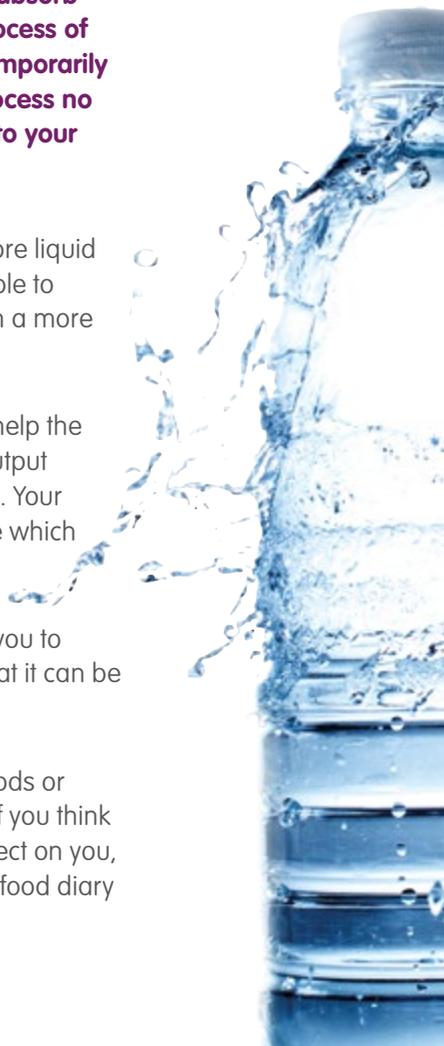
The function of the large bowel (colon) is to absorb water and salts from our food during the process of digestion. If you have an ileostomy either temporarily or permanently, this part of the digestive process no longer takes place and some modifications to your diet will have to be made.

The output from the ileostomy is likely to be more liquid especially to start with. However the body is able to adapt (over a period of 6 to 8 weeks) and often a more toothpaste like consistency is achieved.

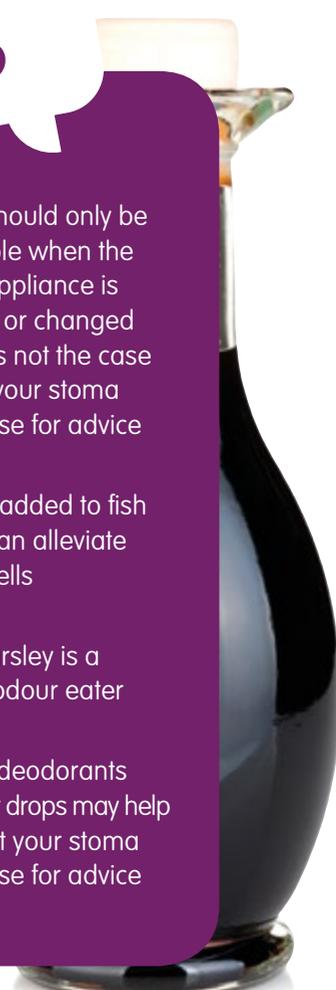
Eating at regular intervals during the day can help the consistency of the output although a watery output can persist and medications can help with this. Your stoma care nurse, GP or consultant can advise which medications would be best for you.

Your stoma care nurse will also have advised you to have a drainable appliance (bag/pouch) so that it can be emptied at regular intervals during the day.

Particularly following your operation certain foods or drinks may upset you – this is very individual. If you think a certain food or drink has had an adverse effect on you, leave it for a week then try it again. Keeping a food diary can be helpful to identify these foods.



tips



Odour

Foods that can produce more odour are asparagus, baked beans, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, cucumber, eggs, fish, garlic, green vegetables, onions, peanut butter, some spices and strong cheeses.

- 1 Odour should only be noticeable when the stoma appliance is emptied or changed – if this is not the case contact your stoma care nurse for advice
- 2 Vinegar added to fish dishes can alleviate fishy smells
- 3 Fresh parsley is a natural odour eater
- 4 Ostomy deodorants sprays or drops may help – contact your stoma care nurse for advice



It is important to remember that food is to be enjoyed and is a social part of life.

Having a ileostomy should not change this although some alterations may need to be made.

