

A NEW DAY PEDIATRIC PSYCHOLOGY

Healing the hurt. Educating the mind. Inspiring the soul.

GASTROPARESIS: HOW TO CONQUER THE DISORDER



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FEATURED WRITER

Gastroparesis is a gastrointestinal disorder that causes the stomach to become paralyzed and does not allow food to digest at a normal rate. It causes nausea, as well as pain in the abdomen every day. However, there are ways to manage the diagnosis in order to live a happy and healthy life. One of the ways is by medication that helps relieve the nausea and pain. Another way is to make diet modifications that will decrease the symptoms. Finally, it can be managed through surgery. The surgery would consist of inserting a Jejunostomy feeding tube into the small intestine.



Adjusting a lifestyle around Gastroparesis can be emotionally draining. The disorder is often unpredictable and episodes can occur at any time, although it does not mean that it should take over one's life. Gastroparesis affects everyone differently and it is best to know how it impacts an individual before deciding to make changes. Consulting with a Gastroenterologist can be very effective in managing the diagnosis.

A New Day Pediatric Psychology, PLLC falls under the vision of Dr. Ann-Louise T. Lockhart, Pediatric Psychologist and Board Certified in Child and Adolescent Psychology.

A New Day specializes in evidence-based behavioral health treatment, interventions, and psychological evaluations for children, adolescents, and adults with known or suspected behavioral health and/or medical conditions affecting all aspects of development and functioning.



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Gastroparesis can bring up some emotions, such as hopelessness, anger, and defeat. It is not easy feeling nauseous every single day and having to interact with the world. There are days where the thought of staying home and not doing anything sounds a lot better than contributing to society. However, it is how one handles the bad days that determines strength in coping with Gastroparesis. The disorder is permanent, but it does not have to be a lifetime sentence if treated properly. Diagnoses does not define a person, but strength and determination do.

For children with Gastroparesis, it can be difficult to understand why they do not feel well and what is causing the pain. Parents can help with this by explaining, in simple terms, that their stomach is unable to help food to break down in order for the body to receive vitamins and nutrients. Another way to aid in understanding is by letting their child know that they are not the only person to have the disorder. Often times when kids have a diagnosis, they believe that they are alone in the journey. If possible, parents can look for support groups for children with Gastroparesis in their community. When kids receive support and guidance on learning how to adapt to Gastroparesis, they will become resilient and see that their diagnosis should not hold them back from what they want to achieve in life.

More Quick Tips for Managing Pain:

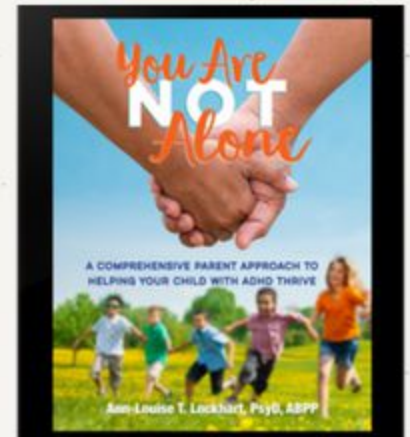
Adapted from the eBook "You Are Not Alone"

- 1. Relaxed, diaphragmatic breathing:** Take slow, deep breaths through the nose and exhale through the mouth. Allow your stomach to fill with your air. Your diaphragm is a muscle in your stomach that helps you take deep breaths and relax. Tension breaths occur in the chest, while relaxed breaths occur in the stomach.
- 2. Progressive muscle relaxation:** This involves tensing and relaxing each muscle group from your head down to your toes. It's a great way to increase body awareness, to notice which muscle groups are most impacted by certain triggers, and to retrain your body to respond differently and healthier. When having muscle spasms and pain, tension occurs naturally. Instead, intentionally tense that muscle and then relax.
- 3. Challenge and replace negative thoughts:** Replace negative thoughts and beliefs, those lying beliefs, with positive thoughts and truths. Write them down, acknowledge they exist and challenge every last lie you tell yourself. Start telling yourself what is true. Meditate on it. Be mindful of those truths. Rest in the truth. Fill your mind with what is true and right. Look for evidence that challenges the lying thoughts and replace them with the truth.

Does every day with your child feel like a struggle?

Have you tried everything and nothing works?

You are not alone!



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STAY TUNED

This newsletter is issued every first and third week of each month.

The purpose of this newsletter is to educate, inspire, and bring healing and awareness by discussing a variety of behavioral health and medical conditions.

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