

# Eating for Gastroparesis: Guidelines, Tips & Recipes

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# Welcome

First, I'd like to both thank and congratulate you for downloading this book. Being proactive and educating yourself is one of the most important aspects of managing gastroparesis.

I was diagnosed with idiopathic gastroparesis over six years ago. Since then, I've become a Certified Health Counselor helping others develop dietary and lifestyle strategies to better manage the disorder. I know from both personal and professional experience exactly how difficult it can be for gastroparesis patients to figure out what and how to eat.

Whether you have gastroparesis yourself or you're caring for someone who does, I truly hope that the information and recipes in this book help to alleviate the confusion and uncertainty that often surrounds the "gastroparesis diet."

As you read, please keep in mind I am not a physician. What I'm providing are guidelines and suggestions, not medical advice. Dietary tolerances, severity of symptoms, and nutritional considerations vary greatly among gastroparesis patients. Please consult your physician if you have any questions as to whether or not a particular suggestion is appropriate for you.



# Part I: The Guidelines

In this section, we'll cover the basic guidelines of a gastroparesis (GP) diet. As you read, remember that you know your body, symptoms and boundaries better than anyone else and some of the suggestions may not be appropriate for you.

Also keep in mind that dietary modifications are a symptom-management tool rather than a treatment for the disorder. Eating foods that are not considered gastroparesis-friendly (GP-friendly) may make you feel worse in the short-term but it's not likely to make the disorder worse overall.

Likewise, following a gastroparesis-friendly diet won't address the underlying cause of the disorder, but may significantly alleviate day-to-day symptoms. While this is especially true for those with mild to moderate gastroparesis, dietary modifications in conjunction with other medical treatment can provide relief for severe GP, as well.

No studies have been conducted to determine which specific foods or diets alleviate or exacerbate symptoms in patients with gastroparesis (GPer). The standard recommendations are based on the basic science of digestion, as well as the experience and observations of patients and clinicians over time.

# The Guidelines

1. Eat several small meals throughout the day.
2. Follow a low-fat diet.
3. Reduce the total amount of fiber in your diet.
4. Limit food with indigestible parts.
5. Supplement with nutrient-rich liquids.
6. Modify the guidelines according to your symptoms.

## Frequently Asked Question

### What does “Gastroparesis Friendly” mean?

Throughout this book, you’ll see the term “GP-friendly” used to describe various foods and recipes. When I call something GP-friendly, I’m indicating that:

- (a) It follows the gastroparesis diet guidelines. In other words, it’s relatively low in fat, low in fiber, and easy to digest.
- (b) It doesn’t contain any nuts, seeds, skins, hulls, peels, dried fruit, raw vegetables, or indigestible parts.
- (c) It’s likely to be well-tolerated by many GPs.

Anything that meets these criteria is unlikely to cause any serious problems. The catch? There are things that I deem “GP-friendly” that don’t agree with me personally. Likewise, there may be some that don’t agree with you.

As I tell my clients, GP-friendly doesn’t always mean <your name here>-friendly. While I know that can be frustrating and it’s tempting to stick to a handful of “safe” foods, I encourage you to keep trying things — particularly those that *are* GP-friendly — for the sake of your overall nutrition, as well as your sanity!

## MODIFY THE GUIDELINES ACCORDING TO YOUR SYMPTOMS

I'm starting with the last guideline because it's the most important *and* often the most frustrating. While I wish that I could tell you exactly what to eat, the unfortunate truth is this: there is no single "gastroparesis diet." In fact, you'd probably be hard-pressed to find a single food that's well-tolerated by all GPer.

Why do tolerances vary so much from patient to patient? It's hard to say. Perhaps it has to do with the wide-variety of underlying causes. Sure, we all have delayed gastric emptying but the reason the emptying is delayed is often very different.

There are also a variety of symptoms associated with gastroparesis, including nausea, vomiting, pain, fullness, reflux and bloating. Not every gastroparesis patient experiences the same symptoms to the same degree. In addition, the actual rate at which the stomach empties varies greatly among those diagnosed with gastroparesis. (Interestingly, the severity of symptoms doesn't always correlate to the degree of delayed gastric emptying.)

What's more, some GPer have other digestive issues, like lactose intolerance, fructose malabsorption, or food allergies. Given all of the variables, it makes sense that the dietary strategies for managing gastroparesis would be different from person to person.

The issue is further complicated by the fact that symptoms tend to ebb and flow. Even individual tolerances may vary from week to week or day to day. Whether or not a particular food or meal causes symptoms can depend on portion size, how quickly or slowly it's eaten, and what was eaten earlier that day or even the day before.

The bottom line is this: there is no one-size-fits-all diet for gastroparesis. There are only a set of guidelines from which you can develop *your* gastroparesis diet. Careful trial-and-error – within the boundaries of the general guidelines — is the only way to figure out exactly what you can and cannot tolerate.

Throughout the remainder of the book, I'll provide you with ideas, suggestions and guidance to help you do just that.



## Frequently Asked Question

### **How do I get past the fear of experimenting?**

First, know that you're not alone. Many gastroparesis patients become fearful of straying from their "safe" foods or even of eating in general. If you're experiencing these feelings, it's important to talk with a professional who can help you work through them. Limiting your food intake unnecessarily will only compromise your overall health and nutrition.

Another thing that may help is to keep a food journal. This will allow you to see on paper what *actually* happens when you try new foods. Remember that even if a particular food causes temporary symptoms, it won't make the gastroparesis any more severe overall.

### Quick Tip

#### **Keep a Journal**

If I could only offer you one tip, it would be to keep a food journal. There is no better way to figure out what does and does not work for you than by consistently keeping track of what you eat and how you feel.

It needn't be time-consuming. You don't need to track calories or other nutritional information. Simply keep a little notebook with you throughout the day to jot down your meals and any symptoms that you experience.

At the end of the day, write down a "symptom score" from 1 to 5. One being a great, symptom-free day; five being a day full of horrible symptoms. Watch for patterns that emerge over time between the severity of your symptoms and what, how, and/or how much you eat.

## **EAT SEVERAL SMALL MEALS THROUGHOUT THE DAY**

Decreasing meal size can alleviate some of the fullness, distention and pain that many GPerS feel after eating, as well as help the stomach to empty more quickly. In fact, a large determinant of gastric emptying time in a normal stomach is the volume of food ingested. A larger meal will take longer to empty than a smaller meal.

For those with gastroparesis, a good rule of thumb is to eat about one-third to one-half of a “normal” sized meal. These days it can be hard to determine what constitutes a normal-sized meal, so a more helpful suggestion might be to consume around 1 to 1.5 cups of food and at least 200 calories. A certain number of calories is required to trigger gastric emptying, so eating too little may be counter-productive.

Depending on how much food you can tolerate at one time, you may need to eat 4, 5, 6 or even 7 times per day. Some GPerS do best waiting 3-4 hours between mini-meals, whereas others find eating a smaller amount every 2 hours works better.

You may find that you can tolerate larger meals in the morning but need to reduce meal size as the day goes on. Likewise, you may tolerate more solid foods earlier in the day and do better with soft foods or liquids in the evening. On the other hand, if your symptoms are worse in the morning, try starting the day with liquids or soft foods and switch to small, solid meals later on.

Experiment with various meal sizes, compositions and schedules to see which combination works best for you. Ideally, you want to find the point at which you’re experiencing fewer symptoms while still being able to consume adequate calories and nutrition.

Keep in mind that even once you figure out which particular way of eating best suits your needs and preferences, you may need to tweak your schedule, meal pattern or food choices as your symptoms wax and wane over time. Gastroparesis is not a static disease; most patients have good days and bad days, so being flexible is important.

## Frequently Asked Question

### **What constitutes a “mini meal?”**

When eating small meals throughout the day, it's easy to get into a snacking mindset, opting for single foods, like crackers, yogurt, or a banana, rather than well-balanced meals.

While this might be the easiest way to go, it's not optimal for nutrition or satisfaction. As much as possible, mini-meals should be well-balanced, with small portions of easy-to-digest carbohydrates, protein and a little fat.

For example:

#### *Breakfast*

1 cup of hot cereal  
1/2 banana or 4 oz. pureed fruit  
1 tablespoon peanut butter

#### *Lunch*

1 cup chicken noodle soup  
Small white roll with 1 tsp butter

#### *Dinner*

2 oz. baked skinless chicken breast  
1/2 cup mashed potatoes  
1/2 cup vegetable puree

Nutritional supplement drinks and certain smoothies also make for well-balanced snacks between breakfast, lunch and dinner.

## FOLLOW A LOW-FAT DIET

Dietary fat delays digestion. In other words, the more fat in a meal, the longer it will take to empty from the stomach. For that reason, gastroparesis patients are advised to follow a low-fat diet. Please keep in mind, however, that **low-fat does not mean no fat**. Your body needs some fat to function properly and removing all fat from the diet isn't necessary to reduce symptoms.

