

Nutrition After Whipple Procedure

It's normal to have a lack of appetite after the surgery which may cause weight loss. It varies in each case. Below are some common problems people have after surgery. You may or may not have them.

Gastroparesis

This is when the stomach empties slowly after a meal. It causes you to feel full and bloated. It should go away by 4-6 weeks after your surgery. To reduce symptoms:

- Eat small frequent meals.
- Avoid high fiber foods.
- Eat soft foods or liquids like Ensure[®], Boost[®], or Carnation Instant Breakfast[®] to help gain and maintain your weight.
- Reduce the amount of fat in your diet.
- Take a walk after eating. Light exercise can help move food through your system faster.

Diarrhea

The pancreas makes enzymes that help digest food. When part of the pancreas is removed, the number of enzymes may also decrease which can cause diarrhea. If you notice greasy, frothy stools that smell more than usual, talk to your doctor about taking pancreatic enzymes. You can also change your diet to help with this:

- Avoid high fat, greasy foods
- Eat 5-6 small meals/day

Another reason for diarrhea is "Dumping Syndrome." This is where food empties too quickly out of the stomach. You may feel shaky, sweaty, and lightheaded after eating. You may feel the urge to have a bowel movement.

To reduce symptoms:

- Avoid foods high in sugar
- Drink fluids between meals
- Avoid hot or cold food
- Eat 5-6 small meals/day

Diabetes

The pancreas makes insulin. People with uncontrolled blood sugars before surgery may have a chance that it will become worse once after surgery. This is because a portion of the pancreas is removed. Patients who have normal blood sugars have a small chance of diabetes.

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?

If you have any questions or have chronic weight loss after 4-6 weeks after your surgery, contact your dietitian or doctor.

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 at: **(608) 890-5500**

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

If you are a patient receiving care at UnityPoint – Meriter, Swedish American or a health system outside of UW Health, please use the phone numbers provided in your discharge instructions for any questions or concerns.

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 © 6/2019 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#496