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Post-operative Colon Resection Instructions

- 1) Avoid strenuous activities (jogging, exercise, sexual activity, etc) until released by your surgeon to resume them. You are encouraged to walk as much as possible.
- 2) Do not drive a motor vehicle until released by your surgeon to do so. You may ride in a car as a passenger. If you are planning a trip by car, make sure that if the destination is over two hours away, to stop the car half way and walk for 10 minutes (see walking below).
- 3) You may shower. Remove your bandages before you shower. You may gently wash your incisions with a mild soap and rinse with water. Do not soak in a bath tub, hot tub or swim until your surgeon releases you to do so.
- 4) Try to avoid taking naps during the daylight hours as this will interfere with your normal sleep cycle.
- 5) Please eat a low residue (low fiber) diet. Do not eat uncooked fruits or vegetables or deep fried foods until your surgeon releases you to do so. Drink plenty of fluids to stay hydrated. Your appetite will improve the further you get from the date of your surgery.
- 6) Your bowel functions will be different for the first few weeks after surgery. As long as you are passing flatus (gas from your anus), you are not nauseated and your abdomen is not distended, you do not need to take a laxative or stool softener.
- 7) Walking is important after surgery. It decreases your risks of blood clots of the leg veins and pneumonias. It helps build up your stamina and strength after surgery, and help with appetite stimulation (by burning calories).
- 8) Feeling weak and tired after surgery is NORMAL. Given time, you will get your energy back.
- 9) Do not use enemas or suppositories until released to do so by your surgeon, as you may potentially injure your bowel connection site (anastomosis).
- 10) After discharge call 205-933-1199 the day of discharge or the next business day to set up a post-operative visit with your surgeon.
- 11) Call 205-933-1199 for temperature of 101 degrees or above, persistent nausea or vomiting, abdominal pain that is different than your incisional pain, if your incisions become red, swollen or drain pus, if you develop leg swelling, shortness of breath or chest pain. In case of an emergency call 911 and then call 205-933-1199 to let your surgeon know.

12) If you have any questions, concerns or issues that may arise between the time of discharge and your post-operative visit, please call 205-933-1199.

Low-Fiber Diet

Fiber is found in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. A low-fiber diet restricts fibrous foods that are not digested in the small intestine. A diet containing about 10–15 grams of fiber per day is considered low fiber. Low-fiber diets may be used to:

- Promote healing and rest the bowel during intestinal flare-ups.
- Prevent blockage of a partially obstructed or narrowed gastrointestinal tract.
- Reduce fecal weight and volume.
- Slow the movement of feces.

You may be on a low-fiber diet as a transitional diet following surgery, after an injury (*trauma*), or because of a short (*acute*) or lifelong (*chronic*) illness. Your health care provider will determine the length of time you need to stay on this diet.

WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT A LOW-FIBER DIET?

Always check the fiber content on the packaging's Nutrition Facts label, especially on foods from the grains list. Ask your dietitian if you have questions about specific foods that are related to your condition, especially if the food is not listed below. In general, a low-fiber food will have less than 2 g of fiber.

WHAT FOODS CAN I EAT?

Grains

All breads and crackers made with white flour. Sweet rolls, doughnuts, waffles, pancakes, French toast, bagels. Pretzels, Melba toast, zwieback. Well-cooked cereals, such as cornmeal, farina, or cream cereals. Dry cereals that do not contain whole grains, fruit, or nuts, such as refined corn, wheat, rice, and oat cereals. Potatoes prepared any way without skins, plain pastas and noodles, refined white rice. Use white flour for baking and making sauces. Use allowed list of grains for casseroles, dumplings, and puddings.

Vegetables

Strained tomato and vegetable juices. Fresh lettuce, cucumber, spinach. Well-cooked (no skin or pulp) or canned vegetables, such as asparagus, bean sprouts, beets, carrots, green beans, mushrooms, potatoes, pumpkin, spinach, yellow squash, tomato sauce/puree, turnips, yams, and zucchini. Keep servings limited to ½ cup.

