

HISTORY

The ileoanal pouch has become an exciting development in the surgical management of patients who have Ulcerative Colitis or Familial Polyposis Coli. It avoids the necessity of a permanent stoma, maintains bowel continence and is a cure for these diseases.

Traditionally, the treatment of choice for patients with ulcerative colitis was complete removal of the colon, rectum and anus, with the formation of an ileostomy. Through the years however, alternatives have been developed. These include total colon and rectum removal with straight ileoanal anastomosis, total colon removal with preservation of the rectum and ileorectal anastomosis, and the continent ileostomy or Kock pouch. In 1978, the late Sir Alan Parks developed the ileoanal pouch procedure which is known widely as the Park's pouch, pelvic pouch, or ileoanal reservoir. In this booklet, our reference will be to the ileoanal reservoir with the "S" or "J" pouch which are the most commonly performed at the Calgary District Hospital Group. "Pouch" and "reservoir" are terms which are used interchangeably in this booklet.

ANATOMY OF A HEALTHY DIGESTIVE TRACT

The digestive tract is a hollow tube which stretches from the mouth to the anus and is lined with mucous membrane. As food travels through the system, enzymes are added which break down the food into a form that can be absorbed and used by our bodies.

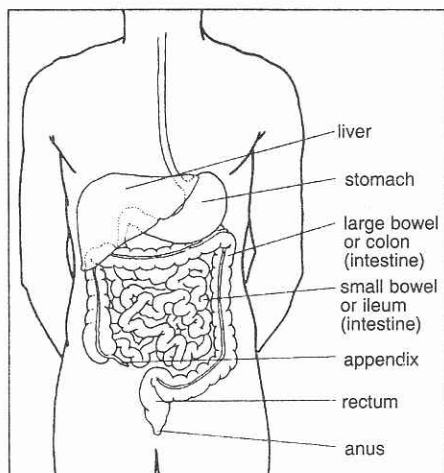


Figure #1

Digestion begins in the mouth, where mechanical breakdown is begun by chewing. The food is then passed through the esophagus to the stomach, where it is broken down into a semi-liquid form by churning and the addition of enzymes. At this point, it is passed into the small bowel or intestine, which is divided into three sections. These are the duodenum, which is approximately ten inches long, the jejunum, which is approximately eight feet long, and the ileum, which is approximately twelve feet long. The digestion and absorption of nutrients takes place mainly in the small intestine. It should be noted that the process of digestion and absorption is almost completed before the products of digestion enter into the large bowel or intestine. The large intestine is approximately five feet in length and is responsible for absorption of fluids and storage of stool. The rectum which is approximately eight inches in length is primarily an organ of elimination. The muscular walls of the rectum expand as it fills with stool, giving you the urge for a bowel movement. After a bowel movement, the rectum relaxes. The rectum is a compliant sac, like a balloon, which expands as it fills and relaxes when empty. The anus, which contains the muscles necessary for bowel control is the end of the digestive tract.