

DIETARY MANAGEMENT FOR NISSEN FUNDOPLICATION

IN HOSPITAL

Begin with crushed ice/sucking ice cubes via a teaspoon. Little amounts, often. You will have an IV for the first few hours post-op to ensure you get enough fluids.

The morning after the operation you may be offered a very watery porridge, or yoghurt. Eat it using a teaspoon, and stop when you feel full (may only be a few teaspoons full). Keep sipping on water/juice and ice and progress to cups of tea etc as you feel able and as your surgeon recommends. Tell staff if you feel nauseated. Be sure to turn down toast or pizza etc (!) if it is offered as some staff may not be aware of your dietary restrictions.

THE DAY AFTER YOUR SURGERY – FLUIDS ONLY

Suitable fluids are:

- Water, diluted Fruit Juice, Milk or Milky drinks eg. Flavoured milk, Milkshakes, Fruit Smoothies, Ordinary Tea, Herb or Fruit Tea, Coffee, Milo, Bournvita, Hot Chocolate, Cordials and concentrates, Soup – strain or blend to remove any lumps.

Do not drink fluids which cause gas and bloating as it is often difficult to burp after your surgery.

- Avoid drinking fizzy drinks eg. Coke, Lemonade, Lucozade.
- It's best not to drink scalding hot or ice cold fluids and don't gulp your drinks, or use a straw or chew gum because all of these tend to make you swallow air into your stomach, making you feel bloated and uncomfortable.

THE FIRST 2 TO 3 WEEKS AFTER YOUR SURGERY - SOFT DIET

On about day two after your surgery (your doctor will decide when you are ready) you can start eating food.

For the first two or three weeks the opening from your oesophagus to your stomach will be a little narrow because of swelling. Until the swelling goes down food must be smooth, soft and sloppy to easily swallow and slip down.

The important points to remember:

- Eat slowly and chew your food thoroughly.
- Eat small meals throughout the day. Stop eating when you feel full. Have extra snacks in between meals if you need the extra nutrients and energy.
- You should have soft, moist foods and gravy or sauces with your meals to help the food slip down your oesophagus.
- For the first 2 to 3 weeks do not eat foods which are hard or form a doughy ball in your mouth. The foods to avoid are breakfast cereals with hard dry pieces of fruit or nuts e.g. muesli, bread, muffins, crumpets, bagels, pizza, potato chips, corn chips, raw vegetables, large fruit pips (kiwifruit pips okay) fruit skins, nuts, seeds, popcorn, cooked fibrous vegetables e.g. cabbage, celery, sweetcorn, beans, tough stringy meat and chicken, battered or crumbed fish, cooked stringy cheese.
- Do not consume foods or drinks which generally cause you a lot of wind and bloating as you may find it harder to belch or burp.

MEAL IDEAS FOR SOFT FOODS

Breakfast Foods

- Breakfast cereal, eg. Porridge, Weet-bix, Special K, Cornflakes – make sure these are well softened with milk, juice or water before eating.
- Soft stewed fruit – peeled first and cooked or tinned e.g. apple, apricot, peach, pear.
- Soft ripe fresh fruit -peeled first e.g. kiwifruit, ripe plums, peaches, ripe banana.
- Smooth yoghurt without nuts, seeds or fruit skins.
- **Fruit smoothies – blend together milk and smooth yoghurt. Add ripe banana, tinned apricots, peaches or kiwifruit. Blend and add liquid honey to sweeten if liked.**

Lunch and Dinner Foods

- **Cream or vegetable soups – strain or puree to remove any lumps.**
- **Soft egg dishes – omelette, souffles, scrambled egg, poached egg, soft boiled eggs.**
- **Soft and moist pasta dishes - macaroni cheese, tinned spaghetti on toast without the crusts, pasta snacks or pasta with sauces. If you like add mashed tinned fish, finely chopped ham or grated cheese and soft vegetables e.g tomatoes and pumpkin.**
- Soft and moist rice dishes – rice risotto cooked till soft and still moist. Add soft peas and mashed tinned fish or finely chopped ham if liked.
- Finely minced or blended lean meat or chicken – to make it very soft don't brown the meat first, just cook with plenty of liquid until very tender and moist. Serve with plenty of gravy or sauce e.g. spaghetti bolognese, lasagne, minced chicken.
- Once you have tried mince meat and find this easy to swallow, you can try a very tender casserole. Make sure the pieces of meat or chicken are small and cook slowly in lots of gravy until very tender such as in a crock pot. The meat should practically 'fall apart'.
- Steamed, microwaved or baked fish. Use boneless fish and remove the skin or use tinned fish. Cook in liquid, sauce, paper or foil so the fish stays moist and avoids getting dry, hard or crispy. Serve with plenty of sauce.
- Very soft or mashed vegetables, eg. potato, pumpkin, kumara, parsnip, carrot, swede, spinach, silverbeet (remove stalks), cauliflower / broccoli flowerets.
- Easily crumbled biscuits "melt in the mouth" e.g. cruskitts or arrowroot spread with toppings to help moisten the biscuit e.g. pate, hummus, cream cheese, meat or fish paste.

