

Soft Diet Guidelines

Purpose

When under anesthesia, your digestive system is put to rest. Once awake, your digestive system may take some time to return to normal function. As a precaution, your diet should be modified to avoid any foods that may irritate the lining of the stomach and cause abdominal discomfort or distention (bloating). Foods that tend to cause irritation contain high amounts of fiber and should be avoided. A soft diet is low in fiber, lightly seasoned, and easy to digest. This diet should be followed until your first bowel movement occurs. After that, high-fiber food can slowly be reintroduced as tolerated.

Food Category	Recommended	Not Recommended
Grains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White/plain bread, pasta rice • Corn flakes, puffed rice • Oatmeal, Cream of Rice or Wheat, Grits, Malt-O-Meal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-fiber bread, pasta, rice, cereal • Grain products that contain dried fruit, nuts, or seeds • Crackers, Triscuits, croutons, chips • High-fat pasteries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ breakfast breads, doughnuts, muffins, scones
Fruit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh fruit without skin, seeds, or pits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ skinned apples, peaches, pears ➢ banana, seedless melon • Canned fruit packed in fruit juice or light syrup (peaches, pears) • Applesauce • Juice without pulp <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ apple, cranberry, grape, orange, pomegranate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh fruit with skin, seeds, or pits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ apples, berries, cherries, grapes, grapefruit, kiwi, oranges, plums, etc. • Dried fruit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ cranberries, raisins, prunes, raisins, etc. • Juice with pulp
Vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooked vegetables (non gas-forming) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ asparagus, carrots, seedless cucumbers, eggplant, skinless potatoes, spinach • Tomato sauce and soup 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raw vegetables (including corn and baked potatoes with skin) • Gas-forming vegetables <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ broccoli, brussel sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, greens, lettuce, onions, peppers, rutabagas, sauerkraut
Dairy (Limit intake to no more than 1 serving daily to reduce risk of bloating)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-fat milk ($\leq 2\%$) • Low-fat yogurt without fruit pieces or granola • Low fat cottage cheese • Low-fat frozen yogurt or ice cream without nuts, seeds, coconut, or hard pieces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole milk • Whole milk yogurt with fruit pieces or granola • Regular cottage cheese • Regular frozen yogurt or ice cream with nuts, seeds, coconut, or hard pieces

Meat, Fish, Poultry, Meat Alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tender lean protein sources (lightly seasoned) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ beef, chicken, ham, turkey, pork tenderloin, soy, tofu • Fish without bones • Eggs • Smooth peanut butter • Cheese without nuts or seeds • Beef or chicken broth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tough and dehydrated meats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ beef jerky • High-fat meats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ fried meat, bacon, bologna, pepperoni, salami, sausage • Fish with bones • Highly seasoned meats • Chunky peanut butter • Cheese with nuts or seeds • Beans, peas, or lentils
Desserts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear Jello-O • Low-fat pudding • Angel food cake • Sherbert • Sorbet • Popsicles • Italian ice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jello-O with fruit pieces • High-fat desserts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ fried snack foods, cookies, cakes, pastries • Desserts that contain nuts, seeds, coconut, hard pieces • Fruit pies • Hard candies • Popcorn
Condiments (use sparingly)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salt and pepper • Ketchup and mustard • Flavored jellies without fruit pieces • Low-fat butter or margarine • Low-fat mayonnaise • Low-fat plain cream cheese 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spicy seasonings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ chili powder, chili peppers, hot sauce, horseradish, etc. • Jellies with fruit pieces • Regular butter or margarine • Regular mayonnaise • Regular crème cheese with nuts, seeds, or fruit pieces • High-fat gravies
Beverages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water • Juice without pulp • Gatorade or Propel • Coffee or tea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sparkling or seltzer waters • Juice with pulp • Soda pop (liquid or frozen) • Beer or champagne • Milkshakes or smoothies • Cappuccino, café mochas or lattes

Additional Tips

- Eat small frequent meals
 - Aim for 6 small meals per day
- Eat slowly and chew thoroughly
- Avoid lying down immediately after eating
 - Allow at least 30 – 60 minutes for digestion and to reduce the risk of reflux



Recommended Sample Menu

Breakfast

½ - 1 cup oatmeal without fruit or nuts
½ cup apple juice
½ cup coffee with 1 TBSP skim milk and sugar

Snack

1 banana
water

Lunch

½ cup baked macaroni and cheese
½ cup cooked green beans
½ cup canned peaches (packed in fruit juice or light syrup)
water

Snack

1 cup tomato soup
water

Dinner

2 oz. soft cooked chicken breast
½ cup mashed potatoes
½ cup cooked spinach
water

Snack

½ cup flavored Jello-O (without fruit pieces)