

Gastroparesis Dietary Information for Diabetics:

Managing gastroparesis can be emotionally and physically challenging. When gastroparesis occurs it can cause something as simple as eating and drinking to become very stressful, complicated and unpredictable. Each individual case is unique and requires trying different types of foods and beverages to see what can be tolerated. Even if you are experiencing symptoms, it is important to get enough nourishment to give your body the best chance of managing your gastroparesis and avoiding malnutrition over time.

We need to eat several times a day to get our nutritional needs met. Patients with gastroparesis do best when they consume smaller, more frequent meals and snacks throughout the day. Below is a list of recommendations to follow to strive to manage your blood sugar and gastroparesis as optimally as possible:

- Eat 4-8 times daily
- Eat every 1-3 hours as able
- Natural whole foods are optimal
- Include a balance of healthy fats, proteins, and carbohydrates each time you eat

A large percentage of gastroparesis patients have diabetes and research shows that elevated glucose levels can trigger or exacerbate gastroparesis symptoms. Fat and fiber slow down the digestive process and are excellent for managing blood sugar levels, but for gastroparesis patients it can further slow down their digestive system. We recommend that you go very slowly as you introduce various foods and beverages so you can properly track what you are best able to tolerate. Patients are most successful when they keep a diet journal of servings and types of foods and their responses. Having it in writing helps you determine patterns and feel less overwhelmed.

For patients with more severe gastroparesis who experience significant vomiting after drinking water may require gastric decompression and enteral jejunal feeding to provide some symptom relief, nutrients, fluids, and medications. For some patients, tube feeding is temporary to help them get rebalanced and for others it can be a long term solution.

Managing gastroparesis can be a stressful and overwhelming process. We recommend working closely with a Registered Dietician with experience in managing the complexities of gastroparesis. It may also be helpful to consider seeking the support of a therapist as you navigate this process.

We at MNGI are committed to providing you with the best care possible.