Snack Foods/ Desserts

- Soft ripe and peeled or soft stewed fruit, eg. tinned apple, apricot, peach, pear, kiwifruit.
- Smooth yoghurt, dairy food, fromage frais, ice cream, instant pudding, rice pudding, custard, jelly, sago, tapioca, egg custard, sorbet.
- Fruit smoothies, Vitaplan, Complian, Up and Go drinks (meal replacements).
- *Easily crumbled biscuits "melt in the mouth" e.g. cruskitts, arrowroot spread with toppings to help moisten the biscuit e.g. jam, butter, margarine, cream cheese, pate, hummus, meat or fish paste.*
- If you like, you can always 'dunk' other biscuits in a hot drink which will soften them well enough to safely swallow.

Drinks

- Aim to drink at least 6 cups of fluid a day. If you do want to drink with your food, a small glass is fine but don't get over full and still remember to chew food well.

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KEEP YOUR BOWELS MOVING REGULARLY - AVOID CONSTIPATION

It is important for your comfort to avoid constipation. Remember to eat plenty of suitable fruit, vegetables and soft easily swallowed higher fibre cereals such as Weet-bix and porridge.

Try soaking a bowl of dried fruit in water overnight and blending with prune juice, then enjoy 2-3 tablespoons on your cereal or yogurt. If wished, also drink prune juice or buy Kiwicrush (a frozen drink sold in New World supermarkets) and enjoy kiwifruit. If you need extra fibre you can also use a bulking laxative such as Metamucil, try 1- 2 tsp once or twice daily.

To keep your bowels regular remember to drink enough fluid each day and try to do some activity such as walking (and other types as you are able) each day.

USEFUL TIPS TO HELP REDUCE WIND AND BLOATING

After your surgery you may find it uncomfortable or more difficult to burp or belch. In this case it will help to avoid eating or drinking excessive amounts of foods and fluids which are known to produce intestinal gas. Try the following advice:

1. Don't let yourself get constipated as this can increase bloating and gas for some people:
 - Drink plenty of fluids- about 2 litres each day (try to have no more than 4 cups of tea or coffee per day and enjoy a range of other fluids).
 - Choose smooth soft foods high in fibre e.g. Weet-bix and hot milk, pureed dried fruit
 - Enjoy regular exercise e.g. walking.
 - Have a glass of prune juice or Kiwicrush (from supermarkets) each day.
2. Make sure you are not swallowing air while eating or drinking. Try not to gulp your food and don't chew gum. Relax at meal times and chew your food well.
3. Avoid fizzy drinks such as beer and soft drinks and don't use a straw to drink.
Drink most of your fluids between meals rather than with food.
4. Foods high in fibre can cause wind but you still need to eat fibre to keep your bowels moving regularly. Increase the fibre slowly into your diet and if certain foods give you a lot of wind just leave them out the first few weeks. It's probably best not to eat too much of the following foods: wheat bran such as in All bran and baking bran, beans particularly soy beans, vegetables from the brassica family such as cabbage and brussel sprouts.
5. Laxatives that are based on soluble fibre i.e. Metamucil, Granacol, Normacol may cause stomach bloating. If you need to take these, it is important to start with small amounts and increase your dose slowly. Try starting with ½ tsp twice daily.

WHEN CAN YOU STOP THE SOFT DIET? ABOUT 2- 3 WEEKS AFTER SURGERY

About 2-3 weeks after your surgery you should find swallowing becomes easier (it may take longer than this). Begin to work up to your normal diet. Start by including one new food at a time. Cut food into small pieces on the plate, chew well, and ensure one mouthful has gone down before adding another mouthful. Eat slowly and mindfully.

When trying breads for the first time, try small mouthfuls of crumbly style breads e.g. Vogel or Burgen. If a food doesn't agree, leave it and re try in a few days time. Hopefully by six weeks you should be eating normally. If not or you are losing weight without trying or at any time have any dietary concerns it would be wise to make an appointment with a dietician.

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