Management of Diarrhea
Patient Education

Cancer treatments and medications can cause your bowels to move much more frequently and stools to become very loose (diarrhea). If you have diarrhea, try avoiding high-fiber foods, which may make the problem worse. These include nuts, seeds, whole grains, legumes, dried fruits, and raw fruits and vegetables. You should also avoid high-fat foods such as fried and greasy foods, as they can also promote diarrhea. In addition, stay away from gassy foods and carbonated beverages. Be sure to sip fluids throughout the day to prevent dehydration. Once the diarrhea has stopped, slowly begin eating foods containing fiber.

What to Do

- Drink plenty of mild, clear, noncarbonated liquids throughout the day. Drink liquids at room temperature, as they are better tolerated than hot or cold beverages.
- Eat small, frequent meals and snacks throughout the day.
- Avoid greasy, fried, spicy, or very sweet foods.
- Limit milk or milk products to two cups a day.
- Avoid drinks and foods that cause gas, such as carbonated drinks, gas-forming vegetables, and chewing gum. (You may drink carbonated beverages if you leave them open for at least 10 minutes before drinking.)
- Drink and eat high-sodium foods such as broths, soups, sports drinks, crackers, and pretzels.
- Drink and eat high-potassium foods such as fruit juices and nectars, sports drinks, potatoes without the skin, and bananas.
- Eat foods high in pectin such as applesauce and bananas.
- Drink at least one cup of liquid after each loose bowel movement.
- Avoid chewing sugar-free gums and eating candies made with sorbitol.
- Call your doctor if diarrhea continues or increases or if your stools have an unusual odor or color.

Special Instructions: __________
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<th><strong>Recommended</strong></th>
<th><strong>Foods that May Cause Distress</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>High Protein</strong></td>
<td>Baked or broiled beef, pork, chicken, turkey, veal, fish, eggs, milk, cheese; yogurt</td>
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<td><strong>Breads, Cereals, Rice, and Pasta</strong></td>
<td>Bread and rolls make from refined, white flour; pasta; converted or instant rice; refined cereals such as farina, cream of wheat, cream of rice, oatmeal, cornflakes; pancakes; waffles, cornbread; muffins; graham crackers</td>
<td>Whole-grain breads and cereals such as whole-wheat and rye bread; bran; shredded wheat; granola; wild rice</td>
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<td><strong>Fruits and Vegetables</strong></td>
<td>Soups made with allowed vegetables; cooked asparagus tips, beets, carrots, peeled zucchini, mushrooms, celery, tomato paste, tomato puree, tomato sauce; baked potato without skin; canned, frozen, or fresh fruit</td>
<td>Fresh, unpeeled fruit; pears; melon; all other vegetables</td>
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<td><strong>Beverages, Desserts, and Miscellaneous</strong></td>
<td>Butter; margarine; mayonnaise; salad dressing; vegetable oil; cake; cookies; flavored gelatin desserts; sherbet; fruit pie made with allowed fruit; decaffeinated beverages; salt pepper, spices, and gravy as tolerated</td>
<td>Desserts with nuts; coconut; dried fruit; chocolate; licorice; pickles; popcorn; foods with a lot of pepper, chili seasoning, or taco seasoning; hot sauces</td>
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