

Eating well when you have gallstones or inflammation of the gallbladder

Nutrition & Dietetic Service

Information for Patients

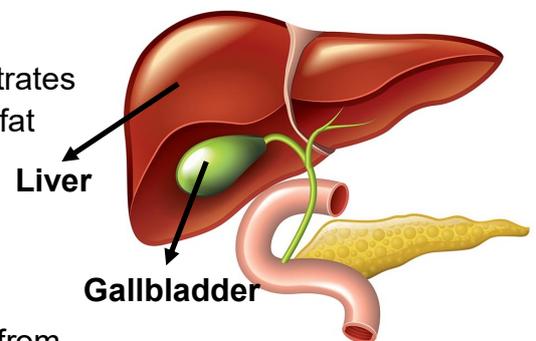
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What does the gallbladder do?

Your gallbladder, found beneath the liver, stores, concentrates and releases bile, a liquid which helps the body to digest fat from the food we eat.



What are gallstones?

Gallstones are small stones that form in the gallbladder from hardened cholesterol, bile pigments or calcium. They can cause pain, cholecystitis, yellowing of the skin and/or eyes (jaundice) and inflammation of the pancreas (pancreatitis).

What is cholecystitis?

Cholecystitis is inflammation of the gallbladder. It usually occurs when a gallstone blocks one of the tubes that carries bile from the gall bladder (cystic duct).

Can changing my diet help with my gallbladder problems?

People are often told to follow a low fat diet if they are diagnosed with cholecystitis or gallstones. There is little evidence to suggest that removing any type of food from your diet will improve your symptoms or condition. Cutting all the fat from your diet may lead to rapid weight loss which is linked with increased risk of gallstones and malnutrition. People with cholecystitis or gallstones should eat a variety of foods and have regular meals and snacks. It is recommended that people with gallbladder problems eat within the healthy eating principles shown on the 'Eat Well Guide' (see p2).

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

What if I have my gallbladder removed (cholecystectomy)?

After a cholecystectomy, you do not need to follow a special diet. Your liver will continue to produce bile that will drip into the bowel all the time rather than being stored in the gallbladder. It is important that you continue to eat well to recover from your surgery.

Healthy eating to maintain your weight

The Eatwell Guide divides the foods we eat and drink into 5 main food groups. Try to choose a variety of different foods from each of the groups to help you get the wide range of nutrients your body needs to stay healthy.

- Eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables a day.
- Base meals on potatoes, bread, rice, pasta or other starchy carbohydrates and choose wholegrain where possible.
- Have some dairy or dairy alternatives (such as soya drinks and yoghurts) and choose lower-fat and lower-sugar options where possible. If you are losing your appetite or weight see p4 for guidance.
- Eat some beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other protein. Aim for at least 2 portions of fish every week – one of which should be oily, such as salmon or mackerel.
- Choose unsaturated oils and spreads and eat in small amounts.
- Eat foods high in fat, salt and sugar less often and in small amounts.
- Drink plenty of fluids – the government recommends 6 to 8 cups/glasses a day.

www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/food-guidelines-and-food-labels/the-eatwell-guide/



What can I do if I feel sick (nausea)?

- Try eating small amounts but often.
- Try dry bread/toast, crackers or plain biscuits.
- Try foods that contain ginger as some evidence show that may help reduce nausea.
- Cold foods with less smell may be easier to manage and avoid cooking smells
- Speak to your Doctor or pharmacist about anti-sickness medications

You can use a diary to record everything you eat and drink, and your symptoms, for 1 week. Record each day separately. Try to record all food and drinks that you eat and drink, along with an approximate amount, and the time of day they are taken. You can also record and describe any symptoms you may have, and any medications or supplements taken. See an example:

Day: Monday Time up: 6.30am Time to bed: 10pm

| Time of the day | Food or drink description | Amount taken | Symptoms description (tummy pain, feeling sick, being sick. Describe poo, frequency of pooing, sudden urges to poo...) |
|------------------------------------|---|---|--|
| Breakfast 7am | Bran flakes Full fat milk Banana Tea | 6 tablespoons ½ cup 1 medium 1 cup | Bloating and tummy (abdominal) pain for 3 hours (intermittent/constant) |
| Mid-morning 10am | Orange juice Weetabix | 250ml 2 | |
| Lunch 12:30pm | Roast chicken Carrot Onion Gravy | 8 tablespoons 6 tablespoons 3 tablespoons | |
| Evening 5pm | Full fat milk | 250ml | Watery soft poo about 30min after |
| Dinner 8pm | Sausage Mash | 3 sausages 4 tablespoons | Mild tummy (abdominal) pain for 1 hour |
| Supplements/ Medication | Complan shake Full fat milk | 1 sachet 200ml | |

What can I do if I have lost my appetite or am losing weight?

- Eat smaller meals, but more frequently. Aim for 5 to 6 small, snack type meals throughout the day.
- Try having your food on a smaller plate and keep the portions small. You can always have 2nd helpings.
- Do not fill up on low energy, filling foods like fruit and vegetables unless they are served with high energy foods like cream, ice cream or cheese sauce.
- Whenever possible choose high protein varieties of foods as protein is important for the body to recover such as foods including meat, fish, beans, lentils, cheese and milk.
- Milk is a nourishing drink. Choose full cream milk as it will give you more calories than a fat reduced milk. Try a glass of full cream milk, a latte, a malted milk drink (Horlicks or Ovaltine), hot chocolate, Lassi, Indian tea or Complan between meals.
- Add extra butter, oil or ghee to your meal at lunch or dinner for example, to mashed potatoes, rice or vegetables.
- Make sure you have snacks readily available to nibble on whenever you can.
- Eat your meals slowly, chew your food well and try to relax for a while after you have eaten.
- Try not to have low energy fluids, for example, water, tea or coffee just before eating.
- Have milk puddings such as rice pudding, custard or shrikhand with extra cream.
- Cutting out fat or restricting other foods can put you at risk of malnutrition so it is important that you monitor your weight and eat a nourishing diet high in energy and protein

If you are worried your weight is going down, please speak with your medical team.

Weight tracker

Use the table bellow to record your weight.

| Date | Weight | Date | Weight | Date | Weight |
|------|--------|------|--------|------|--------|
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| | | | | | |
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Contact details

Dietitian: -----

Telephone number: -----

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔
على هذه المعلومات بلغةٍ أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل
જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો
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Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

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