



York and Scarborough  
Teaching Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Dietary Advice after Surgery for Reflux and Hiatus Hernia The Softer Option

Information for patients, relatives and carers

① For more information, please contact:

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# **Diet after surgery for reflux and hiatus hernia**

This leaflet contains information to help you choose a balanced diet and foods which you can safely enjoy after surgery.

- After surgery you will need to follow a soft diet for six weeks.
- This type of diet should slide down easily to reduce swallowing difficulties and help with healing after surgery.
- After six weeks if you have no problems you should return to your normal diet.

## **Eating habits**

- Try to eat slowly and take your time over meals.
- Cut your food up into small pieces and take small mouthfuls.
- Try to chew your food well and do not swallow any hard or chewy pieces of food.
- It is helpful to sit upright at a table when eating meals.

# **A soft diet**

- As a guide any food that is easily mashed with a fork should be suitable.
- Serve foods moist e.g. add extra sauce, gravy, milk.
- You may also be able to manage crunchy/crispy biscuits and crackers if you chew these well.
- Bread and toast should be avoided.
- Soft diets can be very filling. You may need to have three small meals a day plus snacks.
- Start with small servings – you can always have second helpings.
- Choose a wide variety of foods to ensure a balanced diet.
- Make sure meals and drinks are served attractively – a variety of tastes and colours is important.
- Baby foods are not suitable for adults.

## Drinks

- Avoid **all** fizzy drinks, including fizzy water and alcohol.

## Getting the balance right

To ensure your diet is as nourishing as possible, have a variety of foods and include foods from each of the following groups every day.

### 1. Protein foods

Meat and poultry – minced, tender stews and casseroles with bones and gristle removed. Corned beef, pâté, meat paste.

Fish – flaked with sauce and any bones or skin removed.

Fish paste and mousse.

Eggs – soft scrambled, mashed hard boiled eggs, soufflé

Quorn/soya mince.

## **2. Starchy foods**

Cereals - porridge, Ready Brek, Weetabix, Rice Krispies, Cornflakes (soaked in milk).

Potatoes – mashed, or cooked as a jacket potato with skin removed.

Pasta – cooked until soft and served with a sauce.

Rice – served with lots of sauce.

Crackers, melba toast, breadsticks, biscuits.

## **3. Fruit and vegetables**

Avoid skins and pips. Stewed fruit, soft tinned fruit, mashed fruit are suitable.

Soft vegetables such as cooked carrots, parsnips, swede, turnips, broccoli and cauliflower florets, tinned tomatoes, baked beans, mushy peas, soft avocado.



## **4. Dairy foods**

Milk, preferably full cream.

Milk puddings - rice, custard, mousse, whip, blancmange.

Yoghurt, fromage frais, dips, evaporated milk, cream, ice cream.

Soft cheese - cream cheese, grated cheese in cooking, cheese spread.

## **5. Miscellaneous**

These foods can help to add variety to your diet:  
Smooth peanut butter, chocolate spread, hummous, taramasalata, marmite, honey, jelly jams and marmalades.

# Suggested Meal ideas

## Breakfast

- Porridge or Ready Brek with full cream milk or cream, with sugar, honey or syrup
- Weetabix with warm milk and sugar
- Yoghurt or fromage frais with fruit or honey
- Stewed or mashed fruit with cream or yoghurt
- Scrambled eggs
- Tinned tomatoes

## Meat Dishes

- Shepherd's pie
- Chicken casserole
- Beef stew, Irish stew
- Hotpot
- Meat loaf & gravy
- Savoury mince
- Moussaka

## Fish dishes

- Fish pie
- Cod mornay
- Fish in sauce
- Mashed pilchards
- Salmon
- Salmon mousse
- Mashed tuna & Mayonnaise

## **Pasta dishes**

- Macaroni cheese
- Lasagne
- Spaghetti Bolognese
- Tuna and pasta bake
- Tinned spaghetti/Ravioli

## **Cheese dishes**

- Cauliflower cheese
- Cheese and potato pie
- Savoury cheese custard
- Cheesy dips
- Broccoli and cheese sauce
- Cheesy vegetables
- Cheesy soufflé

## **Puddings**

- Milk puddings
- Egg custard
- Banana custard
- Crème caramel
- Mousse, blancmange
- Ice cream, sorbet
- Sponge and custard
- Angel Delight
- Instant whip
- Semolina
- Trifle, milk jelly
- Tiramisu
- Stewed fruit and custard or cream
- Thick and creamy yoghurt
- Fromage frais
- Queen of puddings

## **Snacks**

- Angel cake
- Yoghurt
- Fromage frais
- Mini rolls
- Mousse
- Bread sticks and dips
- Quavers
- Milk drinks
- Cereal
- Chocolate
- Crackers
- Biscuits
- Melba toast
- Ice cream

# Constipation

This can sometimes be a problem on a soft diet.

- Try to drink at least 6 - 8 cups/3 - 4 pints/1.5 - 2 litres of fluid a day.
- Use a soft high fibre breakfast cereal such as Weetabix or porridge.
- Include suitable soft fruits and vegetables every day.
- Unprocessed bran is not recommended.

# Weight loss

If you are losing weight or have any problems with your diet, contact the dietitian or doctor for further advice.

# Swallowing difficulties

If food feels stuck try the following:

- Stand up and walk around.
- Sip at hot water or any other drink.
- If the problem continues seek medical advice.

**If you have on-going swallowing problems then you should also contact your doctor for advice.**

## **Tell us what you think of this leaflet**

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact:

Admin Team, The York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York YO31 8HE, telephone 01904 725269 or email [Nutrition&Dietetics@york.nhs.uk](mailto:Nutrition&Dietetics@york.nhs.uk).

## **Teaching, training and research**

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. You can opt out if you do not want students to observe. We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research.

## **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email [pals@york.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@york.nhs.uk).

An answer phone is available out of hours.

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