### What is diarrhea?

Diarrhea is having loose or watery stools three or more times in one day. Diarrhea can be caused by:

- Certain types of cancer
- Treatments: chemotherapy, immunotherapy, radiation, surgery, and bone marrow or stem cell transplant
- Infections, inflammation of the bowels
- Certain medications, including antibiotics and antacids containing magnesium
- Emotional stress or anxiety

### Why is it important to manage?

Uncontrolled diarrhea can lead to weakness, dehydration, poor appetite, and weight loss.

### Diarrhea Regimen

- Take two Imodium caplets (or the liquid-version equivalent) after your first loose stool. Take one Imodium caplet (or the liquid-version equivalent) after every subsequent loose stool.
- With your doctor's permission, consider using a soluble fiber product such as Citrucel (100% soluble fiber) or Metamucil (70% soluble fiber from psyllium husk). These soluble fiber supplements hold water and help bulk loose stools.
- For chronic diarrhea, try adding a banana flake product such as Banatrol mixed with drinks or soft foods three times daily.

### Call your doctor if you have diarrhea and any of the following:

- It continues 24 hours or longer.
- Your stools have an unusual color.
- Symptoms include abdominal pain, blood and mucus in the stool, and/or fever.
- You are on immunotherapy. Immunotherapy-related toxicity requires immediate medical attention.

### WHAT TO DO

- Take your antidiarrheal medications as prescribed.
- Drink plenty of mild and room-temperature, clear liquids throughout the day.
- Eat small meals and snacks instead of three large meals a day.
- Drink and eat high-sodium foods and liquids:
  - Broths, soups, sports drinks, crackers, and pretzels
- Drink and eat high-potassium foods and liquids:
  - Fruit nectars, potatoes without skin, and bananas
- Eat foods high in pectin:
  - Applesauce and bananas
- Drink at least one cup of liquid after each loose stool.
- Eat low-fiber foods:
  - White bread, rice, potatoes, and eggs

### WHAT TO AVOID

- Avoid greasy, fried, spicy, or very sweet foods.
- Try to limit milk and milk products; you might have trouble digesting them.
- Avoid drinks and foods that can cause gas:
  - Carbonated drinks, vegetables in the cabbage family, and dried beans and peas
- If you do want a carbonated drink, leave it open for 10 minutes or pour it into a glass and stir it to lessen the bubbles.
- Limit sugar-free gums or candies made with sorbitol, xylitol, or mannitol.
- Avoid high-fiber foods:
  - Whole-wheat breads, granola, raw fruits and vegetables, popcorn, and nuts
- Avoid beer, wine, and other drinks with alcohol.
- Avoid caffeinated beverages.
# Food List for Managing Diarrhea

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF FOOD</th>
<th>RECOMMENDED</th>
<th>NOT RECOMMENDED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High-protein foods</td>
<td>- Baked or broiled beef, pork, chicken, liver, turkey, veal, or fish&lt;br&gt;- Eggs&lt;br&gt;- Low-fat or nonfat milk, cheese, and yogurt (avoid or limit if you have lactose intolerance)</td>
<td>- Dried peas and beans (lentils, kidney beans, white beans&lt;br&gt;- Nuts and seeds&lt;br&gt;- Chunky peanut butters&lt;br&gt;- Meats that are spicy, fried, fatty, or gristly</td>
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<td>Grain foods</td>
<td>- Items made with refined white flour: breads, muffins, rolls, and pasta&lt;br&gt;- Converted or instant rice&lt;br&gt;- Refined cereals: farina, cream of wheat, cream of rice, and cornflakes&lt;br&gt;- Oatmeal&lt;br&gt;- Pancakes and waffles&lt;br&gt;- Cornbread&lt;br&gt;- Pretzels&lt;br&gt;- Graham crackers&lt;br&gt;- Saltines</td>
<td>- Whole-grain breads; multigrain breads with nuts and seeds&lt;br&gt;- Whole-grain pasta&lt;br&gt;- Brown rice and other cooked whole grains&lt;br&gt;- Whole-grain cereals&lt;br&gt;- Bran&lt;br&gt;- High-fiber instant cereals&lt;br&gt;- Granola&lt;br&gt;- Popcorn&lt;br&gt;- Baked goods and snack foods made with whole grains, dried fruit, nuts, seeds, and other high-fiber ingredients</td>
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<td>Fruits</td>
<td>- Canned or cooked fruit&lt;br&gt;- Bananas&lt;br&gt;- Applesauce</td>
<td>- Fresh, unpeeled fruit&lt;br&gt;- Dried fruit</td>
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<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>- Cooked asparagus tips, beets, carrots, peeled zucchini, mushrooms, celery, green beans, acorn squash&lt;br&gt;- Baked potato without skin&lt;br&gt;- Tomato paste, tomato puree, tomato sauce</td>
<td>- All other cooked vegetables&lt;br&gt;- Raw vegetables</td>
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<td>Other foods</td>
<td>- Mild clear liquids&lt;br&gt;- Broths and soups&lt;br&gt;- Sport drinks&lt;br&gt;- Jell-O</td>
<td>- Foods made with sugar alcohols (sorbitol, xylitol, or mannitol)&lt;br&gt;- Carbonated drinks&lt;br&gt;- Foods and drinks with caffeine&lt;br&gt;- Alcohol&lt;br&gt;- Spicy, fried, greasy, and very sweet foods</td>
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