

Diet for Diarrhea

Diarrhea is defined as loose or watery stools, and can be caused by radiation, chemotherapy, other medications, and infections. The following diet tips can help to control your diarrhea.

1. Eat smaller, more frequent meals instead of three large meals.
2. Drink plenty of water or low-sugar beverages to replace fluids lost from diarrhea.
3. Sports drinks can be used to replace lost sodium and potassium.
 - Gatorade, G2 (low sugar/calories)
 - Lifewater (variable sugar/calories)
 - Propel Zero (no sugar/calories)
 - Powerade or Vitaminwater
4. Eat foods high in potassium and sodium to replace minerals lost from diarrhea.
 - High potassium foods include: apricots, avocado, bananas, canned tomatoes, oranges, pears, potatoes and sweet potatoes (especially baked), tomato juice, V8 juice, yogurt.
 - High sodium foods include: broth or bouillon, canned soup, cheese & cottage cheese, frozen entrees, pizza, salty snacks (chips, crackers, pretzels), seasoned rice and pasta packets, tomato juice, V8 juice
5. Include binding foods such as bananas, plain white rice, applesauce, and white toast
6. Add plain yogurt with active cultures to your diet.
7. **Avoid** foods that can make diarrhea worse. **Foods to avoid:**
 - High fiber foods: especially raw fruits, raw vegetables, bran or whole wheat cereal, whole wheat bread, and whole wheat pasta
 - High sugar drinks such as regular soda pop and fruit punch
 - Very hot and very cold drinks
 - Caffeine-containing drinks such as regular coffee, tea, and some soda pop
 - Beer, wine and other alcohol
 - Deep fried or greasy foods
 - Spicy foods such as hot peppers, hot sauce, chili, sausage, spicy Mexican and Asian foods
 - Gas-forming foods such as dry beans, broccoli, and cabbage
 - Sugar-free gum or candy made with sorbitol or xylitol
 - Milk products, if you have had problems with lactose intolerance in the past



For more information about diet for diarrhea, call the dietitian (Beth), 319-369-8027. Call your healthcare provider at PCI Oncology if you have uncontrolled diarrhea, 319-297-2900.