Gastroparesis Nutritional Interventions

1. Meal consistency
   a. CHEW food thoroughly and eat slowly (take 20-30 minutes to finish meal)
   b. If solids not tolerated, any food can be blended with water, low-fat milk, vegetable juice, or broth to make a puree
   c. Liquid nutrients are better tolerated than solid food
   d. Can also try solid foods in the morning, switch to semi-liquid and/or liquid meals over the course of the day
   e. If you have a lot of nighttime reflux symptoms (can be heartburn, gasping at night, regurgitation, vomiting)
      i. Eat dinner earlier and/or consider trying a more liquid meal such as soup or protein shake for dinner.
      ii. Sleep on left side and/or elevate the head of bed (can use books or bricks to lift the head of the bed).
         Avoid right side and stomach sleeping as this can provoke symptoms of reflux.

2. Walk after meals when possible—this may help promote stomach emptying.

3. Decrease volume of meals

4. Limit fiber
   a. If bezoar formation is a concern, avoid foods causing bezoar such as oranges, berries, coconut, legumes,
      vegetables that have high fiber content (i.e., celery).
   b. Most vegetables will be fine to eat if well cooked, without seeds or skins, and chewed thoroughly

5. Limit fat
   a. Fat in liquid form is usually well-tolerated, maintain 20-30% of calories from fat

6. Additional recommendations
   a. Take a multivitamin EVERY DAY!
   b. Avoid alcohol and tobacco. They can worsen symptoms.
   c. Do not lie down immediately after eating—sit upright for 1-2 hours
   d. On days when symptoms are worse, just take liquids to let the stomach rest.
   e. Caffeine, peppermint, chocolate can provoke reflux symptoms. Try to limit use. If they are important to your diet—then it is fine to take but if they are worsening your symptoms let me know so I can discuss alternatives to help with the craving without triggering your symptoms. If you have diabetes and chocolate is important to keeping your stomach calm—let me know and I can make some chocolate suggestions that will not increase your blood sugar.
   f. Eat nutritious foods prior to filling up on “empty calories”
   g. If certain foods help calm your stomach—it is okay to take them. But if they are not nutritious (i.e., pastry, sweets) try to limit their use and eat them at the end of the meal.
   h. Loose-fitting clothing may decrease pressure on your stomach.
   i. If you have diabetes: Improving glycemic control is critical! Keep a log. If you are controlling your blood glucose—that is wonderful. But if you are having difficulty controlling your blood sugar—keep track of your meals, your diabetes medications and your sugar levels. It is possible that your medications have not been properly adjusted for your body’s needs—so bring the logs in for me to review.
   j. Check weight twice a week, if weight is decreasing unintentionally then increase the amount of liquid supplements
      (such as nutritional shakes or protein shakes).
   k. Discuss with the pharmacist at the pharmacy where you fill your medications if your pills can be crushed or opened.
   l. Keep a food log. If certain foods trigger worsening symptoms—try to avoid those foods.
   m. Foods that may help tolerate meals better include graham crackers, jello, saltine crackers. There may be other
      foods that calm your stomach. Whatever foods can help calm your symptoms keep them with you.
   n. If constipation is an ongoing issue, let me know and I will adjust your medications. This may help gastroparesis
      symptoms further.