



*“Providing Tools and Enhancing Skills  
To Improve Your Nutritional Health”*

## Gastroparesis with Diabetes

People with diabetes often have problems with digestion, a condition called *gastroparesis*. You may have this condition if you have frequent stomach pain, nausea, bloating and a feeling of fullness even when eating only small meals. *Gastroparesis* happens when the nerves to the stomach don't work well. Digestion of food slows down or sometimes just stops.

There are steps you can take to help your stomach work better. Check the list below for ideas that others have found helpful.

- ❑ Eat six or more small meals throughout the day instead of eating two or three larger meals. To get into the habit of doing this, eat only half of your meal and save the rest to eat a couple hours later. Do this throughout the day and you should feel better.
- ❑ Stay away from high fat foods or foods with extra fat added, like butter, margarine, mayonnaise, rich sauces, gravies and dressings. Cook your foods without added fats.
- ❑ Chew your foods well before swallowing. Meat may be easier on your stomach if it is ground, pureed or served soft, such as meat loaf, tuna fish or chicken salad.
- ❑ Avoid high fiber foods such as whole grains, bran, raw fruits and vegetables. Better choices are white bread, pastas, and rice, canned fruits and well-cooked vegetables. These will be easier to digest.
- ❑ Sit up when eating and for at least one hour afterwards. Light exercise after eating, such as walking, may help your stomach work better also.
- ❑ Some people find that liquids are easier to digest, and use nutrition supplements to replace some meals. Ask your dietitian which supplements are better for you.

Some foods can be especially difficult to digest. Check the list below for foods to avoid:

- Apples
- Berries
- Coconuts
- Figs
- Oranges
- Persimmons
- Brussels sprouts
- Green beans
- Legumes (dried beans and peas)
- Potato peels
- Sauerkraut

There are also medications that can help your stomach work better to digest food. Ask your doctor for more information about what is best for you.