A typical recommendation for gastroparesis patients is about 40 grams of fat per day. Some GPer may find that they do better with 20-30 grams, while others may be able to consume up to 50 grams without exacerbating symptoms. It's okay to experiment with eating various amounts of fat; it will not make your gastroparesis more severe overall. If there is a certain higher-fat food that you tolerate, there is no reason to remove it from your diet unless it starts to provoke symptoms.

It's best to consume a small amount of fat at several of your meals throughout the day rather than having one high-fat meal. For example, you might add a tablespoon of peanut butter to your smoothie at breakfast, put a slice of cheese on your sandwich at lunch, and roast your potatoes in a teaspoon of olive oil at dinner.

Some GPer find that they tolerate more fat in the morning and less as the day goes on. If that's the case, just be careful not to eat so much fat at breakfast that you feel too full or sick to eat properly for the rest of the day.

In small amounts, any kind of fat can be considered GP-friendly. You should avoid fried foods and fatty meats, however, as these are especially hard to digest. You should also avoid trans fats, which are solid at room temperature and are not health promoting.

### ***Amount of dietary fat per 1 Tablespoon:***

Olive oil – 14 grams

Butter – 11 grams

Peanut Butter – 8 grams

Light Butter – 5-7 grams

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **How can I stop losing weight?**

Many gastroparesis patients lose weight initially, either due to severe symptoms or dietary restrictions. To avoid further weight loss, focus on maximizing the nutrition in every single bite or sip.

Since most GPer fill up very quickly, avoid foods and drinks that take up space without providing much nourishment, such as diet drinks, puffed or whipped foods, fat-free cookies and crackers, etc. Instead choose nutrient-dense foods that pack a lot of vitamins, calories and/or healthy fats into a small volume, such as smooth nut butters, oils, fresh juices and smoothies.

High-fat liquids, such as milkshakes, cream soups and full-fat ice cream are often well-tolerated by gastroparesis patients and can also be helpful for weight gain.

### **Why am I gaining weight with GP?**

Though many GPer struggle with weight loss, there are some patients who easily maintain or even gain weight despite eating very little. This can be due to a history of yo-yo dieting, the high-carb diet, constant grazing, or underlying conditions.

It's worth noting that metabolic disorders, such as hypothyroidism, can cause delayed gastric emptying *and* weight gain. If you continue to gain weight after being diagnosed with idiopathic gastroparesis, consider having your thyroid checked.

Unfortunately, many doctors dismiss the complaints of GP patients who maintain a healthy weight. It's important to find a physician who takes you and your symptoms seriously regardless of weight.

To avoid further weight gain, focus on well-balanced mini-meals, include some fat in your diet to satiate the mind and the body, and include moderate exercise into your daily routine.

## **REDUCE DIETARY FIBER**

Like fat, dietary fiber also delays gastric emptying and can increase feelings of fullness, distention and bloating. The amount of fiber tolerated will vary from patient to patient, but the typical recommendation for a gastroparesis diet is about 10-15 grams of fiber per day.

It's recommended that patients avoid high-fiber foods like raw fruits and vegetables and high-fiber grains. Instead, opt for lower-fiber versions of these foods, such as well-cooked or juiced vegetables, cooked or pureed fruits, white rice, corn or rice cereals, and sourdough or French bread.

Some higher-fiber foods, such as whole wheat products that don't contain any nuts or seeds, aren't associated with bezoar formation and pose no real risk other than potentially exacerbating symptoms and further delaying gastric emptying in the short-term. If you can eat these types of foods without becoming too full to meet your caloric and nutrition needs, it's not necessary to completely remove them from your diet.

## **LIMIT FOODS WITH INDIGESTIBLE PARTS**

In addition to reducing the overall amount of fiber in the diet, most gastroenterologists and dietitians recommend that gastroparesis patients avoid foods that can't be chewed properly or contain indigestible parts.

These include:

- raw and dried fruits and veggies
- nuts and seeds
- Skins, peels, and hulls
- Legumes and dried beans

Ultimately, what you choose to eat or not eat depends on your personal tolerances, physician's advice, severity of symptoms and comfort level. Some gastroparesis patients regularly eat foods that are not considered GP-friendly without any issues at all.

If you'd like to experiment, start by opting for pureed forms of harder-to-digest foods, such as hummus instead of chickpeas or a blueberry smoothie instead of whole blueberries.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Should I be concerned about bezoars?**

Many GPerS worry about bezoars, hardened masses of undigested food that can collect in the stomach. However, unless your doctor has indicated that you have a high risk of developing a bezoar, the need for concern is low. In fact, bezoars are a fairly rare complication, occurring in only about 20% of the gastroparesis population. If you have impaired motility of the small bowel, you may be at a higher risk for bezoars.

Foods specifically associated with bezoar formation are: apples, berries, broccoli, Brussel sprouts, coconuts, corn, green beans, figs, oranges, persimmons, potato peels, sauerkraut, and fiber supplements, such as Metamucil, Peridem, Benefiber, Fibercon and Citrucel.

### **What can I do about constipation?**

If you are not having regular bowel movements, it's important to inform your doctor. Chronic constipation can worsen symptoms of nausea, fullness and bloating, as well as further delay the emptying of the stomach.

To prevent constipation, GP-friendly forms of fiber – well-cooked vegetables and pureed fruits – should be included in the diet, as tolerated. In addition, consider taking a daily magnesium supplement, such as NaturalCalm, to regulate the bowels. Some GPerS may need over-the-counter products, such as Miralax or Milk of Magnesia, as well.

Bulk fiber supplements such as Metamucil, Peridem, Fibercon and Citrucel should be avoided as they contain insoluble fiber and may exacerbate symptoms.

## SUPPLEMENT WITH NUTRIENT-RICH LIQUIDS

For most gastroparesis patients with mild to moderate symptoms, it's not necessary to follow an all liquid diet. However, because liquids empty more quickly than solids, alternating or supplementing liquid or pureed meals with solid meals can decrease symptoms, enhance nutrition and help prevent weight loss.

To ensure adequate nutrition, focus on the nutrients in your liquids rather than calories alone.

A full-liquid diet includes:

- Thinned hot cereals
- Pureed soups
- Smoothies and milkshakes
- Pulp-free fruit and vegetable juices
- Pudding and gelatin
- Ice cream or frozen yogurt
- Regular and Greek yogurt
- All pureed foods

### *Meal Replacement Drinks*

Liquid meal-replacements contain a balance of carbohydrates, protein, and fat, as well as added vitamins and minerals. There are several to choose from, but not all are equally well-tolerated by all patients.

- Ensure or Ensure Plus (gluten-free; fiber content varies)
- Boost or Boost High Protein (gluten-free; fiber content varies)
- Enlive (clear liquid; gluten-free; lactose-free)
- Orgain (organic; lower in sugar than others; gluten-free)
- Carnation Instant Breakfast powder (can be mixed with milk or added to smoothies for extra calories and vitamins)



## Quick Tips

### **Chew, Chew, Chew**

Digestion begins in the mouth with chewing and the enzymes contained in saliva. In gastroparesis patients, the stomach can't break down food as effectively as it should, so thorough chewing is very important. Aim to chew your food until it reaches a liquid consistency.

### **Go For a Walk**

Movement after meals, even just a slow 10 or 15 minute walk, can stimulate digestion and help relieve fullness. Avoid strenuous exercise after eating though, as it will delay digestion.

## Frequently Asked Question

### **Why can't I tolerate meal replacement drinks?**

Though meal replacement drinks, like Boost or Ensure, are frequently recommended for gastroparesis patients, some find that they exacerbate symptoms of fullness and nausea.

That may be because nutrient-dense liquids can take longer to empty from the stomach than other liquids. To alleviate this problem, try diluting the drink with up to an equal amount of water.

Volume may also be a factor. Whereas most gastroparesis are conscious of their portion sizes when eating solid food, it's easy to consume a large quantity of liquid in a short period of time. Make an effort to sip your beverages, drinking them slowly over time.



## Part 2: The Details

Now that you're familiar with the basic guidelines of a gastroparesis diet, it's time to think about what you're actually going to eat. On the following pages, you'll find a list of GP-friendly foods. Think of it as a starting point for your own experimentation. This list is not conclusive, as there are certainly many other foods and products that can safely be included in a gastroparesis diet.

When deciding whether or not a product is GP-friendly, take into account the nutrition facts, serving size *and* ingredient list. Pay specific attention to the amount of fat and fiber in each serving and check for any non GP-friendly ingredients, such as dried fruit, nuts or seeds. Above all, consider your own tolerances and past experience.

Figuring out exactly what to eat may seem overwhelming at first, but it does get easier and I urge you to continue experimenting and expanding your dietary choices as much as possible. Keeping a wide variety of well-tolerated, GP-friendly options on hand will help minimize the stress, boredom, and nutritional issues that can be associated with a limited diet.

