

## **CAN CHEWING GUM SPEED RECOVERY FROM SURGERY?**

### **Researchers at St. Joseph Hospital in Orange Study Effects and Benefits of Patients Who Chew Gum Following Colon Surgery**

ORANGE, Calif. (January 00, 2008) -- Researchers at St. Joseph Hospital in Orange are studying to see if chewing sugarless gum can speed recovery and shorten the time patients who have undergone colon surgery spend in the hospital.

In the study, patients who have undergone surgery for various types of colon conditions, including colon cancer, are being asked to chew sugarless gum three times a day. The goal of the study is to see if gum chewing can help speed up movement of the intestines, thereby allowing patients to be discharged earlier.

“Movement of the intestines is a key indicator of recovery after colon surgery,” said Kathleen Close, RN, Colorectal Coordinator at St. Joseph Hospital. “We want to see if we can speed up healing and recovery by having patients chew gum. Quite simply, patients can’t go home until we know their intestines are working again.”

Close said some international studies have shown a positive impact in some patients who have chewed gum after they have had colon surgery.

She said there may be other benefits of chewing gum after colon surgery, and her researchers will be noting all post-operative complications and benefits.

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