



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 are safe to enjoy after surgery.

- After surgery, you will commence on fluids for the first one to two days.
- After this time, you will progress on to puree foods for one to two days. In hospital you may order from the puree/Level 4 menu or choose foods such as salmon, cod or haddock in sauce, egg custard, pureed meat/poultry, mash potatoes, custard, mousse, smooth yoghurts, crème caramel.
- You will then move on to a soft diet, which you will follow for six weeks.
- This type of diet should slide down easily to reduce swallowing difficulties and help with healing after surgery.
- After six weeks, it is recommended to gradually re-introduce foods one at a time as tolerated until you have returned 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 as they do not have the right nutrition for an adult.

Drinks

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

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

Eggs – soft scrambled, mashed hard boiled eggs, soufflé

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

Fish paste and mousse.

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

Quorn or soya mince.

2. Starchy foods

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

Crackers, melba toast, breadsticks, biscuits.

Pasta – cooked until soft and served with a sauce.

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

Rice – served with lots of sauce.

3. Fruit and vegetables

Avoid skins and pips. Mashed fruit, soft tinned fruit, stewed fruit are suitable.

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

4. Dairy foods

Milk, preferably full cream.

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

Cream, dips, evaporated milk, fromage frais, ice cream yoghurt.

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

5. Miscellaneous

These foods can help to add variety to your diet: chocolate spread, honey, hummus, seedless jams, marmalades, marmite, smooth peanut butter and taramasalata.

Suggested meal ideas

Breakfast

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

Meat Dishes

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

Fish dishes

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

Pasta dishes

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

Cheese dishes

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

Puddings

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

Snacks

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

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 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, York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York,
YO31 8HE, telephone 01904 725269 or
email yhs-tr.yorkdietitians@nhs.net.

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 yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net.

An answer phone is available out of hours.

Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

If you would like this information in a different format, including braille or easy read, or translated into a different language, please speak to a member of staff in the ward or department providing your care.

Patient Information Leaflets can be accessed via the Trust's Patient Information Leaflet website:

www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/

Owner	Carmen Nusco, Clinical Lead Dietitian for Surgery and Critical Care
Date first issued	October 2006
Review Date	February 2029
Version	5 (issued February 2026)
Approved by	Department of Nutrition and Dietetics
Document Reference	PIL 1121 v5
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