## **DAIRY & DAIRY ALTERNATIVES**

Dairy products become a dietary staple for many GPer, while others find that they exacerbate bloating, nausea and bowel irregularities. Pay close attention to whether or not dairy products worsen your GI symptoms.

Milk: skim, 1% or 2%

Non-dairy milk: almond, rice, soy or coconut

Yogurt: any non-fat or low-fat variety without seeds or fruit pieces

- Greek yogurt: 0% or 2%
- Soy or coconut milk yogurt
- “Whipped” varieties may cause additional fullness, belching or bloating

Cottage Cheese

- Non-fat, 1% or 2%
- “Whipped” varieties may cause additional fullness, belching or bloating

Cream cheese

- Non-fat or low-fat, any variety without nuts or veggie/fruit pieces
- Note: “reduced-fat” cream cheese may contain upwards of 10 grams of fat per serving and would not be considered GP-friendly

Other Cheese: any low-fat or light cheese

- Laughing Cow: Light Swiss Wedges or Mini-Babybell Light
- Farmers’ Cheese

Ice cream/frozen yogurt: non-fat or low-fat varieties without nuts or seeds

- Full-fat varieties, if tolerated: no add-ins, pieces or solid chunks
- milkshakes, if tolerated
- Sherbet and seedless sorbet
- Creamsicles or low-fat fudge bars

## Quick Tips

### **Beware of Added Fiber**

Always check the fiber content of packaged foods, even if you've purchased the product before. More and more food manufacturers are now adding inulin and/or "digestion resistant" malodextrin to their products to boost the fiber content.

This added fiber can turn an otherwise GP-friendly product into just the opposite. For example, Breyer's Fat Free Creamy Vanilla Ice Cream now contains 3 grams of fiber per half-cup serving. If you eat one cup of the ice cream, you'll consume about half of the daily total recommended fiber intake for GPs!

In addition to ice cream and frozen yogurt, extra fiber is showing up in all sorts of products, including meal-replacement drinks, cereal, jelly, snack foods, and yogurt.

### **Choose Whole Foods Over Processed Foods**

In general, processed products are stripped of nutrition and loaded with artificial ingredients. Since gastroparesis patients need to pack as much nutrition as possible into each bite of food, whole foods with real ingredients are almost always a better choice.

In addition, some additives found in conventional packaged products, including high fructose corn syrup and sugar alcohols, may contribute to bloating, distention and bowel irregularities for some patients with functional gastrointestinal disorders like gastroparesis.

## **PROTEIN**

### Meat/Poultry

- Lean ground beef or turkey
- Turkey or chicken breast, skinless
- Lean pork chops
- Turkey bacon
- Poultry sausage

### Fish

- Tuna fish
- Tilapia
- Haddock
- Halibut
- Orange Roughy

### Eggs

- Whole eggs
- Egg whites
- Egg Beaters

### Tofu\*

### Nut Butters\* - smooth/creamy; in moderation

- Almond butter
- Cashew butter
- Peanut butter
- Nutella
- PB2: Powdered Peanut Butter
- Better 'n' Peanut Butter

## Frequently Asked Question

### **Is it possible to maintain a healthy vegetarian diet?**

With extra planning and diligence, it is possible for GPerS to safely follow a vegetarian diet. Choices would include:

- Fruits and vegetables (see pages 24-25)
- Low-fiber grains
- Non-dairy milks
- Non-animal protein sources, such as nut butters, protein powders and soy products

Soy can be difficult to digest, especially in processed products, but for those who tolerate it, tofu and soy milk are good vegetarian sources of protein. (Note: if you take medication for hypothyroidism, don't eat soy within four hours of taking your medicine as it can interfere with absorption.)

Depending on how strictly you adhere to the vegetarian diet, eggs and low-fat dairy products can also be an excellent source of protein and other vitamins.

In most cases, supplementation will be necessary to ensure adequate nutrition. A vitamin B12 supplement is typically recommended for all vegetarians and a multi-vitamin is recommended for everyone who follows a gastroparesis diet.

I would suggest that GP patients wishing to follow a vegetarian diet consult a nutrition professional who is familiar with gastroparesis for personal guidance and recommendations.

## **FRUITS & VEGGIES (WELL-COOKED; NO SKINS OR PEELS)**

Apples: applesauce, apple butter, cooked/stewed

Bananas: raw, roasted, or in smoothies

Mangos: in smoothies or purees

Melons: fresh; any variety, seedless

Papaya: in smoothies or purees; may aid in digestion

Pears: canned

Peaches: canned, pureed or frozen for use in smoothies

Squash\*: cooked, seeds removed; mashed or pureed

- Acorn
- Butternut
- Pumpkin

Tomatoes: sauce or juice only

Beets

Carrots

Parsnips\*

Spinach\* -- very well-cooked; pureed, if necessary

Sweet Potatoes and Yams\* -- baked, mashed or pureed

Turnips

White Potatoes: baked, boiled, mashed, or roasted; no skins



## Frequently Asked Question

### **How can I add more fruits and veggies to my diet?**

Many gastroparesis patients worry about not eating an adequate amount or variety of fruits and vegetables while following a GP-friendly diet. Fortunately there are some easy ways to safely include a wider array of fruits and veggies in your diet.

#### *Fresh Juices*

Juicing removes almost all of the fiber from produce while retaining most of the nutrients and enzymes. Almost any fruit or vegetable can be juiced, however it's a good idea to start with small amounts of juice diluted with up to an equal amount of water. Depending on the quality of your juicer and your personal tolerances, you may need to pour the juice through a fine mesh strainer to remove any remaining bits or pulp.

#### *Bottled Juices & Smoothies*

If you don't have an electric juicer or don't have the time to make fresh juice, you can purchase Odwalla, Bolthouse Farms or Naked brand juices and smoothies in the produce section of your supermarket. Be sure to check the fiber content, as some varieties are not GP-friendly.

#### *Baby Food & Purees*

While it may not sound appealing at first, incorporating baby food into your diet can be a safe and convenient way to consume fruits and veggies that you may not otherwise tolerate, such as berries, greens, squash and beans. Try adding the fruits to hot cereal or mixing the vegetables into mashed potatoes.

You can make your own "baby food" at home by simply cooking and pureeing your choice of fruits and vegetables. [See page 47 for puree recipes.]

## **GRAINS**

Cold Cereals: any low-fat, low-fiber rice, corn, oat or wheat cereal without nuts, seeds or pieces of whole grains

- Rice Krispies
- Chex, all varieties
- Special K, original variety
- Corn Flakes

Hot Cereals

- Cream of Wheat
- Cream of Rice
- Cream of Buckwheat
- Quinoa Flakes

Bread

- Any sourdough, French or white bread, pita or roll
- Light wheat\*: no seed, nuts or pieces
- English muffins
- Bagels: no nuts, seeds, or dried fruit

Pancakes & Waffles: frozen, homemade or restaurant – no butter on top

- Van's Buttermilk Pancakes (frozen)
- Van's Totally Natural, Wheat & Gluten-Free Mini Waffles (frozen)
- Van's Totally Natural French Toast Sticks (frozen)

Pasta

- Any white pasta: couscous, orzo, spaghetti, fettuccine, ziti, penne, etc.
- Rice, corn or buckwheat pasta with 2 grams of fiber or less per serving

Rice: any short or long-grain white rice

- Lundberg risotto: Creamy Parmesan and Butternut Squash varieties

## Quick Tip

### **Ginger Soothes Nausea**

When you're feeling sick, eating or drinking something made with ginger can help. Ginger is a natural remedy for nausea and has been shown to stimulate gastric emptying. There are a variety of ginger products available. Here are some of my favorites:

- Organic Ginger Tea - [www.TraditionalMedicinals.com](http://www.TraditionalMedicinals.com)
- Gin-Gins BOOST Ginger Candy - [www.TheGingerPeople.com](http://www.TheGingerPeople.com)
- Seaband Ginger Gum - [www.Sea-band.com](http://www.Sea-band.com)
- Zevia Ginger Ale - [www.Zevia.com](http://www.Zevia.com)
- Mi-Del Organic Ginger Snaps - [www.MiDelCookies.com](http://www.MiDelCookies.com)
- Ginger Wonder Syrup - [www.NewChapter.com](http://www.NewChapter.com)

## Frequently Asked Question

### **Should I take vitamins?**

A multi-vitamin is recommended for everyone following a gastroparesis diet. Choose a chewable or liquid formula to enhance absorption and minimize digestive discomfort.

