

# NM PRADER-WILLI SYNDROME PROJECT

SEPTEMBER 2020

## Gastroparesis and Stress

It is common to feel sad or discouraged when you are trying to manage a chronic condition like gastroparesis. Like Prader-Willi syndrome, gastroparesis is a multi-faceted condition and must be approached from a variety of angles. A combination of medical treatments, complementary therapies, adequate nutrition, proper dietary modifications, a positive attitude, and supportive lifestyle practices will allow you to manage your loved one's gastroparesis related stress.

Below are some tips to manage gastroparesis related stress:

1. **Be prepared:** Try to plan ahead with gastroparesis friendly foods and symptom management remedies. Taking time to prepare gastroparesis friendly snacks and remembering any gastroparesis related medication on the go will help make time away from home easier for everyone.
2. **Be flexible:** While there are a number of things you can do to alleviate and prepare for gastroparesis related symptoms, there is a level of uncertainty that comes with living with gastroparesis. The more flexible you can be, the less stressful the unpredictability will be when your preparations do not go as planned.
3. **Respect your limitations:** Expect an ebb and flow in your loved one's emotions, just as you expect an ebb and flow in their physical symptoms. Not every day is a going to be good day. On their bad days, treat yourself and your child with extra kindness and compassion. Give yourself and your child a break by learning to say no, learning to delegate, and cutting everyone some slack.
4. **Focus on what you can control:** Your child is not responsible for having gastroparesis, but as their caregiver, you are responsible for how you choose to deal with it. And while it might seem like you have very little control over how they will feel day to day, you both have quite a bit more than you think. Concentrate their attention on the things they can do... and do it! Identify their challenges, and then find constructive ways to meet them. Take time to do the things they enjoy that fits into their life with gastroparesis.
5. **Ask questions:** A lot of the fear and anxiety related to gastroparesis is due to uncertainty. When you and your loved one have the knowledge that comes from getting questions answered, it will put your mind and their mind at ease. Call on your child's medical support team to address any questions and concerns you both may have.

Finally, seeking help from a trusted mental health professional to help you work through your child's gastroparesis related stress is as therapeutic as any other medical treatment, and many actually help reduce their physical symptoms by reducing their overall stress.

### NM Prader-Willi Syndrome Project Team

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# Looking for something to do?

## Check out ARCA's First Ever Virtual Paint Night!

**When:** September 19<sup>th</sup> (Saturday) 2-4pm

**Where:** Zoom (Link will be provided to those who sign up)

**What you will need:** Paint brushes, paints (blue, brown, white and your favorite), something to paint on (canvas, paper, cardboard), a cup of water and paper towels.

**How to sign up:** **RSVP is required by 9/14.** Contact ARCA Trainer Sandra Taylor at [staylor@arcaspirit.org](mailto:staylor@arcaspirit.org) or 505-332-6833.

**What we will be doing:** Christina Williams, ARCA Trainer, will be leading you through painting the wonderful picture below. Of course you can let your artistic side out and customize your painting. Want a sunset? Go for it. Want a giant red balloon? Go for it!

The main thing is to paint and have fun while connecting with others in ARCA. In between painting the sky and the balloon, we will have music and/or conversation while the paint dries.

