

# Dietary Advice for Patients with a Colostomy

Nutrition & Dietetics

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Information for Patients

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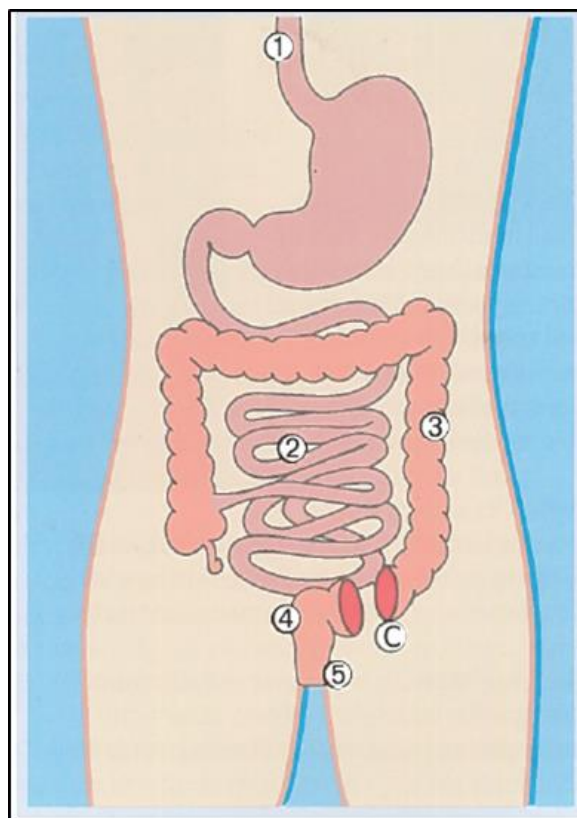
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## What is a colostomy?

A stoma is a surgically created opening which connects your intestines to the outside of your body. A colostomy is a stoma formed from bringing part of your colon (large bowel) out onto the front of your abdomen. The colostomy diverts the flow of stool out of the body and into a stoma bag and can be formed along any part of the colon. The output from a colostomy tends to be more formed, depending on the location of your stoma along the colon.

