



Dietary Guidelines Following a Distal Pancreatectomy

A distal pancreatectomy is surgery to remove a tumor in the body or tail of the pancreas. This may make it difficult for your body to digest food and control your blood sugar. Your Registered Dietitian can help you design a diet that will meet your needs.

Below is a list of general nutrition guidelines to follow.

- Eat 5-6 small meals throughout the day to prevent feeling full. Space meals 2-3 hours apart.
- Avoid greasy or fried foods.
- Avoid high fiber foods such as raw fruits and vegetables, whole grain items, and dried beans. Bananas and seedless melon are allowed.
- Chew foods thoroughly and eat slowly.
- Eat egg, cheese, yogurt, chicken, fish, and creamy peanut butter and other high protein foods first in case you get full quickly. Protein is very important in the healing process.
- Drink fluids between meals and 30-60 minutes before or after eating. Drinking fluids at mealtime may limit solid food intake due to quickly feeling full, possible nausea, and abdominal cramping.
- Avoid eating simple sugars. Your body may have difficulty controlling your blood sugar levels causing increased thirst, frequent urination, blurry vision, or fatigue. Your RD will help you plan a diet to help control your blood sugar.
- If you are prescribed a pancreatic enzyme, take as instructed with meals and snacks to help with fat digestion.

The following page lists foods that are easy to digest. If you would like to see a Registered Dietitian once you leave the hospital, ask your physician for a referral and contact the Nutrition Wellness Practice at Columbia (646-317-4811) or Cornell at (212-746-0838) to schedule an appointment.

For additional information, please visit the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network at www.pancan.org

Foods easy to digest:

Types	Food and Drinks	Suggestions
Grains	Refined white flour products Refined cold corn or rice cereals Refined hot cereals (such as Cream of Wheat, Grits, Farina (fine-ground)), White bread, toast, pasta, and rice	Eat dry toast or crackers before getting out of bed if you have nausea in the morning.
Vegetables	Well-cooked or canned vegetables Vegetables without skins or seeds Potatoes, without skins (boiled or baked)	Avoid cooked leafy greens or spinach Avoid high fiber vegetables such as peas and corn Avoid soup made with foods that cause gas, such as dried beans and peas, broccoli, or cabbage Avoid onions
Fruits	Soft, well-cooked, or canned fruits, such as applesauce, peaches, and pears, bananas, avocado	Avoid dried fruit and fruit skin
Milk and Milk products	Milk, Lactose-free, soy, rice, or almond Yogurt or soy yogurt (plain or vanilla) Cheese, hard: (mild types, such as American Cheese, soft or semi-soft (such as cottage cheese, ricotta or cream cheese)	If you have food allergies or lactose intolerance, read labels carefully
Meat and Other Proteins	Tender well-cooked beef, pork, poultry, or fish	Cook thoroughly and to proper temperature. Use a food thermometer to check when foods are safely cooked. Use cooking methods that include a liquid such as braising to maintain tenderness
Fats and Oils	Choose healthy, such as canola and olive oils. Cream cheese	Use in moderation
Drinks	Water Clear carbonated drinks that have lost their fizz Fruit juice without pulp (such as cranberry or grape) Tea Sports drinks	Limit the portion sizes of high sugar beverages
Other	Soups: Low fiber (strained or puree, if needed) Clear broth (such as chicken, vegetable, or beef) Dessert and snacks: Custard, gelatin, frozen yogurt, ice cream, lemon drop candy, popsicles, pudding, sherbet, sorbet	Limit the portion sizes of high sugar desserts and snacks

