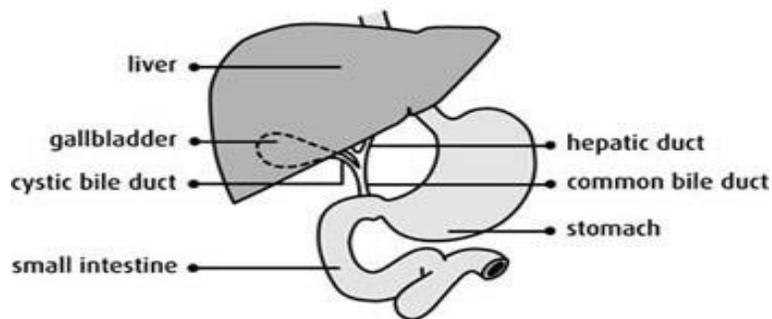


## Nutrition Guidelines for Management of Gallbladder Disease

Location of Gallbladder



- The role of the gallbladder is to store bile, which is made by the liver. Bile helps digest and break down fat. Gallstones are made when the cholesterol in bile forms hard stones.
- Your risk for developing gallbladder disease may increase if you:
  - are a woman, are over the age of 60, take cholesterol-lowering medications, are pregnant, take hormone replacement therapy, take birth control pills, are overweight, have diabetes, have lost weight very quickly, fast (go without eating for long periods of time), are aboriginal.
- It is important to know that there is no specific diet or food that has been proven to prevent gallbladder disease. The following suggestions may help:
  - Eat a healthy diet following Canada's Food Guide.  
[www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide](http://www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide)
  - Eat a diet high in fibre including fruits and vegetables (at least 7 or more servings a day) and whole grain products (whole wheat bread, pastas, rice, crackers).
  - Limit refined sugar such as sweetened beverages (pop, juice, juice beverages), candy, sweet desserts and foods with added sugar (such as flavoured yogurts, condiments etc.).

- Try eating a small portion of nuts a few times a week. Eating 140 g (1 cup) of nuts per week is associated with a reduced risk of gallstone disease and gallbladder removal (cholecystectomy). If you are trying to lose weight, do not consume too many nuts as they are high in calories.
  - Choose lower fat dairy products such as 1% MF (milk fat) milk, 2% or less MF yogurt, 20% MF cheese, low fat sour cream, low fat cream cheese.
  - Choose leaner meats and poultry. Remove the skin and excess fat from poultry and meat. Avoid marbled red meats. Choose leaner ground meats. Try meat alternatives such as lentils, chickpeas, beans and tofu.
  - Choose cooking methods such as barbequing, baking, broiling and grilling more often than frying foods.
  - Research shows that following a severely fat restricted diet is inappropriate for the treatment of gallstones. **It is encouraged to consume a healthy diet with moderate amounts of fat: 20-30% of calories from fat. This equals about 30-45ml or 2-3 tbsp of fat each day.** Use healthy fats such as non-hydrogenated margarine, canola oil, olive oil, soybean oils, mayonnaise, and salad dressings made with healthy oil. A diet too low in fat may actually lead to gallstone formation secondary to inadequate bile production.
  - Limit caffeinated beverages to three 8 oz (250 ml) cups per day. This includes coffee, tea, cola beverages.
  - Limit alcohol containing beverages to 1 drink per day (150 ml/ 5 oz wine, 360 ml/ 12 oz beer, 45 ml/ 1.5 oz hard liquor).
- Diet modifications may not offer any advantages for gallbladder disease before surgery as the passage of gallstones into the ducts is a random event unrelated to the type of food.
  - If you have your gallbladder removed, there is no evidence to support the need for a fat-restricted diet after surgery. The digestion of fat should not be an issue for patients following gallbladder removal and a normal diet should be tolerated soon after surgery.

## Sample Menu:

### Breakfast:

¾ cup of whole grain cereal  
1 cup of low fat milk (1% MF)  
1 slice of whole wheat toast  
**1 tsp of non-hydrogenated margarine**  
1 piece of fruit (or ½ cup)  
Tea or coffee or herbal tea

### Lunch:

1 cup vegetable soup  
1 whole grain pita with 1 ½ oz leftover meat or canned tuna, with lettuce, tomato (any vegetables you want) and **1 tbsp of mayonnaise or salad dressing**  
1 low fat yogurt (2% MF)  
Glass water  
1 piece of fruit (of ½ cup)

### Afternoon snack:

1 banana with 1 tbsp of peanut butter

### Supper:

2 ½ oz of lean meat, fish or poultry  
1 cup of brown rice or pasta or 1 medium potato  
Vegetables (enough to cover half of your plate)  
1 cup of low fat milk (1% MF)  
Allow for **2 tsp of oil or margarine in cooking or for salad dressing**

### Evening snack:

3 cups of popcorn with **1 tsp of non-hydrogenated margarine**

**\*Total fat intake equal to 7 servings**

Please call your doctor or Registered Dietitian if you have any questions or concerns.

Registered Dietitian: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_