Gastroparesis patients may also benefit from supplemental:

- Vitamin D
- Vitamin B12
- Magnesium
- Calcium
- Iron

## **SNACK FOODS & TREATS**

Crackers: any low-fat, low-fiber variety without seeds

- Goldfish crackers
- Saltines
- Low-fat graham crackers

Cookies: any low-fat, low-fiber variety without nuts

- Reduced-fat Nilla Wafers
- Annie's Bunny Grahams, any variety

Pretzels: any variety

Potato Chips

- Pop Chips, any variety
- Baked potato chips, any variety

Rice Krispie Treats

- Homemade
- Packaged, any variety
- EnviroKids Crispy Rice Bars

Low-Fat Baked Goods

- No-Pudge Brownie Mix
- See recipes in Part 3

Jello: any variety

Puddings: any low-fat variety

- Homemade using lower-fat recipes (see Part 3)
- Low-fat rice pudding

## Frequently Asked Question

### **IS IT POSSIBLE TO EAT AT RESTAURANTS?**

Yes, going out to eat is possible for gastroparesis patients, though proper planning is helpful.

Here are some tips:

#### **1. Know what you're going to order before you arrive.**

It can be uncomfortable to search a menu for GP-friendly items while others look on, asking whether or not there's anything you can eat. The good news is almost all chain restaurants and many independent establishments now post their menus online. Some also provide nutrition information, which is extremely valuable since seemingly healthy dishes can sometimes be loaded with fat. If possible, do your research ahead of time and decide what you're going to order so that you don't even have to open the menu.

#### **2. Ask for what you want.**

Order what you want, whether that means just a side dish or something off of the children's menu. Also, don't be afraid to make special requests. G-PACT offers free wallet-sized restaurant cards that briefly explain gastroparesis and your need for special accommodations. Visit [www.G-PACT.org](http://www.G-PACT.org) to order.

#### **3. Enjoy the company.**

Do your best to focus your attention on the people you're with and the conversation taking place rather than the food. While that's certainly easier said than done, being social and continuing to spend time with friends – even if that means watching other people eat food that you wish you could be eating – is usually better for the spirit than sitting at home alone!



## Part 3: The Recipes

When following a gastroparesis diet, it's easy to get stuck in a rut, eating the same foods over and over. It can also be hard to make and eat meals with your family or friends.

In this section, I've included a wide variety of recipes that I hope will enhance both the enjoyment and nutritional quality of your diet, as well as help you achieve as much of a sense of "normalcy" as possible.

In general, all of the recipes are considered "GP-Friendly." Once again, it's important to remember that not every recipe will not be appropriate for every gastroparesis patient. You may need to alter the ingredients slightly to create a dish that's specifically suited to your dietary tolerances.

Enjoy!

# Breakfast

## HOT CEREAL

Since it's low in fat, low in fiber and easy to digest, hot cereal is often very well-tolerated. There are tons of possible flavor combinations; mix and match to find your favorites! Cooking times vary for each type of cereal, so prepare according to the directions on the package. Prepared individual portions can be frozen in plastic containers for a quick and easy meal.

### ***Choose a Cereal:***

- Cream of Wheat – good source of iron; low in fiber
- Cream of Rice/Brown Rice Cream – gluten-free; low in fiber
- Cream of Buckwheat - gluten-free; low in fiber
- Quinoa Flakes - gluten-free; higher protein; 2.6g fiber per serving

### ***Choose a Liquid:***

- Water
- Milk (skim, low-fat, or whole – depending on tolerance to fat)
- Almond, Rice or Soy Milk
- Juice (apple, white grape)

### ***Choose Add-Ins:***

- ¼- ½ cup homemade applesauce
- 2-4 oz. baby food fruit
- ½ banana, mashed up
- ¼ cup canned pumpkin\*
- 1 tbsp smooth almond butter, creamy peanut butter or Nutella
- 1 scoop of protein powder
- honey or maple syrup
- jelly or seedless jam
- cinnamon, ginger, apple pie spice, or pumpkin pie spice



## The Gastroparesis-Friendly Kitchen

Stocking your kitchen with the right tools will make cooking and preparing gastroparesis-friendly meals easier. I recommend investing in the following:

- immersion blender (for soups and purees)
- blender or Magic Bullet (for smoothies)
- potato ricer (for non-pasteey mashed potatoes and other purees)
- 4, 8 and 12 oz. freezer-safe containers (to freeze GP-friendly portions of your GP-friendly favorites)
- a good set of measuring cups (for portion control)
- *optional*: electric juicer (for fresh fruit and vegetable juices)

Depending on your personal tolerances, I also recommend keeping the following ingredients on hand, as they're used in a number of GP-friendly recipes:

- non-fat cooking spray
- eggs, egg whites or Egg Beaters
- some kind of milk (dairy or non-dairy)
- low-fiber pasta
- white rice
- almond or peanut butter

## **BUTTERMILK PANCAKES**

*MAKES 9 4-INCH PANCAKES*

*Your whole family will love these light, fluffy pancakes. Each one has about 3 grams of fat.*

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
  - 2 tbsp sugar
  - 1 tsp baking powder
  - 1/2 tsp baking soda
  - 1/4 tsp salt
  - 1 cup low-fat buttermilk
  - 1 tsp vegetable oil
  - 1 large egg, lightly beaten
1. Combine flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt in a large bowl.
  2. Make a well in the center of the mixture.
  3. In a separate bowl, combine buttermilk, oil, and egg.
  4. Pour into the center of the flour mixture, stirring until smooth.
  5. Spoon about 1/4 cup batter onto a hot nonstick griddle or nonstick skillet coated with cooking spray.
  6. Turn pancakes when tops are covered with bubbles and edges look cooked.
  7. Cook an additional 2 minutes on other side.

To freeze leftover pancakes, cool completely and then place in zip-top freezer bags. Reheat in the microwave or toaster oven.

## MOM'S FAVORITE ORANGE SCONES

SERVES 8

*I made these scones as part of a Mother's Day brunch a couple of years ago and my mom has requested them every Mother's Day since! Each scone has about 4 grams of fat.*

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
  - 2 tsp baking powder
  - 1/2 tsp baking soda
  - 1/4 tsp salt
  - 1/3 cup sugar
  - 3 tbsp butter, cut into pieces
  - 1 cup fat-free vanilla yogurt
  - 1/4 cup orange juice
  - 1/2 cup powdered sugar
  - 1-2 tbsp orange juice
1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Spray a baking sheet with cooking spray.
  2. Combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt and sugar in a bowl.
  3. Cut in butter with pastry blender or smooch with your hands until it's crumbly and mealy in texture.
  4. Combine yogurt and 1/4 cup juice in another bowl. Add to flour mixture, stirring just until moistened.
  5. Flour your hands and transfer dough to the baking sheet.
  6. Shape into a 9-inch disk. Cut into 8 wedges, cutting into but not all the way through the dough.
  7. Bake for 16 minutes or until golden brown. Let cool for 15 minutes.
  8. Meanwhile, stir together powdered sugar and remaining orange juice.
  9. Drizzle glaze over cooled scones. Allow glaze to set before serving.

## **ONE MINUTE EGGS**

*Eggs are well-tolerated by many gastroparesis patients and there's no easier or faster way to make scrambled eggs than this. You can substitute 1/2 cup of EggBeaters for the ingredients listed and/or throw in a little shredded low-fat cheese, if desired.*

- 1 egg
- 1 egg white
- splash of milk

1. Spray a coffee mug with cooking spray.
2. Mix egg and egg white in the mug with a splash of milk.
3. Microwave for 30 seconds. Stir to break up eggs.
4. Microwave another 30 seconds, or until set.
5. Let stand about 2 minutes before eating.

## BREAKFAST PARFAIT

*An easy, high-protein breakfast with about 8 grams of healthy fat. You can omit the peanut butter, however, making it nearly fat-free.*

- 6 oz. vanilla 0% Greek yogurt
- 1 tbsp creamy peanut butter
- 1/2 banana, sliced
- 1/4 cup crispy rice cereal

1. Mix yogurt and peanut butter until combined.
2. Layer half of yogurt in the bottom of a parfait glass or bowl.
3. Top with half of the banana slices.
4. Pour cereal over banana slices.
5. Add the rest of the yogurt.
6. Top with remaining banana slices.

# Family Friendly

## LOW-FAT TUNA NOODLE CASSEROLE

SERVES 6-8

- 4 cups dry penne pasta
- 1 small onion, finely chopped (*if tolerated*)
- 2 (6 ounce) cans solid white tuna, water packed
- 2 (10 ounce) cans fat-free cream of mushroom soup, undiluted
- 1/2 cup 0% Greek yogurt or low-fat sour cream
- 1 cup skim milk or 1 cup 1% low-fat milk
- 1 tbsp Mrs. Dash seasoning mix
- 1/2 tsp garlic powder
- 1/2 tsp black pepper ( or to taste)
- 1 cup grated reduced-fat cheddar cheese

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Grease a 13 x 9-inch baking dish with cooking spray.
3. Boil the pasta in a large pot of boiling water until al dente; drain then transfer to a large bowl.
4. Add in onion and tuna; toss to combine.
5. In a saucepan heat soup with milk until smooth.
6. Stir in yogurt/mayo and seasoning/spices until combined.
7. Pour into the bowl and toss to combine.
8. Transfer mixture to prepared baking dish.
9. Bake for about 30 minutes.

