Reconstructive Ileal Pouch Diet Guidelines

Good nutrition plays a vital role in gaining and maintaining health and energy. Below are guidelines to help you maintain good nutrition after surgery. These will also help your body to adapt as easily as it can to its new anatomy and digestive system.

The pouch diet is designed to decrease stress on the bowels while you recover from surgery. This diet will also help you slowly advance back to a normal healthy diet.

Your pouch will keep on adapting to your body for about a year after surgery.
- Pouch capacity will increase and the number of bowel movements per day will decrease
- Stool consistency will change over time

Keep in mind that each person responds to the surgery and recovery process in a different way. You will need to find a diet approach that works best for you. There is quite a lot of trial and error that takes place during these months. Try to be patient and assure yourself that sooner or later you will find a diet that works for you.

The Initial Post Operative Diet: Moving back to Solid Foods

Follow a soft, low fiber diet. This will allow the bowels to heal. It will also decrease problems linked with the introduction of food.

At first, you should avoid foods high in acid. This includes orange juice, lemonade, and tomato products. This is because you may feel some burning due to the frequent bowel movements. These foods can be added back to your diet as stools decrease. Also avoid nuts, seeds, and hulls at first until your doctor approves.

Foods you may eat:
- canned fruits
- cheese
- cooked vegetables
- fish
- milk
- potatoes
- pasta
- poultry
- white bread
- white rice
- yogurt

Foods to avoid:
- dried fruit
- fatty meats
- nuts
- popcorn
- seeds
- raw fruits and vegetables
Stay hydrated. Drink a lot of fluid daily.
At first, you are at risk for dehydration because of the number of stools you may have. You need
to drink at least 6-8 glasses of water or sugar free, non-carbonated, non-caffeinated drinks
throughout the day. Sports drinks can be used because of their electrolyte content. The color of
your urine should be clear to pale yellow. If it is darker, increase your fluid intake.

Moving to a Healthy, High Fiber Diet
Several weeks after the surgery you will be told to start a high fiber diet.

Remember tolerance to foods is varies by person. Have patience and go slowly when
bringing foods back into your diet. This will help you to assess how you tolerate certain foods
and if you have any problems. It may be helpful to keep a food journal. If you notice side
effects from a certain food, don’t try it for a few weeks, but try it again later.

- Avoid nuts, seeds and hulls until your doctor approves.
- Slowly increase the amount of fiber in the diet to 20-25gm per day. Fiber will help
decrease the number of stools you have.
- Drink 6-8 glasses of fluid each day.
- Eating may increase bowel movements. Try to avoid eating between meals or late at
  night to regulate bowel pattern.
- Chew your food well to prevent a blockage.
- Follow a well balanced diet and healthy lifestyle.

Internet resource for patients who have an internal ileal pouch: www.J-pouch.org

Do not hesitate to discuss any questions or concerns you may have with your dietitian or doctor.

Teach Back
What is the most important thing you learned from this handout?

What changes will you make in your diet/lifestyle, based on what you learned today?

Questions
If you are a UW Health patient and have more questions, please contact UW Health at one of the
phone numbers listed below. You can also visit our website at www.uwhealth.org/nutrition.

Nutrition clinics for UW Hospital and Clinics (UWHC) and American Family Children’s
Hospital (AFCH) can be reached: (608) 890-5500.

Nutrition clinics for UW Medical Foundation (UWMF) can be reached at: (608) 287-2770.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you
have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This
is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each
person’s health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using
this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 5/2015 University of Wisconsin Hospitals
and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Clinical Nutrition Services Department and the Department
of Nursing. HF#355