

Discharge Instructions: Feeding Your Child a Soft Diet



Your child has been prescribed a soft diet. This is also called gastrointestinal soft diet, or bland diet. This means your child needs to eat foods that are soft, easy to chew and swallow, and easy to digest. This diet is for people with digestive problems.

General guidelines

- Let your child eat in a calm, relaxed setting.
- Don't rush your child while eating.
- Tell your child to chew food slowly and completely, and swallow slowly.
- Let your child eat small meals throughout the day.
- Don't let your child eat within 2 hours of bedtime.
- Don't give your child medicines, such as aspirin or ibuprofen. Talk with the healthcare provider before giving your child any medicine.

Foods you can give your child

You can give your child any of the foods below.

Vegetables, such as:

- Cooked carrots
- Summer squash (zucchini, yellow squash) cooked or mashed, without seeds
- Winter squash (acorn, butternut, spaghetti squash) cooked or mashed, without seeds
- Mashed potatoes
- Boiled potatoes without skin
- Boiled sweet potatoes without skin
- Avocado (limit portion to ¼ medium avocado)
- Other cooked, canned, or frozen vegetables without seeds, skin, or coarse fiber

Fruits, such as:

- Applesauce
- Bananas
- Baked peeled apple
- Peeled, ripe peaches or pears
- Canned fruit
- Melon

- Cooked fruits without skins or seeds

Grains, such as:

- Cooked white rice
- Cream of wheat
- Cream of rice
- Plain pasta and noodles
- Plain white crackers that are moistened
- White bread, rolls, or bagels
- Soft wheat tortillas

Protein foods, such as:

- Eggs that are poached, soft boiled, or scrambled
- Fish, turkey, chicken, or other meat that is not tough or stringy
- Tofu
- Soft, low-fat cheeses
- Yogurt without seeds or nuts
- Smooth peanut butter (limit to 1 tablespoon at a time)

Dessert foods, such as:

- Plain ice cream
- Custard
- Gelatin
- Pudding
- Moist cake
- Plain sherbet
- Soft fruit pie with bottom crust only
- Soft cookies moistened in liquid

Foods not to give your child

Don't give your child any of the foods below.

No vegetables, such as:

- Raw vegetables
- Pickled vegetables
- Fried vegetables
- Sauerkraut

- Corn
- Mild or hot peppers
- Tomatoes
- Tomato foods, such as tomato paste, tomato sauce, and tomato juice

No fruits, such as:

- Raw apple
- Grapes
- Coconut
- Berries with seeds, such as strawberries, raspberries, and blackberries
- Acidic fruits, such as oranges, grapefruits, lemons, limes, and pineapple
- Dried fruit
- Fruit leather or chewy snacks

No grains, such as:

- Whole-grain breads, rolls, and crackers
- Breads and rolls with nuts, seeds, or bran
- Bran and granola cereals
- Hard or crispy tortillas

No protein foods, such as:

- Nuts and seeds that are whole or chopped
- Fried or greasy meats
- Processed or spicy meats, such as sausage, pepperoni, bacon, ham, and lunch meats
- Ribs and other meats with barbecue sauce
- Tough or stringy meats, such as corned beef or beef jerky
- Dried cooked beans, such as pinto, kidney, or navy beans
- Crunchy peanut butter
- Spicy or flavored cheeses, such as jalapeño and black pepper cheese
- Eggs that are crispy fried
- Hard cheeses
- Fried tofu

No sauces, such as:

- Barbecue sauce
- Ketchup

- Hot sauce

No snacks, such as:

- Potato chips (plain or flavored)
- Corn chips
- Popcorn, popcorn cakes, or rice cakes
- Crackers with nuts, seeds, or spicy seasonings
- French fries
- Fried or greasy foods

No dessert foods, such as:

- Foods that contain chocolate
- Candy
- Pastries or cakes
- Ice cream with nuts, seeds, coconut, or dried fruit

Drinks

You can give your child:

- Water
- Mild juices, such as apple and grape
- Milk. Your child may need lactose-free milk.

Don't give your child:

- Cranberry, orange, pineapple, or grapefruit juice
- Lemonade
- Colas or other drinks with caffeine
- Alcoholic beverages
- Coffee
- Black teas
- Vegetable juice
- Whole milk, if your child is lactose intolerant

When to call the healthcare provider

Call the healthcare provider if any of the following occur:

- Symptoms that don't get better, or get worse
- New symptoms

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