

# Dietary information about Dumping Syndrome

Department of Nutrition and Dietetics

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Information for Patients

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The information contained in this leaflet is for adult patients .Occasionally after having an operation where all, or part of your stomach is removed you may experience dumping syndrome. This is caused by food moving too fast into your small intestine.

There are 2 types of dumping syndrome - early and late.

If you experience dumping syndrome, whether early or late, it is possible to alter your dietary choices and eating pattern to prevent it from happening.

	What are the symptoms?	Why does this happen?
<b>Early</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watery diarrhoea</li> <li>• Abdominal cramping/bloating</li> <li>• Nausea and vomiting</li> <li>• Weakness/light-headedness</li> <li>• Flushed skin</li> <li>• Sweating</li> <li>• Heart palpitations</li> </ul>	<p>Early dumping starts during a meal or up to 30 minutes after a meal.</p> <p>It is caused by food being delivered into a part of your small intestine (jejunum) faster than normal.</p> <p>This rapid movement causes fluid to be drawn into the small intestine which dilutes the partly digested food.</p> <p>This results in a drop in your blood pressure which can make you feel unwell.</p>
<b>Late</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Profuse sweating</li> <li>• Shakiness</li> <li>• Weakness/feeling faint</li> <li>• Headache</li> <li>• Anxiety</li> <li>• Poor concentration</li> <li>• Feeling cold</li> <li>• Tired/needing to rest</li> </ul>	<p>Late dumping starts 1 to 3 hours after a meal or it can happen if you miss a meal.</p> <p>Sugary and starchy foods pass rapidly into the small intestine (jejunum) causing your body to produce a sudden rush of insulin.</p> <p>Insulin is a hormone which helps maintain a consistent level of sugar in the blood.</p> <p>The sudden rush of insulin results in your blood sugar falling lower than normal which can make you feel unwell.</p>

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**To try and prevent both forms of dumping syndrome:**

- Do not miss meals and avoid going for long periods without food
- Ensure meals include protein and fat to minimise symptoms. Good sources of protein include meat, fish, eggs, beans, pulses, lentils, nuts, quorn, tofu and dairy foods such as milk, cheese and yoghurt. Sugary foods have less of an impact if they are eaten with protein and fat
- Reduce the amount of refined sugar/sugary foods and drinks
- Avoid soup and drinks with your meals and avoid drinking fluids for 30-60 minutes after food. Try to drink fluid in between meals
- Eat slowly and chew food well before swallowing
- You should eat little and often aiming for at least 5-6 small meals a day rather than 3 larger ones
- When you feel full stop eating. Never force yourself to finish a meal. You can always have a snack later on
- Try increasing the fibre in your diet, for example wholemeal and wholegrain foods. You should increase fibre gradually
- Avoid very hot or very cold foods and drinks
- Avoid alcohol
- Do not rush up from eating - remain seated for 5-10 minutes before slowly getting up
- Try lying down for 15-20 minutes after a meal to slow down the movement of food

**Treatment of late dumping syndrome**

Your blood sugar level, which drops with late dumping syndrome, can be increased and your symptoms improved by eating or drinking a small amount of something sugary, for example a cup of tea with sugar, sugary sweets, toast and jam or chocolate biscuits. Try to follow this with something more substantial and based on starchy carbohydrate, for example cheese on crackers, beans on toast or a sandwich.

**How long will dumping syndrome last?**

The symptoms of dumping syndrome usually settle within the first 3 months after your operation. Some people will continue to have symptoms unless dietary changes are made.

If you do not experience dumping syndrome then we recommend that you continue to eat plenty of starchy and sugary foods as these are a good source of energy.

**Dietitian:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Contact: 0116 258 5400**

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