

## Gastroparesis Diet Guide

### What is gastroparesis?

Gastroparesis is a condition where the stomach empties food slower than normal. This can cause nausea, vomiting, feeling full quickly, bloating, and stomach pain. Changing what and how you eat is an important first step in managing your symptoms.

### General eating guidelines

The key to eating with gastroparesis is making it easier for your stomach to empty. Here are the most important changes to make:

- Eat smaller, more frequent meals** throughout the day instead of three large meals. Try eating 5-6 small meals.[1][5]
- Choose foods that are soft and easy to chew** into small pieces before swallowing. This is called a "small particle diet" and has been shown to help reduce symptoms and improve stomach emptying.[1-2][4]
- Chew your food very well** to break it down into smaller pieces.[5]
- Drink more liquids** with your meals. Liquids empty from the stomach more easily than solid foods. Soups and liquid-containing meals are good options.[1][5-6]

### Foods to limit or avoid

- High-fat foods:** Fatty foods slow down stomach emptying. Limit fried foods, fatty meats, butter, cream, and high-fat dairy products.[1][4-5]
- High-fiber foods:** Fiber is harder to digest and can slow stomach emptying. Limit raw vegetables, whole grains, beans, nuts, and seeds.[1][5]
- Spicy and acidic foods:** These can irritate your stomach. Avoid hot peppers, citrus fruits, tomato sauce, and vinegar.[1]
- Foods that can form blockages:** Avoid foods like persimmons, berries with seeds, and fibrous vegetables that might clump together in your stomach.[5]

### Foods that are usually well-tolerated

- Soft proteins:** Well-cooked chicken, fish, eggs, smooth nut butters, tofu
- Refined grains:** White bread, white rice, pasta, crackers
- Cooked vegetables:** Mashed, pureed, or well-cooked vegetables without skins or seeds
- Soft fruits:** Bananas, applesauce, canned fruits, fruit juices
- Bland, starchy, sweet, and salty foods:** These tend not to make symptoms worse[4]
- Dairy:** Low-fat milk, yogurt, and cheese (if tolerated)
- Liquids and soups:** Broths, smoothies, nutrition shakes, pureed soups

## **Meal preparation tips**

- Mash, chop, grind, or blend foods to reduce particle size[5]
- Cook vegetables until they are very soft
- Remove skins and seeds from fruits and vegetables
- Use a food processor or blender to make foods smoother
- Consider liquid meal replacements or high-calorie nutrition shakes if solid foods are hard to tolerate[5]

## **Other important tips**

- If you have diabetes, work with your doctor to keep your blood sugar well-controlled, as this can help with gastroparesis symptoms.[1][3]
- Review your medications with your doctor. Some medications (like certain pain medicines and diabetes drugs) can slow stomach emptying.[3]
- Avoid eating within 2-3 hours of bedtime to give your stomach time to empty.
- Stay hydrated by sipping liquids throughout the day.

Dietary changes work best when combined with other treatments your doctor may recommend. Everyone with gastroparesis is different, so you may need to adjust these recommendations based on what works best for you.

## **References**

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