

Tips to Thrive

A NUTRITION PLAN FOR GASTROINTESTINAL DYSMOTILITY

Gastrointestinal (GI) dysmotility refers to the uneven movement of food through the intestines. This makes eating unpleasant due to nausea, vomiting, and stomach pain. Vitamins and minerals might not be absorbed. This can cause poor nutrition. A nutrition care plan is important to stay healthy and will help you enjoy a better quality of life with GI dysmotility.

WHAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN MY NUTRITION CARE PLAN?

- **Preventing nutritional deficiencies:**

A physical exam is important. A clinician will check vitamin and mineral levels to prevent nutritional deficiencies. These nutrients can be given via gastrostomy tube (G-tube), jejunostomy tube (J-tube), or through an intravenous (IV) line.

- **Foods that reduce unpleasant GI symptoms:**

Avoid foods that slow the movement of food through the GI tract. Fat and fiber slow the movement of food. This can worsen GI dysmotility. The table below lists foods that are often easier to digest. This list is not complete. It can be used as a tool for meal planning.

- **Plan for proper fluid intake:** Fluids are an important part of a care plan. Vomiting and excessive stool loss can quickly lead to dehydration. Oral rehydration solution (ORS) is a low-sugar, salt-containing beverage. It is easy to absorb and supports proper hydration. It can be taken orally or through a feeding tube. ORS is easy to make. Use one quart of water, three-fourths teaspoon of salt, six teaspoons of sugar, and a drink mix to taste. Taking the right amount and types of fluids can reduce the need for IV support.

Together, reducing nutrition-related deficiencies, promoting an oral diet, and staying hydrated can improve nutritional status and quality of life for consumers with GI dysmotility.

FOOD GROUP	FOODS TO AVOID	FOODS TO CHOOSE
Grains, cereal, and pasta	Whole grains, brown rice, popcorn, and potatoes with skin	White bread, white rice, crackers, and refined grains
Fruits, vegetables, and legumes	Skins, nuts, seeds of the plant, and fruit juices	Cooked or canned fruits and vegetables with the skin removed
Milk and dairy products	As tolerated	As tolerated
Meats, fish, eggs, and poultry	Tough meats	Baked, broiled, tender meats, and any style eggs

CONTACT US

Phone: 888.6.THRIVE

Email: info@thrivex.net

Web: thrivex.diplomat.is



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