## OVEN “FRIED” CHICKEN

*SERVES 4*

- 2 lbs skinless chicken breast
  - 2/3 cup Bisquick reduced-fat baking mix
  - 1 1/2 tsp paprika
  - 1 tsp salt
  - 1/4 tsp pepper
  - 1 Tbsp butter
1. Put butter in 13x9 baking dish. Preheat oven to 425°F and stick the baking dish with butter in the oven while it’s preheating.
  2. Combine Bisquick, paprika, salt, and pepper in a large Ziplock bag.
  3. Rinse chicken in cold water, then put 1 or 2 pieces at a time into the Ziplock bag and shake well to coat.
  4. Put the coated chicken breasts in the buttered baking dish.
  5. Bake for 35 minutes; turn pieces over and bake an additional 10-15 minutes or until internal temperature reaches 160°F.

## FAT-FREE CREAMY MASHED POTATOES

- 3 cups of peeled, diced potatoes
  - 8 ounces fat-free chicken broth
  - Salt/garlic salt/black pepper, to taste
1. Boil potatoes until tender. Drain well.
  2. Mash or put through a potato ricer, adding broth until desired thinness and consistency is reach.
  3. Season to taste.

## **THREE CHEESE WHITE PIZZA**

6 *SERVINGS*

- 1 cup fat-free cottage cheese
- 1 cup shredded reduced-fat mozzarella cheese
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1-12 inch Boboli pizza crust
- 1 tsp Italian seasoning

1. Preheat oven to 425. Place pizza crust on baking sheet.
2. Combine all three cheeses in a medium bowl.
3. Spread cheese mixture over pizza crust, leaving 1/2 inch border around the edge.
4. Sprinkle with Italian seasoning.
5. Bake for 10 minutes or until cheese is fully melted.
6. Remove pizza to cutting board. Cut into 6 slices



## **CRISPY TILAPIA**

4 *SERVINGS*

- 2 egg whites, lightly beaten
- 1/2 cup cornmeal
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 tsp Italian Seasoning
- 2 Tbsp all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp canola oil
- 4 - 4 oz. tilapia fillets

1. Put egg whites into a shallow dish.
2. Combine cornmeal, cheese and seasoning in a medium bowl.
3. Sprinkle both sides of fillets with flour. Dip each fillet into egg whites then dredge in cornmeal mixture.
4. Spray a nonstick skillet with cooking spray, then add oil. Heat over medium-high heat.
5. Add fillets to hot pan and cook 4-5 minutes on each side, until fish is golden brown and flakes easily with a fork.

## **OVEN BAKED RICE**

- 1 cup of white rice
- 2 cups boiling water
- 1 tsp salt
- ½-1 Tbsp butter
- 1 cube of vegetable bouillon, optional

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Combine all ingredients in a 2 quart baking dish.
3. Cover and bake for 30-40 minutes until all liquid is absorbed and rice is fluffy.

## **BAKED CHICKEN FINGERS & SWEET POTATO FRIES**

*SERVES 4*

- 2 large sweet potatoes or yams
  - 1/2 - 1 Tbsp olive oil
  - salt, to taste
  - 1 pound chicken breast tenders
  - 1/4 cup low-fat buttermilk
  - 1/3 cup coarsely crushed cornflakes
  - 1/3 cup seasoned bread crumbs
1. Preheat oven to 400°. Coat a baking sheet with non-stick cooking spray.
  2. Peel sweet potatoes. Slice into french fry-sized pieces.
  3. Arrange potatoes in a single layer on one side of baking sheet. Coat potatoes with olive oil and salt. Toss to cover.
  4. Bake for 20 minutes.
  5. Meanwhile, combine chicken and buttermilk in a shallow dish. Cover and chill 15 minutes.
  6. Drain chicken, discarding liquid.
  7. Combine cornflakes and bread crumbs in a large zip-top plastic bag.
  8. Add 4 chicken pieces to bag. Seal and shake to coat.
  9. Repeat procedure with remaining chicken.
  10. Push potatoes to one side of baking sheet. Arrange chicken in a single layer on the other side.
  11. Bake another 15-20 minutes, until chicken is cooked through and potatoes are crispy.

## **BUTTERNUT SQUASH RISOTTO (IN THE MICROWAVE!)**

- 1 1/4 cups uncooked medium-grain rice
  - 1 tsp olive oil
  - 2 1/2 cups fat-free, less-sodium chicken broth
  - 1 cup water
  - 1 (12-ounce) package frozen pureed butternut squash
  - pinch of salt
  - pinch of black pepper
  - 6 Tbsp grated fresh Parmesan cheese
1. Combine rice and oil in a 1 1/2-quart microwave-safe dish, stirring to coat.
  2. Microwave, uncovered, for 3 minutes.
  3. Add broth and 1 cup water to rice mixture. Microwave, uncovered, for 9 minutes.
  4. Stir well. Microwave, uncovered, for another 6 minutes.
  5. Remove from microwave. Let stand 5 minutes or until all liquid is absorbed.
  6. In the meantime, heat squash in microwave for 2 minutes or until warm.
  7. Add squash, salt, pepper, and cheese to risotto. Stir well to combine.

## **MOCK CHICKEN POT PIE**

- 1 ½ cups chicken breast, cooked and diced
- 1 can diced new potatoes, drained
- 1 cup frozen, sliced carrots
- 1 can (10 ¾ oz) condensed 98% fat-free cream of chicken soup
- ½ cup fat-free milk
- 1 cup Bisquick Heart Smart® mix
- ½ cup fat-free milk
- 1 egg

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. In an ungreased 2-quart casserole dish, mix chicken, vegetables, soup and ½ cup milk.
3. Microwave on high for 4 minutes. Stir
4. In small bowl, stir Bisquick® mix, ½ cup milk and the egg with fork until blended.
5. Pour Bisquick mixture over vegetable mixture.
6. Bake uncovered about 30 minutes or until golden brown.

## PITA PIZZA FOR ONE

- 1 pita
- 3 Tbsp pizza sauce
- 3 Tbsp part-skim (low-fat) mozzarella cheese
- 1 Tbsp grated Parmesan cheese

*Optional:* GP-friendly toppings

- tolerated veggies (cooked spinach, mushrooms, etc)
- lean ground turkey, cooked and drained
- skinless chicken breast, cooked and shredded

1. Preheat oven or toaster oven to 400 degrees.
2. Spread sauce on pita.
3. Top with desired toppings.
4. Sprinkle on cheeses.
5. Broil in oven or toaster oven for 4-5 minutes until cheese is melted.

*Note: This is a great family-friendly meal idea since each family member can choose their own toppings. To make 4 pizzas, you'll need about  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of sauce, 1 cup of mozzarella cheese,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of Parmesan cheese, and assorted toppings.*

## INSTANT POTATO GNOCCHI

SERVES 4

*This fluffy potato pasta can be eaten with smooth tomato sauce, if tolerated, or a little bit of butter and a sprinkling of Parmesan cheese.*

- 1 cup mashed potato flakes
  - 1 cup boiling water
  - 1 egg, beaten
  - 1.5 cups all-purpose flour
  - ½ tsp dried basil
  - ¼ tsp garlic powder
  - 1/8 tsp salt
  - 1/8 tsp pepper
  - 6 cups of water
  - any well-tolerated pasta sauce (smooth/strained)
1. Place potato flakes in a large bowl. Stir in boiling water; add egg. Stir in flour and seasonings.
  2. On a lightly floured surface, knead 10-12 times, forming a soft dough.
  3. Divide dough into four portions. On a floured surface, roll each portion into ½ inch thick ropes; cut into ¾ inch pieces.
  4. Press and roll each piece with a lightly floured fork.
  5. In a large saucepan, bring water to a boil.
  6. Cook gnocchi in batches for 39-60 seconds or until they float. Remove with a slotted spoon.
  7. Serve with sauce.

## HOMEMADE RICE & 'RONI

*SERVES 6*

- 1/2 cup uncooked spaghetti, broken into 1 inch pieces
- 3/4 cup uncooked white rice
- 14 1/2 ounces chicken or vegetable broth
- 1 chicken or vegetable bouillon cube
- 1 Tbsp butter

1. Melt butter in a medium skillet over medium heat.
2. Add broken spaghetti pieces and saute, stirring constantly, until the spaghetti begins to brown.
3. Add rice, stirring until the rice is well coated with the butter and the spaghetti browns a little more
4. Carefully pour in broth and add bouillon.
5. Cover and simmer about 20 minutes or until liquid is absorbed.

