

Chewing gum -- the new post-operative medicine

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In an article recently recommended by Bradley Kropp of Faculty of 1000 Medicine, researchers find chewing gum is a simple solution to the recovery of bowel function after gastrointestinal surgery – a problem that has troubled patients and physicians for decades.

Authors of the paper published in Urology evaluated 102 patients undergoing gastrointestinal surgery and gave half of them 5 pieces of chewing gum per day after their operation. Chewing the gum is thought to stimulate the smooth muscle fibers and secretion from the salivary glands and liver. The 51 patients who chewed gum recovered their bowel movement significantly faster than those who did not.

Pediatric Urologist, Kropp will be giving his patients undergoing reconstructive surgery a piece of gum following their operation. He says, “In today’s high-tech, molecular-driven scientific world, it is nice to come across an article that can be implemented immediately into our practices without increased healthcare cost”

Kropp also adds, “Just think how much a pack of gum would cost today had the pharmaceutical industry come across this information first.”

Citation: Gum chewing stimulates bowel motility in patients undergoing radical cystectomy with urinary diversion. Kouba EJ, Wallen EM, Pruthi RS in Urology 2007 Dec 70(6):1053-6 www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sites/entrez?term=f1000,f1000m,isrctn

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