Fruits

All fruit juices except prune juice. Cooked or canned fruits without skin and seeds, such as applesauce, apricots, cherries, fruit cocktail, grapefruit, grapes, mandarin oranges, melons, peaches, pears, pineapple, and plums. Fresh fruits without skin, such as apricots, avocados, bananas, melons, pineapple, nectarines, and peaches. Keep servings limited to ½ cup or 1 piece.

Meat and Other Protein Sources

Ground or well-cooked tender beef, ham, veal, lamb, pork, or poultry. Eggs, plain cheese. Fish, oysters, shrimp, lobster, and other seafood. Liver, organ meats. Smooth nut butters.

Dairy

All milk products and alternative dairy substitutes, such as soy, rice, almond, and coconut, not containing added whole nuts, seeds, or added fruit.

Beverages

Decaf coffee, fruit, and vegetable juices or smoothies (small amounts, with no pulp or skins, and with fruits from allowed list), sports drinks, herbal tea.

Condiments

Ketchup, mustard, vinegar, cream sauce, cheese sauce, cocoa powder. Spices in moderation, such as allspice, basil, bay leaves, celery powder or leaves, cinnamon, cumin powder, curry powder, ginger, mace, marjoram, onion or garlic powder, oregano, paprika, parsley flakes, ground pepper, rosemary, sage, savory, tarragon, thyme, and turmeric.

Sweets and Desserts

Plain cakes and cookies, pie made with allowed fruit, pudding, custard, cream pie. Gelatin, fruit, ice, sherbet, frozen ice pops. Ice cream, ice milk without nuts. Plain hard candy, honey, jelly, molasses, syrup, sugar, chocolate syrup, gumdrops, marshmallows. Limit overall sugar intake.

Fats and Oil

Margarine, butter, cream, mayonnaise, salad oils, plain salad dressings made from allowed foods. Choose healthy fats such as olive oil, canola oil, and omega-3 fatty acids (such as found in salmon or tuna) when possible.

Other

Bouillon, broth, or cream soups made from allowed foods. Any strained soup. Casseroles or mixed dishes made with allowed foods.

The items listed above may not be a complete list of recommended foods or beverages. Contact your dietitian for more options.

WHAT FOODS ARE NOT RECOMMENDED?

Grains

All whole wheat and whole grain breads and crackers. Multigrains, rye, bran seeds, nuts, or coconut. Cereals containing whole grains, multigrains, bran, coconut, nuts, raisins. Cooked or dry oatmeal, steel-cut oats. Coarse wheat cereals, granola. Cereals advertised as high fiber. Potato skins. Whole grain pasta, wild or brown rice. Popcorn. Coconut flour. Bran, buckwheat, corn bread, multigrains, rye, wheat germ.

Vegetables

Fresh, cooked or canned vegetables, such as artichokes, asparagus, beet greens, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, celery, cauliflower, corn, eggplant, kale, legumes or beans, okra, peas, and tomatoes. Avoid large servings of any vegetables, especially raw vegetables.

Fruits

Fresh fruits, such as apples with or without skin, berries, cherries, figs, grapes, grapefruit, guavas, kiwis,

mangoes, oranges, papayas, pears, persimmons, pineapple, and pomegranate. Prune juice and juices with pulp, stewed or dried prunes. Dried fruits, dates, raisins. Fruit seeds or skins. Avoid large servings of all fresh fruits.

Meats and Other Protein Sources

Tough, fibrous meats with gristle. Chunky nut butter. Cheese made with seeds, nuts, or other foods not recommended. Nuts, seeds, legumes (beans, including baked beans), dried peas, beans, lentils.

Dairy

Yogurt or cheese that contains nuts, seeds, or added fruit.

Beverages

Fruit juices with high pulp, prune juice. Caffeinated coffee and teas.

Condiments

Coconut, maple syrup, pickles, olives.

Sweets and Desserts

Desserts, cookies, or candies that contain nuts or coconut, chunky peanut butter, dried fruits. Jams, preserves with seeds, marmalade. Large amounts of sugar and sweets. Any other dessert made with fruits from the not recommended list.

Other

Soups made from vegetables that are not recommended or that contain other foods not recommended.

The items listed above may not be a complete list of foods and beverages to avoid. Contact your dietitian for more information.

This information is not intended to replace advice given to you by your health care provider. Make sure you discuss any questions you have with your health care provider.