# Purees

## **WHITE SWEET POTATO & ROASTED BANANA**

- 2 Jersey White sweet potatoes
- 1 banana (peel on)
- 1-2 Tbsp smooth nut butter, optional
- Splash of skim milk, rice milk, soy milk, or almond milk

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Wrap sweet potatoes in foil and place on a baking sheet. Cook for about 40 minutes.
3. Put banana, peel on, onto the cookie sheet and cook an additional 15 minutes.
4. Allow sweet potatoes and bananas to cool a little and then remove the peels and skins.
5. Process in a food processor or blender, adding nut butter if desired and milk as needed to achieve desired consistency.



## VEGGIE PUREE

- 1 tsp vegetable oil
- 2 carrots, peeled and chopped
- 2 sliced leeks, white part only
- 2 potatoes, peeled and chopped
- 2 parsnips, peeled chopped
- boiling water
- 4 oz. baby food green beans, *optional*

1. Heat oil in a deep sauce pan.
2. Add carrots and leeks. Sauté until softened, about 6-7 minutes.
3. Add potatoes and parsnips. Pour in boiling water until it just covers the veggies.
4. Cover and simmer for 15-20 minutes or until veggies are very tender.
5. Puree using immersion blender, food processor or blender.
6. Stir in baby food green beans, if desired.

## **SWEET POTATO & CARROT**

- 1 large sweet potato
- 1 lb. baby carrots
- ½ cup unsweetened applesauce
- ¼ cup maple syrup, *optional*

1. Peel and chop sweet potato.
2. In a large stock pot, cover sweet potato pieces and carrots with water. Bring to a boil over high heat.
3. Reduce heat and simmer for about 20-30, until very tender. Remove from heat and drain.
4. Combine all ingredients and puree with an immersion blender or in a food processor or blender.

## ACORN SQUASH & APPLE

- 1 acorn squash
- 3 Macintosh apples
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- Apple juice

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Peel and dice apples. Cut acorn squash in half and scoop out seeds.
3. Place acorn halves face up in a pan. Add an inch of water to the bottom of the pan.
4. Place diced apples in the squash “holes” where the seeds were. Sprinkle with cinnamon.
5. Pour water over the apples so that there is water in the squash holes. Cover pan with tinfoil.
6. Bake for 40 minutes or until the acorn shell puckers and apple halves are soft.
7. Cool slightly then scoop squash “meat” and apples out of the shell.
8. Puree in a food processor or blender, adding apple juice or water to achieve desired consistency.

## **SAVORY BUTTERNUT SQUASH & POTATO**

- 2-3 lb butternut squash
  - 1 lb potatoes, peeled and quartered
  - 1 cup evaporated non-fat milk (or dairy alternative)
  - 1 Tbsp butter or olive oil
  - salt and fresh ground black pepper, to taste
1. Cut the squash in half and scoop out the seeds. Peel the shell and cut the squash into 3-inch dices.
  2. Place squash and potatoes in a large saucepan and fill with water and 1/2 tsp salt.
  3. Bring to a boil and cook until both the squash and potatoes are fork-tender (30-40 minutes).
  4. Drain liquid (reserving about 1 cup) and add in milk and butter.
  5. Puree, adding cooking liquid as necessary to achieve desired consistency.

## PARSNIP & POTATO

- 2 Russet potatoes
- 2 large parsnips
- Chicken broth

1. Peel and chop potatoes and parsnips into small pieces.
2. In a large stock pot, cover potato and parsnip pieces with water.
3. Bring to a boil over high heat.
4. Reduce heat and simmer for 20-30 minutes, until very tender.
5. Remove from heat and drain.
6. Run through a potato ricer *–or–* puree using an immersion blender, food processor or blender, adding broth as needed until desired consistency is achieved.

## **CARROT & TURNIP**

- 2 lbs carrots, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 lbs turnips, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1/2 cup 0% plain Greek yogurt
- 1/4 tsp ground ginger
- 1 Tbsp softened butter, *optional*
- Salt and pepper, to taste

1. Cook both carrots and turnips in boiling salted water for 30 to 40 minutes or until tender.
2. Drain and transfer to a food processor or blender.
3. Add yogurt, ground ginger, and softened butter. Process until smooth.
4. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

## POTATO & TURNIP

- 6 large red new potatoes
  - 2 large turnips
  - 1/2 cup chicken broth, warmed
  - 1/2 cup non-fat sour cream or 0% plain Greek yogurt
  - salt and pepper
1. Peel and slice potatoes and turnips 1/4-inch thick.
  2. Cook in boiling water for 15-20 minutes or until fork-tender. Drain.
  3. Whip cooked potatoes and turnips with electric mixer, mixing until smooth.
  4. Add warm chicken broth and sour cream/yogurt.
  5. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Whip again until blended.

# Soups

## EASY CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP

6 SERVINGS

- 2 tsp butter
- 1 cup chopped carrots
- 1/2 cup chopped onions (*if tolerated*)
- 2 small potatoes, diced
- 1 tsp thyme
- 1 tsp poultry seasoning
- 4 (14 ounce) cans chicken broth
- 2 tsp chicken bouillon
- 4 ounces egg noodles, uncooked
- 2 cups cooked chicken breast, chopped

1. Melt butter in large pot.
2. Sauté the carrot and onion for 2 minutes.
3. Add potato, thyme, poultry seasoning, chicken broth and bouillon.
4. Bring to a boil.
5. Add noodles and chicken and cook on low for 20 minutes.



## LOW-FAT POTATO SOUP

SERVES 6

- 5-6 large potatoes, cubed
  - ½ cup chopped onion (*if tolerated*)
  - 1 (32 ounce) can of chicken broth (*reserve 1 cup for gravy*)
  - 1 packet powdered gravy mix
1. Combine all ingredients except gravy mix and 1 cup of broth in a large pot.
  2. In a separate container, stir together gravy mix and reserved broth.
  3. Add gravy to pot.
  4. Reduce heat to a simmer and cook for about an hour until potatoes are very tender and soup has thickened.
  5. Optional: puree using a regular or immersion blender.

## **SOUPA AVGOLEMONO (EGG-LEMON SOUP)**

- 6 cups chicken broth
- 3/4 cup uncooked white rice or orzo pasta
- 3 eggs
- juice of 1 lemon

1. Bring broth to boil in saucepan.
2. Add rice or orzo. Cover and cook on medium low heat for 20-25 minutes (rice) or 10 minutes (orzo).
3. While the rice cooks, lightly beat the eggs and the lemon juice together.
4. When the rice/pasta is done, remove the broth from heat.
5. **Slowly** mix about one cup of the hot broth into egg/lemon mixture.
6. Gradually add the egg/lemon/broth mixture to the soup, stirring constantly.
7. Place saucepan back on the heat, and stir until soup is heated through (DO NOT BOIL).

## POTATO SPINACH SOUP

*This is a great way to get your greens! Well-cooked spinach is often tolerated without blending, but this soup can easily be pureed. This recipe uses no broth, which makes it lower in sodium than many other soup recipes.*

- 1 Tbsp butter
- ½ large onion (*if tolerated*)
- ¼ cup flour
- 3 cups water
- 2 cups potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 2 tsp salt
- 1 cup spinach, chopped (fresh or frozen)
- 1/2 cup evaporated skim milk

1. Melt butter in a pan.
2. Add onions. Cover and cook until tender - about 15 minutes.
3. Blend in flour, and cook for a couple of minutes.
4. Add potatoes, water and salt. Stir constantly until boiling.
5. Reduce heat and simmer 30 minutes.
6. Add spinach. Cook an additional 5-6 minutes, until spinach is very well cooked.
7. Pureed, if desired, using an immersion blend, food processor or blender.
8. Gradually stir in milk.

## BLENDING BEET & POTATO SOUP

- 4 medium sized beets, peeled, cooked and cubed
- 4 medium sized potatoes, peeled and cubed
- ½ onion, chopped (*if tolerated*)
- 1 tsp dried dill
- 1 Tbsp butter
- 8 cups vegetable stock
- 1/2 cup fat-free evaporated milk or dairy-free substitute
- salt and pepper

1. Saute onions with dill in butter until softened.
2. Add cubed potatoes, stock and beets. Bring to a boil.
3. Reduce to a simmer and cook until veggies are very soft, about 30-40 minutes.
4. Blend until smooth with an immersion blender.
5. Stir in milk. Add salt and pepper to taste.