Ileostomy

tips

Blockages

Fibrous foods are difficult to digest and may cause a blockage in the bowel if they are not chewed properly or are eaten in large quantities.

For the first 6-8 weeks take particular care with foods such as celery, coconut, dried fruit, fruit and vegetable skins, lettuce, mango, mushrooms, nuts, peas, pineapple, pips, pith, seeds and sweetcorn.

When your ileostomy has settled (after 6-8 weeks) you may want to reintroduce fibre but always in smaller quantities and make sure your food is well cooked and well chewed.

If fruits and vegetables continue to upset you try tinned fruits in natural juice, stewed, baked or pureed fruits, unsweetened fruit juices, or vegetables in soups or casseroles.



If a blockage occurs:

- 1 **Drink fluids** only
- 2 Stop eating solid food
- 3 Do not use laxatives
- 4 Cut the opening of your stoma appliance slightly larger as your stoma may swell
- 5 Massage your tummy and the area around the stoma
- 6 Some people find a warm bath helpful



If this condition persists for more than two hours or if you start vomiting - SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION from either your stoma care nurse or your hospital A&E department.

tips

Increased stool frequency

An increased output can be due to a number of reasons such as a stomach bug, stress, antibiotics, highly spiced food, beer or lager.

Its important to continue to drink as usual but also to replace the extra fluids and to add salt to your diet by eating salted crisps, savoury crackers or foods containing salt.

Avoid foods and drinks that may increase stool frequency such as fruit and vegetables, fried foods, fruit juices and drinks containing caffeine or alcohol.

1 **Normally** you should be aiming to drink 8-10 glasses (1.5 – 2 litres) of fluid per day including non-caffeinated fluids such as squashes, water and fruit teas

2 Increased output means that you will need to increase your fluid intake to avoid becoming dehydrated. Some people find it useful to include other fluids such as Isotonic Lucozade, meat extract drinks such as Bovril, Oxo or Marmite to replace the salt or buy a rehydration solution from a chemist or the 'St Marks' mixture (see overleaf)

3 Foods that may thicken your output include apple sauce, ripe bananas, buttermilk, cheese, marshmallows, boiled milk, noodles, rice, tapioca pudding, toast and yoghurt

4 Use anti-diarrhoea medications as directed by your stoma care nurse or GP



If your condition persists for two days it is important to seek medical advice from your stoma care nurse, GP or dietitian.



tips

Wind (gas)

A diet that is high in fibre may cause excess wind and a stoma output which may be more runny.

These foods may include: baked beans, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, garlic, lentils, onions, beer/lager, fizzy drinks and onions

This list is not exhaustive and a certain amount of 'trial and error' is involved.

- 
- 1 Eat slowly and try to avoid gulping air
 - 2 Eat regularly and don't skip meals
 - 3 Avoid washing foods down with carbonated drinks or beer
 - 4 Avoid using straws and chewing gum
 - 5 You can reduce wind caused by fibrous foods by:
 - Using** low fibre alternatives such as white bread, pasta and rice, cornflakes, rice crispies
 - Reducing** your intake of pulses, vegetables and fruit
 - 6 Drink peppermint water or tea



Recipe for St Marks electrolyte mix for rehydration

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 6 heaped 5ml (teaspoon) | glucose |
| 1 level 5ml (teaspoon) | salt |
| Half heaped 2.5ml (teaspoon) | sodium bicarbonate |

Stir all the ingredients into a litre of water (still bottled if abroad) and chill

These are general guidelines and specific advice given to you by your GP, stoma care nurse or dietitian should always be followed. You are advised to see a healthcare professional if you experience a persistent change in your stoma function or if you develop new bowel symptoms.

Useful contact

Ileostomy and Internal Pouch Support Group

0800 0184 724

www.the-ia.org.uk



020 7940 1760 | feedback@bowelcanceruk.org.uk
www.bowelcanceruk.org.uk/yourdiet

 [@Bowel_Cancer_UK](https://twitter.com/Bowel_Cancer_UK)

 facebook.com/charitybcuk

Registered charity number: 1071038 (England & Wales) SC040914 (Scotland)
Information correct as of February 2014