

Ileostomy Take-Down Without Ileal Pouch

This surgery will close your ileostomy and takes about 2 hours. Stool will now travel through the bowel and exit through the anus.

Before Surgery

Bowel Prep

A few days before, you need to buy 32 oz of a clear liquid of your choice such as apple juice or Gatorade®. You will also need to have at least a half bottle of MiraLAX® on hand.

The Day Before Surgery

Eat a light breakfast and you may eat lunch if you know your system will clear over the next 6 hours by drinking more fluids.

Drink only clear liquids (no sediment or pulp) after breakfast/lunch until **2 hours** before your surgery starts. Clear liquids include:

- Water
- Broth
- Juice without pulp (apple, grape)
- Popsicles
- Hard candy
- Sparkling water or soda
- Coffee or tea, no creamer
- Gatorade®
- Crystal Light®
- Clear Jell-O® (no fruit, etc. in it)

At 6 pm (It is okay to do this earlier)

_____ If you are passing fluid **with** sediment/particles into your pouching system, then drink 3 doses (about 5 tablespoons) of MiraLAX® mixed with a clear liquid of your choice.

_____ If you are passing clear fluid (**no** sediment or particles) into your pouching system, you do not need to take a laxative. Continue to stay hydrated with clear liquids throughout the day.

After Surgery

Wound Care

Your wound at the ileostomy site will not be stitched shut. There will be a small opening the size of a quarter to a half dollar that will be pink and moist. It may be swollen, pink, sore, numb, and bruised with clear pink drainage.

You may have more drainage than from your other incisions. This is normal. In the hospital, the wound will be packed with gauze for a few days. Then, the dressing will be laid over the wound without packing, so the wound can become smaller, form a scab and heal.

Bathing

When it is okay to shower, gently wash the wound with a mild soap and water, pat dry.

Do not soak in a bathtub, hot tub, or swim until it is healed.

Do not put lotion, powder, or ointments on the wound.

Infection

Watch for signs of infection:

- Increased redness or warmth.
- Pus-like drainage.
- Excess swelling or bleeding.
- Fever above 100.4°F for two readings (taken by mouth) taken 4 hours apart.

Pain Relief

Expect to have pain after surgery. In the hospital, we may give you Tylenol® and ibuprofen on a regular basis. We will order narcotic medicine to treat severe pain.

We will talk to you about pain medicines before you go home. We will order a small amount of pain medicine for you at discharge. We will also talk about other ways to manage your pain.

Diet

Your diet will advance from clear to full liquids then to a soft diet. Expect to go home on a low- residue, low-fiber diet.

Eat 3 meals a day. Try not to eat between meals. This can help regulate bowel movements.

Eating an early evening meal produces more bowel movements at night. Many people choose to eat a larger midday meal and a smaller early evening meal to decrease bowel movements at night.

At your 2-week follow-up visit, expect the fiber in your diet to be increased. This will help to decrease the number of stools each day. We may ask you to try a bulk fiber such as Benefiber®, or Metamucil®. We may ask you to try Imodium® or Lomotil® to help slow stools. This can make travel easier.

You may need to keep track of foods that increase your stools or cause loose stools. The process is different for each person. It can take months to more than a year to get back to normal.

Bowel Movements

If you had a bowel resection when your ileostomy was placed, you may have more bowel movements after this surgery. They

may be loose at first, this is normal. As your body heals and you have more fiber in your diet, you will have fewer and more formed stools.

At first, **avoid** acidic foods like orange juice, lemonade, tomato products and foods with vinegar. These can cause rectal skin problems.

If you are having loose, frequent bowel movements then you will need to protect the skin around your anus. Keep this area clean and dry. Use water to cleanse and gently dab dry. Use a protective skin ointment such as Boudreaux's Butt Paste®, Desitin®, Proshield Plus®, A&D ointment®, zinc oxide, or Calmoseptine® on the rectal skin area after each stool to prevent skin problems.

Two Things to Watch for After an Ileostomy Takedown

Dehydration is a concern when you have frequent loose stools. Be sure to drink extra water and fluids (14-15 8 oz. glasses) until your stool output decreases. Sip on fluids.

Do not drink too much too fast, this causes them to move through your system even faster.

Symptoms of dehydration are:

- Increased thirst
- Dry mouth and skin
- Weight loss of more than 3 pounds overnight
- Fatigue
- Feeling dizzy when you stand or sit up

Bowel obstruction can be caused by food, bands of scar tissue, a hernia, and a twisted or kinked bowel. This can occur even if you are passing liquid stool or mucus.

Symptoms of obstruction are:

- Tender and bloated stomach.
- Cramping.
- Nausea or vomiting.
- Fever of 100.4 F or higher, reading taken by mouth.
- Unable to pass gas or stool.

Activity

- **Do not** drive if you are taking narcotic pain pills.
- **Do not** lift more than 10 pounds for the first 2 weeks. Then, **do not** lift more than 20 pounds for the next 4 weeks.
- Limit activity to walking until okayed by your doctor.
- Check with your doctor before going back to work.
- Sex may be resumed when you feel ready.
- **Avoid** all tobacco and second-hand smoke.

When to Call

Call the clinic if you notice:

- Bloating
- Nausea or vomiting
- Dizziness
- Rectal skin problems
- Bowel movement problems
- Pain not controlled by pain pills
- Signs of infection

Who to Call

Digestive Health Center

Monday – Friday, 8 am – 5 pm

(608) 242-2800

Toll free **(855) 342-9900**

After hours, weekends or holidays this number will be answered by the paging operator. Ask for the doctor on call. Leave your name and phone number with area code. The doctor will call you back.

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 © 3/2025 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#7806