## PUREED CARROT & GINGER SOUP

- 2 tsp canola oil
- ½ medium onion, chopped (*if tolerated*)
- 3 Tbsp finely chopped fresh ginger root
- 3 cups carrots, chopped
- 1 medium potato, peeled and chopped
- 8 cups vegetable or chicken stock
- Salt, to taste
- Dash of nutmeg

1. Heat the oil in a large pot.
2. Add the onion and ginger, and sauté until the onion is translucent.
3. Add the carrots, potato and vegetable stock. Bring to a boil.
4. Cover, reduce heat and simmer until the vegetables are very tender, about 35-45 minutes.
5. Purée in batches in a blender or food processor *OR* remove from heat and puree in the pot using an immersion blender.
6. Add salt and nutmeg. Serve alone or over white rice.

# Smoothies

## **BASIC SMOOTHIE RECIPE**

*Mix and match the following basic ingredients based on your preferences and dietary tolerances. Greek yogurt is significantly higher in protein than regular yogurt and is available in 0%, 2% and full-fat varieties. Choose whichever you tolerate best.*

*If you can't tolerate dairy products, omit the yogurt and increase the liquid to 1 cup. Any type of liquid can be used, including cow's milk, soy milk, almond milk, rice milk, or juice.*

- ½ cup of plain or vanilla Greek yogurt
- ½ cup of juice, milk, or milk substitute
- 1 cup frozen fruit

1. Blend all ingredients until smooth.
2. Add more liquid, if necessary, until it reaches desired consistency.

## **NUTTY PEANUT BUTTER & BANANA SMOOTHIE**

- 1 banana, sliced and frozen
- 6-8 oz. milk or almond milk
- 1 Tbsp peanut butter
- dash of cinnamon, optional

Blend all ingredients until smooth.

## **CREAMY TROPICAL SMOOTHIE**

*This reminds me of a frosty Pina Colada! But please note -- the recipe as written is NOT low in fat. Some gastroparesis patients tolerate high-fat liquids very well and this particular smoothie is ideal for those who need to gain or maintain weight. To reduce the fat content, use skim, soy, rice, or almond milk, adding a splash of coconut extract to keep the tropical flavor.*

- 4 oz. 0% Greek yogurt
- ½ cup regular Coconut Milk
- 1 cup chopped mango and/or papaya, frozen

Blend all ingredients until smooth.

## **PEACHY-KEEN KEFIR SMOOTHIE**

*Kefir is a cultured, enzyme-rich beverage filled with healthy bacteria (probiotics). It also supplies complete protein, essential minerals, and B vitamins. Choose organic whenever possible.*

- 1 cup of kefir
- 1 cup of peaches, canned or frozen

Blend until smooth.

## **DAIRY-FREE PUMPKIN SPICE SMOOTHIE**

*Pumpkin has a moderate amount of fiber but may be well-tolerated in moderation, especially when pureed and thinned.*

- 1/2 cup canned pumpkin (or 4 oz. jar of baby food squash)
- 1/2 frozen banana
- 3/4 cup almond milk
- 1/2 scoop (about 2 Tbsp) vanilla protein powder
- 1 tsp pumpkin pie spice

1. Combine all ingredients in a blender and blend until smooth.
2. Add water or more almond milk, if needed, until the mixture reaches the desired consistency.



## **STRAWBERRIES & CREAM SIPPER**

*This is a very tasty little pick-me-up with a good amount of vitamins B6, B12 and C. It has a quite a bit of sugar though, so enjoy in moderation.*

- 3 oz. Bolthouse Farms Strawberry Banana Smoothie
- 3 oz. Bolthouse Farms Vanilla Chai Smoothie
- 2-4 oz. water

Combine all ingredients and pour over crushed ice.

## **SAFE & SIMPLE STRAWBERRY SMOOTHIE**

*Many gastroparesis patients avoid berries due to the seeds and skins. The strawberry juice drinks used in this recipe are a great alternative as they are pulp-free. This low-fat, low-fiber “recipe” has about 7 grams of protein and provides a significant amount of vitamins B6, B12 and C. Best of all, it’s really tasty.*

- 4 oz. Odwalla Strawberry Protein Monster
- 2 oz. Bolthouse Farms Strawberry Banana Smoothie
- 2 oz. water
- a few ice cubes

1. Blend the juices and ice in a blender or Magic Bullet until smooth.
2. Add as much water as necessary to reach desired consistency.

Variation: for a thinner drink, combine the juices in a glass with about 4 ounces of water and add a few ice cubes.

## GP-FRIENDLY GREEN MONSTER

*This very healthy smoothie is based on Dr. Andrew Weil's Green Monster smoothie. I tweaked the recipe a bit to make it a little more GP-friendly and added NutraSea fish oil for Omega 3 and vitamin D.*

- 4 oz. apple juice (about 2 small apples)
  - 2 oz. of carrot juice (a big handful of baby carrots)
  - 1 oz. cucumber juice (about 1/3 of a cucumber)
  - 1 oz. kale juice
  - 1/2 banana, frozen (or 1/2 cup ice)
  - 1 tsp NutraSea Plus D Omega-3 Fish Oil - Apple Flavor
1. Peel and core the apples. Peel the carrots (if not using baby carrots) and cucumber. Wash the kale. Feed all fruits/veggies through an electric juicer.

*Tip: Collect the juice in a measuring cup so that you know when you have the appropriate amount of each juice. Add the kale first; the other fruits will push extra kale juice out of the machine.*

2. Strain the juice really well to remove any pulp.

*Tip: Put a small fine mesh strainer over the cup that you use to collect the juice. Then pour the juice through the strainer again when you add it to the blender.*

3. Combine juice, fish oil and banana/ice in a blender and blend until smooth.

## **EASIER GREEN MONSTER**

*SERVES 1-2*

*Unlike the original Green Monster smoothie, this one doesn't require a juicer. It still provides a good amount of vitamins and phytonutrients, though. The Greek yogurt is optional but will add about 6 grams of protein. The fish oil, which you can't taste at all, adds 4.5 grams of healthy Omega-3 fat.*

*This recipe yields about 2 cups, so you may want to freeze half for another day.*

- 1/2 cup water
- 1/4 cup Bolthouse Farms 100% Carrot Juice
- 1/2 cup Bolthouse Farms Green Goodness
- 1/2 frozen banana or a few ice cubes
- 1/4 cup plain Greek or regular yogurt, optional
- 1 tsp. NutraSea Plus D Omega-3 Fish Oil - Apple Flavor, optional

Blend all ingredients in a blender or Magic Bullet until smooth.

# Snacks & Treats

## **GP-FRIENDLY BROWNIE FOR ONE**

- 2 Tbsp flour
  - 2 Tbsp sugar
  - 1 Tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder
  - 1/8 tsp baking powder
  - 2 Tbsp applesauce or non-fat/low-fat yogurt
  - 1 Tbsp milk or water
1. In a coffee mug or small bowl, stir together flour, sugar, cocoa powder and baking powder.
  2. Add applesauce/yogurt and milk/water. Mix just until combined.
  3. Microwave for about 50 seconds or until set. The center will still look a bit gooey. Do not overcook or it will be tough.
  4. Allow to cool slightly, but eat while still warm.

## **BAKED BANANAS**

*SERVES 4*

*Bananas tend to be well-tolerated by many GPs and are a good source of potassium and vitamin B6. If you're tired of banana smoothies, give this recipe a try instead.*

- 4 firm bananas
- non-stick cooking spray
- 1-inch piece grated fresh ginger or 1/8 tsp dried ginger
- 1 Tbsp cinnamon
- 1/2 Tbsp nutmeg
- 1/4 cup maple syrup, *optional*

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
2. Peel and cut bananas in half, lengthwise.
3. Spray a baking dish with non-stick cooking spray and arrange bananas in a single layer.
4. Drizzle with maple syrup. Sprinkle with cinnamon, nutmeg, and ginger.
5. Cover and bake for 10 to 15 minutes.
6. Mash or puree cooked bananas, if desired.

## **EASY PUMPKIN MUFFINS**

- 1 box spice cake mix
- 1 (15 oz.) can solid pack pumpkin (not pumpkin pie mix)
- 1/2 tsp vanilla
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- apple cider glaze, optional (recipe below)

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Spray a nonstick muffin pan with cooking spray or prepare with 12 cupcake liners.
3. Mix cake mix, pumpkin, cinnamon and vanilla in a large bowl. An electric mixer is helpful, since the mixture is very thick. Don't overwork the dough or the muffins will be tough.
4. Fill muffin cups 2/3 full. (If you have a medium sized ice cream scoop, it makes this really easy!)
5. Bake for about 22 minutes, until a toothpick inserted into one of the muffins comes out clean.
6. Let cool for about 10 minutes.

