



GASTROPARESIS

What is Gastroparesis?

Gastroparesis is a disorder in which the stomach takes too long to empty its contents (normal time is 3 hours). It also occurs frequently in people with diabetes.

Gastroparesis happens when nerves to the stomach are damaged or stop working. The vagus nerve controls the movement of food through the digestive tract. If the vagus nerve is damaged, the muscles of the stomach and intestines do not work normally, and the movement of food is slowed or stopped. The causes of gastroparesis are intestinal infections, prolonged use of narcotic medications and persistently elevated blood glucose (sugar) levels over a long period of time.

Symptoms of gastroparesis are nausea, vomiting, weight loss, abdominal bloating or discomfort, an early feeling of fullness when eating or after eating, excessive tiredness and fatigue, or excessive flatulence. Most people only get a few of these symptoms.

Foods to Avoid

Greasy foods / Fast foods
Fried foods
Cheese
Butter
Fresh fruits
Uncooked vegetables
Salads
Red meat with lots of fat

Recommended Foods

Foods with a "baby food" consistency
Applesauce
Canned fruits and well-cooked/ well-steamed vegetables
Cream of Wheat
Mashed potatoes
Shakes and Smoothie drinks
Low fat milk, Yogurt, Cottage cheese
Popsicles
Broth, Soups with Chicken
Sandwiches with deli meats
Pasta with marinara sauce

Medications

ACID BLOCKERS (controls stomach acid): 1 pill daily ½ hour before breakfast, if heartburn is present

LIQUID REGLAN (speeds up digestion): 5-10 mg with each meal

CISAPRIDE was withdrawn from the US by the FDA in March 2000, but it is still available via special ordering through Janssen Pharmaceuticals.

ERYTHROMYCIN is an antibiotic which has a side effect of speeding up stomach emptying and can help some people with gastroparesis.