

Caring for Upset Stomach and Digestion

- Stomach upset or digestion problems can happen with kidney disease.
- Small changes to your food can help you feel better.
- If your symptoms get worse or do not improve after 1–2 days, reach out to your doctor.



Nausea, Upset Stomach, Heartburn

Some foods can make symptoms worse. Try to limit these:

- Spicy or highly seasoned foods
- Fried and high fat foods (like cheese, dressings, olives)
- Snack foods like chips and popcorn
- Sweets like cakes, pies, and chocolate
- Raw vegetables (except lettuce) and raw fruit
- Gas-causing foods (like onions, cabbage, broccoli)
- Processed meats (like bacon, sausage, lunch meat)
- Drinks with caffeine or alcohol (coffee, tea, soda)

Taste Changes

- Taste changes are common with kidney disease. Foods may not taste the same, or you may notice a metallic or bitter taste. This can be frustrating, but small steps can help.
- Try chewing gum between meals. Rinse your mouth with water or mouthwash before eating to help wake up your taste buds. Use herbs, salt-free seasonings, lemon, lime, or vinegar to add more flavor. Marinating foods can also help. Mint gum, breath mints, or a baking soda rinse (spit it out) may make your mouth feel fresher.

Constipation

- Constipation can be uncomfortable, but small steps can help.
- Try adding more fiber with fruits, vegetables, and whole grains like oatmeal or brown rice. Drinking fluids, especially water, can help (check with your doctor if you have limits). Moving your body each day can also help keep things regular.
- If needed, your doctor can talk with you about medicines.

Diarrhea

- Loose stools can be uncomfortable, but small food choices can help.
- Try clear liquids like apple juice, ginger ale, or decaf tea
- Choose easy foods like toast, cereal, crackers, plain pasta, or rice
- Canned fruit and soft-cooked vegetables may feel better on your stomach
- Try eating small meals every 3–4 hours
- Limit fried, high fat, and spicy foods
- Avoid sugar-free candies or cookies, as they may make symptoms worse

Vomiting

- If you are having trouble keeping food or drinks down, go slow and take small steps.
- Try sucking on ice chips if liquids are hard to keep down.
- Sip small amounts of clear liquids like apple juice or ginger ale.
- Gelatin, clear broth, or popsicles can help replace fluids.

When you start to feel better, try adding soft, bland foods one at a time.

Soft, Easy-to-eat Foods

- A soft, bland diet can help when your stomach is upset. These foods are gentle and less likely to cause irritation or gas.
- You may only need this for a short time, until you start to feel better, or up to about 2 weeks if needed.

Sample Menu



Breakfast:

- Toast, plain bagel or plain English muffin with jelly
- Canned fruit (canned in juice, drained) or applesauce
- Plain eggs cooked without added fat
- Cream of wheat, cream of rice hot cereal

Lunch & Dinner:

- Plain, cooked chicken or turkey (without skin) or fish
- Plain eggs prepared without added fat
- Rice or Pasta prepared without added fat
- Low sodium soups without beans or gas forming vegetables
- Canned fruit (canned in juice, drained) or applesauce.
- Canned, no added salt vegetables (avoid sauerkraut)
 - Low sodium crackers, saltines or unsalted pretzels

Snacks:

- Plain low sodium crackers
- Unsalted pretzels, breadsticks or rice cakes
- Canned fruit (canned in juice, drained) or applesauce
- Animal crackers, Vanilla Wafers, Graham Crackers

Other things to consider:

- Try to avoid foods with strong smells
- Smaller meals or snacks may feel better
- Sip drinks between meals
- Try not to lie flat after eating
- Ask your provider about a probiotic
- If you have diabetes and feel unwell, check your blood sugar often
- Drinks with added electrolytes (like sports drinks) are not kidney-friendly and are best to avoid

