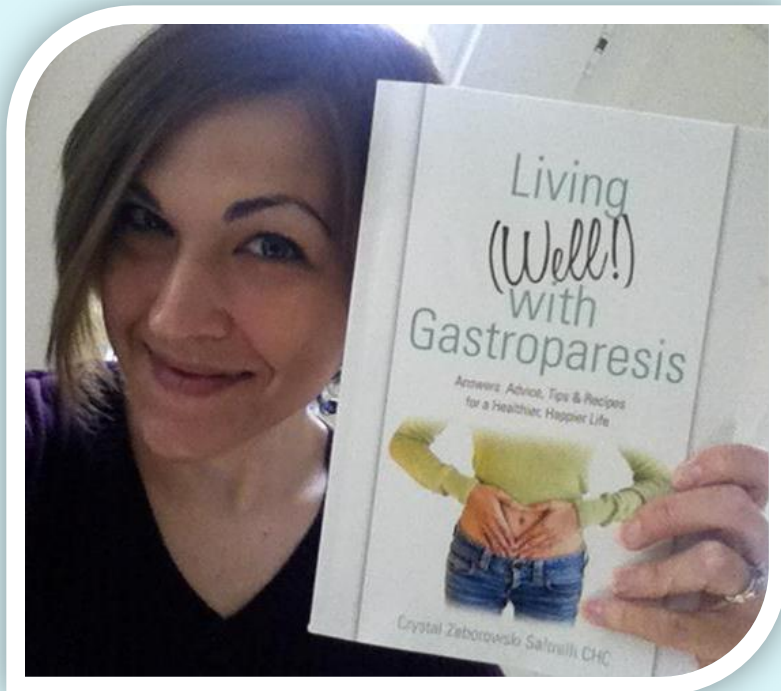


Living (Well!) with Gastroparesis: for Loved Ones



**PRESENTED BY:
CRYSTAL SALTRELLI**

*Certified Health Counselor, AADP
Gastroparesis Educator & Author*

In this class, we'll cover...



...the basics of gastroparesis.

...common myths and misconceptions about gastroparesis.

...the comprehensive gastroparesis management plan.

...how it really feels to have gastroparesis.

...how you can *all* live (well!) with gastroparesis.

...ways to support someone with gastroparesis.

...your questions.

Gastroparesis: The Basics



Functional gastrointestinal motility disorder

Specific to the stomach

Experienced differently from person to person

Symptoms tend to ebb and flow

Diagnosed via 4-hour gastric emptying scan

Poorly understood by general medical community

Common Misconceptions about Gastroparesis



- Rare condition
- Most often seen in diabetics
- Easily managed with medication or dietary changes
- Caused by stress and/or it's "in the head"
- Vomiting is the main symptom
- Does not cause pain
- Only causes "stomach" symptoms
- Symptoms are consistent from day-to-day
- People with gastroparesis look sick
- It's an eating disorder
- Means you cannot eat solid food
- Always leads to weight loss/people with GP are thin
- Progresses in severity overtime
- Never goes away

How is gastroparesis treated?



Usually:
medication and
dietary changes

- Reglan, erythromycin and/or domperidone
- Low-fat, low-fiber “3-step” diet
- Emphasis on calories not nutrition

More effective:
comprehensive
management
plan

- Dietary modification with an emphasis on proper nutrition
- Supportive lifestyle practices
- Stress management
- Complementary therapy and remedies
- Appropriate medical treatment

Comprehensive Gastroparesis Management Plan



Coping Skills

- Acceptance
- Attitude
- Support

Complementary Therapies

- Acupuncture
- Massage therapy, etc.

