

Dietary advice to reintroduce food following gastrointestinal surgery

This information sheet provides general dietary advice for patients following gastrointestinal surgery.

It should **not** be used for patients who have been assessed by Speech and Language Therapy and require modified consistency, or for patients who require specific restrictions/advice following major UGI surgery such as an oesophagectomy or gastrectomy, or bariatric surgery.

Nutrition plays an important part in your recovery following gastrointestinal surgery.

You will usually start on clear fluids after your surgery, to then progress to free fluids (all liquids).

This diet sheet is for information once you have been advised by your surgeons you are able to start eating.

You may have heard this diet referred to as light, soft or sloppy diet. This diet can be restrictive and is therefore intended for a brief period.

Which foods are suitable?

- Porridge, cornflakes, rice Krispies – well softened with milk or hot water
- Rice pudding, yoghurt (smooth and creamy), custard, mousse, jelly, seedless jam and ice cream
- Toasted white bread, ham/egg/tuna white bread sandwiches
- Mashed potatoes
- Boiled rice
- Scrambled eggs and plain omelettes
- Meats, chicken and fish - no bones, soft (can be broken with a fork) or pureed
- Soup
- Root vegetables - small portion, well cooked, soft, mashed/pureed (no skin, pips, seeds and stalks)
- Fruit – stewed or tinned (soft or pureed)
- Gravy – to add to meat, fish, mash and vegetables
- Meritene Energis Shake and Meritene soup (available on the wards, no prescription required)

Which foods should be limited?

- Crackers, hard biscuits, pastry
- Wholemeal or wholegrain products (including bran based breakfast cereals)
- Dry/tough/hard meats
- Cheese and fried foods

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- Beans, pulses, seeds and nuts
- Raw fruit and vegetables
- Highly spicy and peppery food

Here are some suggestions for meals and snacks available on the hospital menu:

Breakfast ideas:

- Porridge or Ready Brek made with milk or hot water
- Scrambled eggs with toasted white bread
- Rice Krispies or cornflakes made with milk
- Toasted white bread with butter and seedless jam

Main meals (lunch and evening meal) ideas:

- Soup with toasted white bread and butter
- Plain chicken or fish (add gravy or creamy sauces as tolerated)
- Plain omelette
- Ham or tuna or egg white bread sandwiches

Sides:

- Mashed potatoes or jacket potato **without** the skin
- Boiled rice
- Small portion of soft root vegetable (e.g. carrots, swede)

Puddings and snacks ideas:

- Rice pudding, smooth and creamy yoghurt, custard, mousse, jelly, ice cream
- Stewed or tinned fruit
- Meritene Energis Shake (vanilla, strawberry, chocolate)
- Glasses of plain milk, milky drinks, fruit juice

Some tips to help with eating

- Sit upright for meals and snacks, and for 30 minutes after eating
- Have small and frequent meals
- Relax, eat slowly and chew foods well
- Add gravy to keep your food moist. You may add some creamy sauces and butter if tolerated
- Drink fluids with meals and snacks
- Sleep with an extra pillow and avoid meals 2 hours before bed time



Helpful
Tips

If you experience any problems adhering to this diet, please discuss it with your doctor, nurse or dietitian.

What is next?

After a few days, your doctor, nurse or dietitian will advise you on when and how to progress with your diet.

If you find you are not progressing within 7 to 10 days, you should be referred to a dietitian.

Our commitment to confidentiality

We keep personal and clinical information about you to ensure you receive appropriate care

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and treatment. Everyone working in the NHS has a legal duty to keep information about you confidential.

We will share information with other parts of the NHS to support your healthcare needs, and we will inform your GP of your progress unless you ask us not to. If we need to share information that identifies you with other organisations we will ask for your consent. You can help us by pointing out any information in your records which is wrong or needs updating.

Additional Sources of Information:

Go online and view NHS Choices website for more information about a wide range of health topics <http://www.nhs.uk/Pages/HomePage.aspx>

You may want to visit one of our Health Information Centres located in:

- Main Entrance at Birmingham Heartlands Hospital Tel: 0121 424 2280
 - Treatment Centre at Good Hope Hospital Tel: 0121 424 9946
 - Clinic Entrance Solihull Hospital Tel: 0121 424 5616
- or contact us by email: healthinfo.centre@heartofengland.nhs.uk.

Dear Patient

We welcome your views on what you thought of this patient information leaflet, also any suggestions on how you feel we can improve through our feedback link below:

- Patient Information Feedback email: patientinformationleafletfeedback@heartofengland.nhs.uk

If you wish to make any other comments this can be done through the links listed below:

- Patient Opinion: www.patientopinion.org.uk
- I want great care: www.iwantgreatcare.org (Here you can leave feedback about your doctor)

Be helpful and respectful: think about what people might want to know about our patient information and this hospital and how your experiences might benefit others. Remember your words must be polite and respectful, and you cannot name individuals on the sites.

If you have any questions you may want to ask about your condition or your treatment or if there is anything you do not understand and you wish to know more about please write them down and your doctor will be more than happy to try and answer them for you.