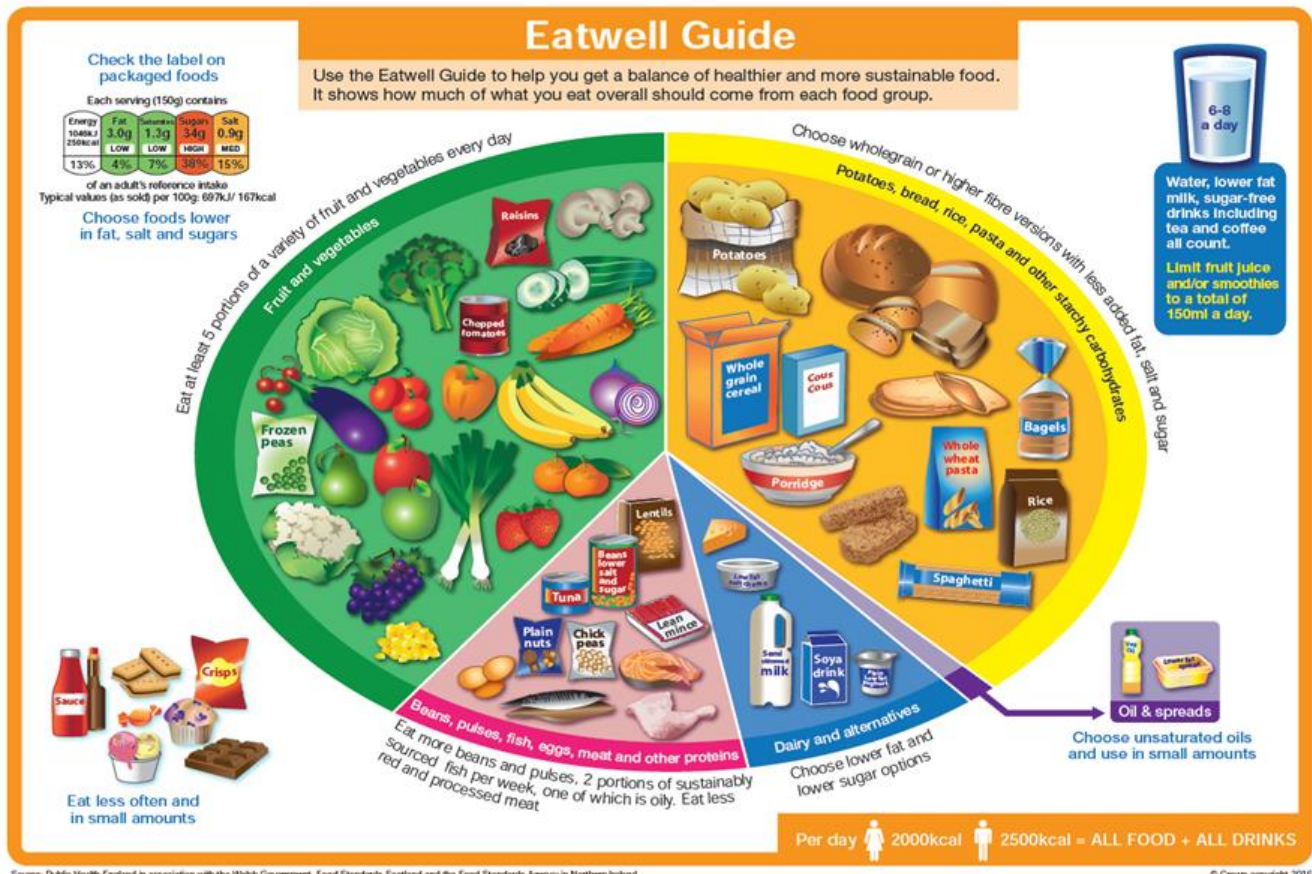
- 1. Oesophagus
- 2. Small Intestine
- 3. Large Intestine (Colon)
- 4. Rectum
- 5. Anus
- C. Colostomy

*Picture sourced from  
SecuriCare*



## Dietary Advice following the formation of a colostomy

The formation of the colostomy has minimal impact on digestion and absorption of fluids and nutrition in most cases. Most patients are able to follow a normal, healthy, balanced diet based on the 'Eat Well Guide'. It is also important to aim to drink 6-8 glasses or approximately 2L of fluid each day.



Source: Public Health England in association with the Welsh Government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland

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Everybody is different in the foods they are able to tolerate, with or without a stoma. Trial and error of different foods is a useful method in working out if there are any foods that may cause you any digestive issues. Some people may find that they struggle to tolerate foods which they frequently enjoyed before they had a colostomy. It is important to note that the bowel adapts and these issues will often resolve with time.

Below is a table of other more frequently reported symptoms and foods that may be causing the trouble:

<b>Foods that may cause loose stools</b>	High fibre foods (e.g. wholemeal/wholegrains, raw fruit and vegetables) High fat foods Alcohol Caffeinated drinks Fruit juice Spicy foods
<b>Foods that may cause odour</b>	Brassica vegetables e.g. cauliflower, broccoli, cabbage Garlic and onions Beans, peas and pulses Eggs Fish Alcohol Fizzy drinks
<b>Foods that may cause wind</b>	Brassica vegetables e.g. cauliflower, broccoli, cabbage Garlic and onions Beans, peas and pulses Fizzy drinks Chewing gum
<b>Foods that can thicken stoma output</b>	Ripe banana Boiled rice or pasta Marshmallows or jelly babies Smooth peanut butter Apple sauce

Post colostomy formation, you may wish to adopt a gradual approach to fibre reintroduction to minimise the risk of obstruction.

If your stoma blocks- **STOP** eating. Continue to drink plenty of fluids as this will help the blockage to pass. If the symptoms persist for more than 12 hours, call your GP or stoma nurse.

If you would like more information, please speak with your UHL Consultant or GP for a referral to a Dietitian.

Health information and support is available at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)  
 or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice

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