

Background:

Gastroparesis is a condition that greatly reduces, or in some cases completely eliminates, the ability of the stomach to properly digest food and move it through the digestive tract. When functioning normally, the muscles of the stomach frequently contract to crush food and push it to the next stage of digestion. With gastroparesis however, the stomach is not able to produce contractions strong enough to move food along which prevents it from being completely digested.

Purpose:

Modifying dietary habits can ensure you receive the necessary calories and nutrients to stay healthy while also avoiding unnecessary stress to the digestive system. Eating smaller meals more frequently and reducing the amount of hard to digest foods like fatty and fibrous foods will help ease digestion and avoid complications resulting from gastroparesis.

As the severity of gastroparesis varies from person to person, the gastroparesis diet has three levels to accommodate different needs. These diets may require supplemental nutrition; your physician will discuss these options with you if appropriate.

Stage 1: Liquid diet – liquids prevent dehydration while supplying the body with important minerals. Liquids are easily digested and can even be digested around bezoars. Bezoars are solid masses of undigested food that can block proper digestion and occasionally develop in individuals with gastroparesis as a result of poor motility in the stomach. This stage will not provide sufficient nutrients long-term and should not be continued longer than recommended by your physician.

Stage 2: Limited diet – low-residue and low-fat foods can be incorporated into the diet along with liquid or pureed foods. These foods have more nutritional value than liquids alone but are relatively easy for the stomach to digest. Fat intake should be limited to 40 grams per day. Fat is generally tolerated better in liquid form than in solid form.

Stage 3: Maintenance diet – designed to control gastroparesis long-term. This stage incorporates all stage 2 foods plus additional limited fat and fibrous foods. High-fiber foods should be cooked so they are soft and chewed thoroughly to avoid fibrous materials slowing or blocking digestion. Fat intake should be limited to 50 grams per day.

What food and food products are appropriate for Stage 1?

- Sport drinks
- Soft drinks
- Non-fat dairy products
- Fat-free milk or juice fortified with non-fat dry milk powder, protein powder, instant breakfast or other flavored powders
- Fat-free bouillon
- Fat-free consommé
- Jell-O
- Popsicles
- Sherbet or sorbet
- Fruit nectars and fruit juices
- Lemonade
- Liquid nutritional supplements such as Ensure or Boost

What food and food products are appropriate for Stage 2?

- Skim milk, products made with skim milk
- Low-fat yogurt
- Low-fat cheeses
- Fat-free consommé and bouillon
- Fat-free broths containing pasta or noodles and well-cooked vegetables
- Breads and cereals
- Cream of wheat
- Pasta
- White rice
- Egg noodles
- Low-fat crackers
- Eggs
- Peanut butter (maximum 2 Tbsp per day)
- Vegetable juice
- Well-cooked vegetables without skins
- Fruit juice
- Canned fruit without skins
- Hard candies, caramels
- Puddings and custards made with skim milk
- Frozen yogurt
- Fruit ice
- Jelly
- Honey
- Syrups
- Sports drinks
- Soft drinks
- Blended Stage 3 foods

What food and food products are appropriate for Stage 3?

- Skim milk, products made with skim milk
- Low-fat yogurt
- Low-fat cheeses
- Fat-free consommé and bouillon
- Fat-free broths containing pasta or noodles and well-cooked vegetables
- Breads and cereals
- Cream of wheat
- Pasta
- White rice
- Egg noodles
- Low-fat crackers
- Eggs
- Peanut butter (maximum 2 Tbsp per day)
- Poultry
- Fish
- Lean ground beef
- Vegetable juice
- Well-cooked vegetables without skins
- Fruit juice
- Canned fruit without skins
- Hard candies, caramels
- Puddings and custards made with skim milk
- Frozen yogurt
- Fruit ice
- Jelly
- Honey
- Syrups
- Sports Drinks
- Soft Drinks

Sample meal plan for Stage 3

Breakfast

1 cup (C) Cream of Wheat
One slice white toast
1 Tbsp Peanut Butter
Morning snack
6 ounces (oz) low-fat yogurt
One half of a banana

Lunch

8 fluid ounce (fl oz) nutritional drink*
½ C pasta
1 Tbsp fat-free Parmesan cheese
1 Tbsp low-fat butter
Afternoon snack
½ C canned peaches
¼ C low-fat cottage cheese

Dinner

2 oz chicken or fish
½ C cooked squash
½-1 C mashed potatoes
Evening snack
1 C low-fat pudding or frozen yogurt

Total calories: 1630
Total fiber: 10 g
Total fat: 49 g
Total protein: 71 g

If you believe you may be suffering from symptoms of gastroparesis, you need to discuss dietary and medication changes with your physician. Your healthcare provider is the best source of information for questions and concerns related to your health. To schedule an appointment with our Registered Dietitian Nutritionist, call **602-422-9800** or visit www.arizonadigestivehealth.com/help-desk-forms/request-an-appointment.