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GALLBLADDER DIET INFORMATION

The gallbladder stores and excretes bile and bile acids necessary for digestion of fat. Gallbladder problems include cholecystitis, or the inflammation of the gallbladder, and cholelithiasis, or gallstones. Gallbladder problems may cause **severe pain, abdominal cramps, nausea, vomiting and a loss of appetite**. The majority of people with gallstones never develop symptoms their whole lives. Once you start to develop symptoms, surgery to remove your gallbladder is very likely.

Although diet doesn't directly cause gallbladder problems -- and it won't cure them -- watching what you eat and keeping a healthy weight might help you prevent gallstones from forming and ease or avoid some discomfort that you may be experiencing.

Foods to Avoid When You Have Gallbladder Problems

Researchers say many gallbladder symptoms come from the modern Western diet, which is high in refined carbohydrates and saturated fats. Symptoms from gallstones are usually caused by our gallbladder as it tries to squeeze out bile, but a gallstone is blocking the outflow. Imagine squeezing against a closed door, and that's why it hurts. The more fatty foods you eat, the more the gallbladder tries to squeeze.

Try to avoid or limit these high-fat foods in your diet:

- Fried foods
- Highly processed foods (*doughnuts, pie, cookies*)
- Whole-milk dairy products (*cheese, ice cream, butter*)
- Fatty red meat

Also steer clear of very low-calorie diets.

Your Diet After Surgery

After having their gallbladders removed, some people develop frequent loose, watery stools that characterize diarrhea. In most cases, the diarrhea lasts no more than a few weeks to a few months.

Although there isn't a set gallbladder removal diet, the following tips may help minimize problems with diarrhea after you've had your gallbladder out:

- **Go easy on the fat.** Avoid high-fat foods, fried and greasy foods, and fatty sauces and gravies for at least a week after surgery. Instead, choose fat-free or low-fat foods. Low-fat foods are those with no more than 3 grams of fat a serving. Check labels and follow the serving size listed.
- **Increase fiber in your diet.** This can help normalize bowel movements. Add soluble fiber, such as oats and barley, to your diet. But be sure to increase the amount of fiber slowly, such as over several weeks, because too much fiber at first can make gas and cramping worse.
- **Eat smaller, more-frequent meals.** This may ensure a better mix with available bile. A healthy meal should include small amounts of lean protein, such as poultry, fish or fat-free dairy, along with vegetables, fruits and whole grains.



You may also try limiting foods that tend to worsen diarrhea, including:

- Caffeine
- Dairy products
- Greasy foods
- Very sweet foods

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Call our office at (503) 874-0574 if your diarrhea doesn't diminish or becomes more severe, or if you lose weight and become weak.

There are options that we may recommend, including medicines, such as loperamide (*Imodium A-D*), which slows down intestinal movement, or medications that decrease the laxative effect of bile, such as cholestyramine (*Prevalite*).

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/cholecystectomy/expert-answers/gallbladder-removal-diet/faq-20057813>
<http://www.livestrong.com/article/522732-foods-drinks-not-to-consume-with-gallbladder-problems/>