

Early Dumping Syndrome

Dumping syndrome is caused by food moving too quickly from your stomach into your small intestine. When food moves this fast, your digestive system releases more hormones than normal and fluid moves from your blood into the small intestine. It is believed that the excess hormones and fluid cause symptoms. Early dumping syndrome is when these symptoms appear less than 30 minutes after a meal. The symptoms of late dumping syndrome appear one to three hours after a meal. Early and late dumping syndromes have different symptoms.

Symptoms of early dumping syndrome

- diarrhea
- nausea
- bloating
- belly pain or cramping
- stomach making rumbling/growling noises
- Other possible symptoms include dizziness or fatigue after a meal, face/neck/upper chest getting red, fast or irregular heartbeat, and sweating.

Dumping syndrome usually occurs in those who have had stomach or esophageal surgery. It is more common after some types of surgery than others. For example, it is more common if you have the entire stomach removed, less common if you have only a part of the stomach removed. To date, no one has found a way to prevent getting dumping syndrome.

Early dumping syndrome is more common than late dumping syndrome but some people have both. About 1 in 10 people who have stomach surgery develop dumping syndrome. About three out of four people with dumping syndrome have early dumping syndrome.

Diagnosis

Diagnosis is made by medical history, review of symptoms, exam, and possibly tests such as:

- blood tests: oral glucose tolerance test, hematocrit
- gastric emptying scan (scintigraphy): You eat a bland meal that contains a bit of radioactive material and a camera (outside your body) scans your belly and enables your doctor to see the location of the radioactive material and how fast your stomach empties
- upper endoscopy or an upper GI series: tests that allow the doctor to examine the inside of the esophagus, stomach, and small intestine

Treatment

The first step is changing how and what you eat. If your symptoms are mild, this may relieve your symptoms over time. Here are some suggestions from the National Institutes of Health's National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK):

- eat 6 small meals a day, instead of 3 larger meals
- wait to drink liquids until at least 30 minutes after a meal
- lay down for 30 minutes after you eat a meal
- eat more protein, fiber, and fat and less carbohydrates (Choose complex carbohydrates such as whole grains, fruits, and vegetables instead of simple carbohydrates such as candies, cookies, sugary drinks, and foods and drinks with added sugar)
- avoid milk and milk products (cheese, sweetened yogurts, ice cream, chocolate milk)
- avoid very cold foods
- add pectin or guar gum—plant extracts used as thickening agents—to your food

If diet and eating habits do not improve your symptoms, your doctor may prescribe medication such as:

- [octreotide](#) (Sandostatin®): This medicine comes in short- and long-acting forms.
 - The short-acting form is injected subcutaneously (under your skin) 2 to 4 times a day before meals. A health care professional may inject the medicine or may teach you or your caregiver how to give the injection.
 - The long-acting form is injected intramuscularly (into your buttocks muscles) once every 4 weeks. Side effects may include pain where the medicine is injected, diarrhea, weight gain, gallstones, and steatorrhea.
- acarbose (Prandase®, Precose®): This medication works by slowing the action of certain chemicals that break down food to release glucose (sugar) into your blood. It is usually prescribed to those with late dumping syndrome. Side effects of acarbose may include bloating, diarrhea, and flatulence.

If dietary changes and medication do not work, surgery may be a possibility. The type of surgery you need would depend on the type of surgery that caused your early dumping syndrome. **Surgery to fix dumping syndrome doesn't always work.** Talk to your doctor about the risks and benefits of this surgery and whether it may help you.