Stress Management

- Daily relaxation practice
- De-stressing home and workplace

Appropriate medical treatment

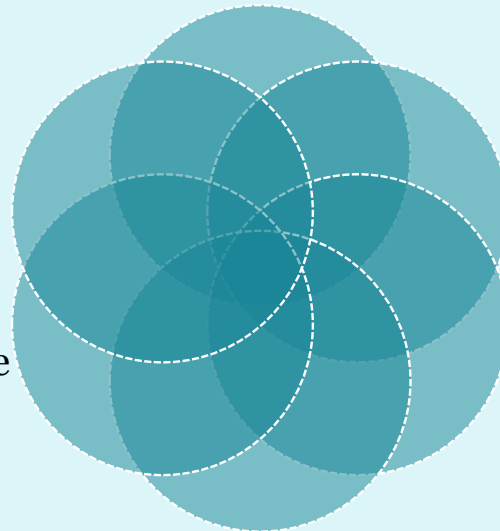
- Medication
- Procedures
- Nutritional support

Dietary Modifications

- Low fat and low fiber
- Small, well-balanced, nutrient-rich meals
- Nutritional supplementation

Lifestyle practices

- Regular physical activity
- Adequate sleep/rest
- Reexamining priorities
- Respecting limitations



What's it like having gastroparesis physically?



- I always feel like I just ate Thanksgiving dinner, even when I only eat a few bites.
- It's like I ate way too much of a food didn't "agree with me."
- I feel like I'm swimming in caramel – dragging, slow moving, tired.
- My belly looks and feels like I'm 6 months pregnant, but I'm not expecting.
- It's like having "morning sickness," all day everyday.
- It feels like I've eaten plastic...or a shoe...or something else inedible. It just sits there.
- Bad days feel like I have a stomach virus. Good days feel like I'm recovering from a stomach virus.

What's it like having gastroparesis mentally?



- I'm glad I don't look sick but it's frustrating, too. It's hard for others to understand how I can look so good when I say I feel so bad.
- I feel like an outsider at food-focused events since I can't fully participate. It's worse when others make a big deal about what I'm eating or not eating.
- I have become fearful of eating or doing something that might make me feel ill. Food is a source of constant anxiety.
- It feels like this has consumed my whole life.
- Stress makes my symptoms worse, but having the condition is very stressful.
- I feel guilty about my new limitations, my symptoms, how they impact others, etc.
- It has been a grieving process for my old normal and a process of trial and error to find my new normal.

Living (Well!) with Gastroparesis



It is possible!

Focus on things **other than gastroparesis**
(GPer and loved ones)

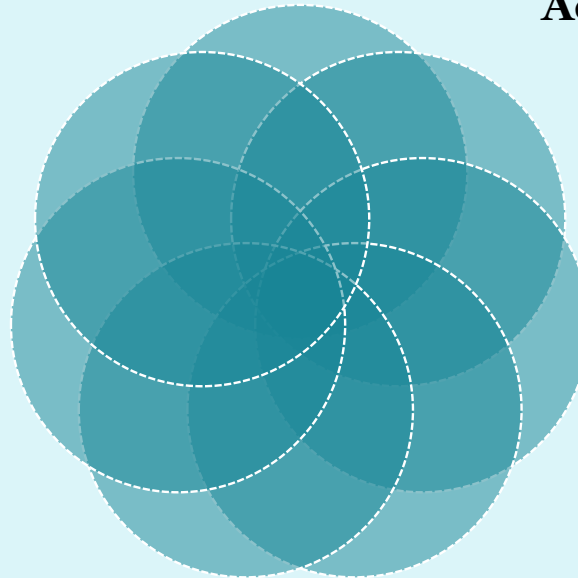
Acceptance by GPer and loved ones
(it's a process!)

Various types of support from family and friends, as well as professionals

Trial and error in all areas

A change in **priorities**, reflected by **action**
(GPer and loved ones)

Implementation of a **comprehensive management plan**



How to Best Support a GPer



- Attend doctors appointments
- Encourage self-care (and practice it yourself!)
- Be respectful of new limitations and priorities
- Participate in and encourage activities that will help them manage the condition
- Use and encourage supportive, proactive language
- Remember (and remind them) that they are more than GP
- Plan non-food-focused activities and events
- Be flexible
- Follow their lead
- Be honest
- Ask what they need most from you
- Help them obtain additional forms of support

Questions?



CRYSTAL SALTRELLI, CHC

WWW.LIVINGWITHGASTROPARESIS.COM

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/LIVINGWITHGASTROPARESIS

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

WWW.GASTROPARESISBOOK.COM

WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/CSALTRELLI