### ***While the muffins are cooling, prepare the glaze...***

- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 2-3 Tbsp apple cider
- 1/2 tsp pumpkin pie spice

1. Combine all ingredients.
2. Spoon glaze over the warm muffins.

## **BAKED PUMPKIN PUDDING**

*This is basically a crust-less pumpkin pie. It's perfect for Thanksgiving and/or Christmas!*

- 1 (12 oz.) can of solid pack pumpkin puree [not pumpkin pie mix!]
  - 1 (12 oz.) can evaporated skim milk -OR- 1 ½ cups soy milk
  - ¾ cup white sugar
  - ½ cup Bisquick baking mix, regular -OR- gluten-free
  - 2 eggs or ½ cup Eggbeaters
  - 1 Tbsp butter, melted [can be omitted]
  - 2 ½ tsp pumpkin pie spice -OR- 1 ½ tsp cinnamon, ½ tsp nutmeg, ¼ tsp cloves, ¼ tsp ginger
  - 2 tsp vanilla extract
1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray a 9 inch pie pan with cooking spray.
  2. Put all ingredients in a blender and blend until combined. Pour into pie pan.
  3. Bake in preheated oven for 50 to 55 minutes, or until knife inserted in center comes out clean.
  4. Serve warm or chilled.

*Crockpot variation: Spray Crockpot with cooking spray. Pour blended mixture into prepared Crockpot. Cook on high for 2 hours or low for 4 hours, or until mixture is set. (Time varies based on the size of your Crockpot.)*

## **CROCK POT RICE PUDDING**

*While this is technically a dessert, I happen to think rice pudding also makes a yummy breakfast during the winter months.*

- ¾ cup short-grain rice
  - 1 (12 oz) can evaporated skim milk
  - 2 cups water
  - 1/3 cup white sugar or ¼ cup agave nectar
  - 1 ½ tsp vanilla
  - ½ tsp ground cinnamon, more if desired
1. Combine all ingredients in slow cooker; stir well.
  2. Cover and cook on Low for 4 to 5 hours or on High for 2 to 2-1/2 hours.
  3. Stir twice during cooking process.



## **LOW FAT BANANA BREAD**

*SERVES 12*

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 3/4 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup butter, softened
- 1/2 cup egg substitute (or 2 large eggs)
- 1 1/2 cups mashed ripe banana (about 3 bananas)
- 1/3 cup non-fat Greek yogurt or plain low-fat yogurt
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray a bread pan with cooking spray.
2. Combine flour, baking soda and salt in a bowl.
3. Beat butter and sugar in large bowl until well combined, about 1 minute.
4. Mix in egg substitute, mashed bananas, yogurt, and vanilla.
5. Add flour mixture to banana mixture. Mix until combined.
6. Transfer batter to prepared pan.
7. Bake bread about 60 minutes, or until it is lightly brown and a toothpick inserted into center comes out clean.
8. Cool for a few minutes in pan. Then remove bread from pan and cool completely.

## MARSHMALLOW CEREAL TREATS

- 3 Tbsp butter
- 10 ounces mini-marshmallows
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 5 cups low-fat, low-fiber cereal\*

1. Spray a 9x9 pan with cooking spray.
2. Melt butter in a large pot over low heat.
3. Add marshmallows. Cook over low heat, stirring frequently, until marshmallows are melted.
4. Remove from heat. Stir in vanilla.
5. Add cereal and stir until combined.
6. Immediately pour into prepared pan.
7. Allow to cool before cutting.

*\*Suggestions: Crispy Brown Rice, Rice Krispies, Cocoa Krispies, Corn Flakes, Special K Original*

## CHOCOLATE ANGEL FOOD CAKE

*A great dessert for company, this cake can be served to others with mashed berries and fresh whipped cream on the side.*

- 2/3 cup sifted cake flour ( not self-rising)
- 1/3 cup unsweetened cocoa
- 1 1/2 cups granulated sugar, divided
- 12 large egg whites, at room temperature
- 1 1/2 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 1/2 tsp cream of tartar
- 1/2 tsp salt

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
2. Sift together flour, cocoa and 3/4 cup granulated sugar; set aside.
3. Beat egg whites at low speed until foamy, about 5 minutes.
4. Add vanilla, cream of tartar and salt.
5. Increase mixing speed to medium. Slowly add remaining sugar.
6. When sugar is incorporated, continue beating until stiff peaks form - about 2 minutes more.
7. Sift 1/3 of dry ingredients over egg whites; gently fold in with rubber spatula. Repeat until all dry ingredients have been incorporated.
8. Pour batter into ungreased 10-inch tube pan.
9. Bake 40 to 45 minutes, until top springs back when gently pressed
10. Invert and hang pan on neck of a bottle or turn onto its side to cool.
11. To unmold, run a thin knife around side of pan and tube.

## **Big, Chewy Ginger Cookies**

- 2 cups white flour
- 2 tsp baking soda
- Dash of salt
- 2 tsp ground ginger
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 ¼ cups brown sugar
- 2 Tbsp butter
- ¼ cup molasses
- 2 large egg whites or ¼ cup egg substitute
- ½ cup unsweetened applesauce

1. Preheat your oven to 325°F.
2. Combine all of the ingredients from the flour through the brown sugar and mix well.
3. Using an electric mixer combine the butter, molasses, egg whites, and applesauce.
4. Add the dry ingredients to the wet mixture and mix well.
5. Spray a baking sheet with non-stick spray.
6. Drop the batter by 1 1/2 tablespoons onto the baking sheet.
7. The cookies will spread so allow some room.
8. Bake for about 15 minutes or until they start to brown on the bottom.
9. Cool on a rack.

## CHOCOLATE CINNAMON MERINGUES

*These pretty, crunchy cookies are fat-free, fiber-free and gluten-free.*

- 1 cup sugar
- 1/3 cup cocoa powder
- 4 egg whites
- 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp cream of tartar

1. Sift together sugar and cocoa powder.
2. In a large bowl, beat the egg whites, cinnamon, and cream of tartar with an electric mixer on medium speed until it forms soft peaks.
3. Beat in the sugar mixture one tablespoon at a time.
4. Beat the entire mixture on high until it's glossy and stiff.
5. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper.
6. Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls of batter onto the sheets, leaving 1 inch between.
7. Bake at 250 degrees F for 40 to 45 minutes, or until the tops feel dry to the touch.
8. Cool 5 minutes, then remove from parchment paper.

## **BROWN RICE CRISPY TREATS**

9 *SERVINGS*

*A healthier, no-marshmallow version of rice crispy treats. The peanut butter boosts the fat content, however, so watch your portion size!*

- 1/3 cup smooth peanut butter
  - 1/3 cup of brown rice syrup or honey
  - 3 cups of brown rice crispy cereal (ex. Erewhon's)
  - 1 tsp vanilla extract
1. Coat an 8x8 baking dish with cooking spray or line with parchment paper.
  2. Put peanut butter, rice syrup/honey, and vanilla into a small sauce pan.
  3. Cook over low heat until the mixture is warm and melty.
  4. In the meantime, spray a large bowl with cooking spray. Add the rice cereal to the bowl.
  5. Pour melted peanut butter mixture over the cereal and stir until all of the cereal is coated.
  6. Spread cereal mixture into baking dish in an even layer.
  7. Place in the refrigerator for about an hour before serving.

## APPLE CINNAMON COFFEE CAKE

16 SERVINGS

- 1/4 cup sugar
- 2 tsp cinnamon
- 1 box organic white or yellow cake mix (*such as Dr. Oetker or Arrowhead Mills*)
- 1 2/3 cups cinnamon applesauce
- 3/4 cup egg substitute or 3 eggs (*adds about 1 gram of fat per serving*)

1. Preheat oven to 350.
2. Mix sugar and cinnamon in a small bowl. Set aside.
3. Spray a 10 inch tube pan or bundt pan with cooking spray.
4. Dust pan with the sugar and cinnamon mixture.
5. Stir together cake mix, applesauce and egg beaters until well combined.
6. Pour into prepared pan and bake 40-45 minutes until a toothpick comes out clean.

# About the Author



Crystal Saltreli was diagnosed with idiopathic gastroparesis in 2003 at the age of 23. She quickly set about becoming her own health advocate, a path that eventually led to a career educating and empowering other gastroparesis patients to lead happier, healthier lives.

Crystal completed her training in Health Counseling and Holistic Nutrition at the **Institute for Integrative Nutrition** in partnership with the **State University of New York** at Purchase and is certified by the **American Association of Drugless Practitioners**. Her undergraduate degree is from **Dartmouth College** and she has recently completed continuing education coursework via the **Harvard School of Medicine**.

In addition to counseling gastroparesis clients one-on-one, Crystal is active in the greater gastroparesis community. She is on the Patient-Board of the I Can Foundation and a supporter of G-PACT. She also writes a blog called Living With Gastroparesis, which is read by gastroparesis patients worldwide.

In January of 2010, Crystal had the gastric neurostimulator implanted at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN. She currently lives with her husband, Raymond, in Rochester, NY.

Please join Crystal on Facebook at [www.Facebook.com/Gastroparesis](http://www.Facebook.com/Gastroparesis) and visit her blog at [www.LivingWithGastroparesis.com](http://www.LivingWithGastroparesis.com).