

# Dietary advice for people with gallstones

## Nutrition and Dietetics

### Patient Information Leaflet

#### Introduction

This dietary advice sheet gives some general information to help you make the recommended changes to your diet if you have gallstones. If you need more detailed advice, or if you are following a special diet that makes it difficult to make these changes, please ask your GP to refer you to a registered dietitian.

#### What are gallstones?

Gallstones are small stones that can sometimes form in the gallbladder. They are more likely to occur as people get older. Obesity and pregnancy also increase the risk of developing gallstones.

#### How should I change my diet?

- Your doctor may have advised you to follow a low fat diet because you have gallstones. A low fat diet may help to reduce the pain caused by the gallstones. Your body still needs a small amount of fat so you should not follow a fat free diet.
- The suggestions in this leaflet will help you to choose low fat foods but still eat a varied and healthy diet.
- Make sure that your diet also contains plenty of fresh, frozen or tinned fruit and vegetables.
- You should also eat your normal amounts of bread, cereals, chapattis, pasta, rice and potatoes. These foods are filling and low in fat – but make sure that you do not add fats or oils when you prepare them.
- Some people find that certain foods make their symptoms worse. If you have symptoms that come and go, try keeping a food diary where you record the foods you eat and any symptoms you have. It may help you figure out which foods cause your problems. Avoid those foods until after you have surgery.

## Please note:

- After removal of your gallbladder, you do not need to follow a low fat diet.
- A low fat diet may result in weight loss. If you are concerned about this, please ask your GP to refer you to a registered dietitian.
- Weight loss can reduce the risk of developing gallstones so if you are overweight, this may be beneficial. However, rapid weight loss (more than 2lbs or 1kg a week) may increase the chance of gallstones forming.

## Reducing your fat intake

Food group	Avoid or eat less of these foods	Choose these foods instead
<b>Fats and oils</b>	Butter, margarine, lard, suet, ghee  Cooking oils including olive oil, sunflower oil, vegetable oil	Low-fat spreads such as Flora Light Spread, Benecol Light Spread or Anchor Half Fat Butter
<b>Cooking methods</b>	Fried foods	Grilled, boiled, baked, poached or casseroled foods
<b>Dairy products</b>	Full-cream or Jersey milk  Evaporated and condensed milk  Full-fat cheese, such as cheddar and stilton  Full-fat soft cheese  Cream  Full-fat yoghurt	Semi-skimmed or fully skimmed milk. Soya milk  Low fat cheese, such as cottage cheese, Edam, half-fat cheeses  Low-fat soft cheese, such as Dairylea Light Spread Laughing Cow Light, Philadelphia Light  Low-fat yoghurt such as Shape, Muller Light, Weight Watchers
<b>Meat and fish</b>	Fatty meat, processed meat, sausages, corned beef, beef burgers, meat pies and tinned meat  Oily fish such as mackerel, sardines, kippers, fish tinned in oil	Red meat (if all visible fat is removed)  Chicken and turkey (remove skin)  White fish such as cod, haddock, plaice, shellfish, tuna in brine, tinned salmon

<b>Biscuits and cakes</b>	Digestives, cream and chocolate biscuits, Hobnobs  Cream cakes, Danish pastries, cakes with marzipan, gateaux	Crispbread, rice cakes, Rich Tea, Garibaldi and Morning Coffee biscuits.  Low-fat biscuits or cakes (occasionally), scones, teacakes, crumpets, meringues
<b>Snack foods</b>	Crisps, nuts, Bombay mix, seeds (including sunflower and pumpkin)  Coconut	Low fat crisps, Skips, French Fries, Quavers, breadsticks, Twiglets  Fruit (fresh, tinned and dried)
<b>Confectionery</b>	Chocolate, toffee, fudge	Boiled fruit sweets, mints, marshmallows, liquorice, Turkish delight
<b>Desserts</b>	Fruit pies, fruit crumbles  Milk puddings  Ice cream	Low-fat yoghurts such as Shape, Muller Light, Weight Watchers  Jelly, fruit (tinned, fresh or dried), sorbet  Low-fat ice-cream, such as Sainsbury's 'Be Good to Yourself', Tesco 'Healthy Living' or Weight Watchers  Low-fat milk puddings, such as custard or rice pudding
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	Creamy dips, hummus, avocado pears, cream soups  Pastry foods such as quiche  Oil-based salad dressings, such as vinaigrette, mayonnaise  Cream and cheese sauces  Gravy made with fat or meat juices	Low-fat salad dressing, salsa dips  Tomato based or 95% fat-free cooking sauces, sauces made with cornflour and low-fat milk and/or low-fat cheese  Gravy made with stock cubes and cornflour (do not add meat juices)  95% fat-free ready-made meals

If you have any questions, or if there is anything you do not understand about this leaflet, please contact:

Dietitians at Russells Hall Hospital on 01384 244017  
(8.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday)

Community dietitians at Stourbridge Health and Social Care Centre on  
01384 323749 (8.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday)

Russells Hall Hospital switchboard number:  
01384 456111

**This leaflet can be downloaded or printed from:**

<http://dudleygroup.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/patient-information-leaflets/>

If you have any feedback on this patient information leaflet, please email  
[patient.information@dgh.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@dgh.nhs.uk)

**This leaflet can be made available in large print, audio version and in other languages, please call 0800 073 0510.**

للحصول على هذه النشرة بحجم أكبر، وعلى شكل إصدار صوتي و بلغات أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال بالرقم  
08000730510.

此宣传单可提供大字版本、音频版本和其它语言版本，请拨打电话：  
0800 073 0510。

Ulotka dostępna jest również w dużym druku, wersji audio lub w innym języku. W tym celu zadzwoń pod numer 0800 073 0510.

ਇਹ ਪਰਚਾ ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ, ਬੋਲ ਕੇ ਰੀਕਾਰਡ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਅਤੇ ਦੂਸਰੀਆਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ, 0800 073 0510 ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਜੀ।

Aceasta broșura poate fi pusă la dispoziție tipărită cu caractere mari, versiune audio sau în alte limbi, pentru acest lucru vă rugăm să sunați la 0800 073 0510.

یہ کتابچہ آپ کو بڑے حروف کی لکھائی، سمعی صورت اور دیگر زبانوں میں مہیا کیا جا سکتا ہے۔  
برائے مہربانی فون نمبر 08000730510 پر رابطہ کریں۔