

**Subject:** 🤢 Gastroparesis is the opposite of fun 🤢

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**PlushieDreadfuls**

**Gastroparesis is un-fun.**



It's not just an upset tummy or grumbling stomach noises. It's not acid reflux or heartburn. It's gastroparesis, and it's the *pits*. Having this completely un-fun digestive condition means that you can barely eat anything and then you feel uncomfortably full, and you keep feeling that way for hours. Then there's

the bloating, the nausea, the cramping, stabbing pain, and the vomiting.

A fair percentage of older folks with uncontrolled diabetes (type I or type II, take your pick) tend to develop gastroparesis, and once they do, their overall prognosis isn't great. For the folks who find themselves driving the porcelain bus around the bathroom a few times a week who *don't* have diabetes (or any other obvious cause like vagus nerve damage), the prognosis also isn't great because... well... there is a *lot* of vomiting.



## **COMPLETELY UN-FUN.**

There's nothing anyone can say that can make it all better, but there are a few things you can try to at least make it suck less. (Please remember to discuss any of this with your doctor, though, because we're not *those* kinds of doctors, and your mileage may vary.) Sticking to gentle foods with low or no dairy, relying on small meals of soups and nutrition shakes, and pacing yourself throughout the day with tiny soft snacks seems to help.

Most importantly, though, don't let yourself feel like a flare up is your fault.

Your body is being a big jerk all on its own, so don't get stuck in the bad feels about it. It's already hard to not be able to make plans or know if you can have birthday cake or even if you're going to be able to get out of bed: don't let the brain goblins fake you into thinking you did something *wrong*. Your meat puppet is just a little off the rails.



The thing is, no one is entirely sure why gastroparesis happens at least half the time, but we *do* know that *all* the time, it's your stomach just *not doing its job*. It hangs onto all that food, and it's not even *trying* to digest it well. Sure, the gallbladder is making bile and producing the acids necessary to start that first phase of breaking down food into usable bits, but the stomach, it's just not moving. It could be that the pyloric sphincter isn't opening up to let matter down into the duodenum, or it could be that the entire neuromuscular action in the digestive tract is on mute.

But, remember what we said about vagus nerve damage being something that can cause gastroparesis? That might be why so many people with gastroparesis also have migraines - and *that* points to something actually pretty exciting about treatment in the future. (Ask your doctor about that, too!)





In the meantime, all we can offer you is a Gastroparesis Rabbit Plushie Friend who knows your pain. You can see the discomfort of impending chunks being blown in their expression, but their soft corduroy ears and squish-tastic body lend a little comfort between spasms. They even come with their own barf bag, too, so you don't have to share yours (but we don't recommend you try to use *theirs*, as it's also a plushie and wouldn't hold anything well).

Love and Best Wishes,  
The Dreadful Crew

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