

# Discharge Instructions: Eating a Soft, Bland Diet



You have been prescribed a soft, bland diet. This reduces the amount of work your digestive tract has to do. It also reduces the chance that your digestive tract will be irritated by the food you eat. A soft, bland diet is prescribed for people with digestive problems. This is different from a soft diet that is prescribed for people with issues chewing and swallowing. The diet you have been prescribed consists of foods that are tender, mildly seasoned, and easy to digest. While on this diet, don't eat fried or spicy foods, or raw fruits and vegetables. Also don't drink alcohol.

## General guidelines

- Eat in a calm, relaxed atmosphere. How you eat may be as important as what you eat. Don't rush while eating. Chew your food slowly and thoroughly, and swallow slowly.
- Eat small meals often throughout the day. But don't eat 3 hours before lying down.
- Think about raising the head of your bed 6 or 9 inches. Wedge pillows let you sleep on an incline and may be helpful.
- Don't eat any foods that cause discomfort.
- Don't use NSAIDs (nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs), such as aspirin and ibuprofen. Also don't take medicine that contain aspirin. NSAIDs can cause ulcers and delay or prevent ulcer healing.
- Use antacids as needed. But keep in mind that magnesium-containing antacids may cause diarrhea.
- Don't smoke.

## Foods to eat

- Cream of wheat and cream of rice
- Cooked white rice
- Mashed potatoes and boiled potatoes without skin
- Plain pasta and noodles
- Plain white crackers (such as no-salt soda crackers)
- White bread
- Applesauce
- Cooked fruits without skins or seeds
- Mild juices, such as apple and grape
- Bananas
- Cooked or mashed vegetables without stems and seeds
  - Carrots
  - Summer squash (zucchini, yellow squash)
  - Winter squash (acorn, butternut, spaghetti squash)

- Cottage cheese
- Mild hard or soft cheeses
- Custard
- Yogurt without seeds or nuts
- Milk (you may need lactose-free milk)
- Ice cream without seeds, nuts, chocolate chips, or toppings
- Smooth peanut butter
- Eggs
- Fish, turkey, chicken, or other lean meat that is not tough or stringy
- Tofu

## **Foods to stay away from**

- Nuts and seeds
- Snack foods, such as the following:
  - Chocolate-containing snacks, candy, pastries, or cakes.
  - Potato chips (plain, barbecued, or other flavors)
  - Taco chips or nachos
  - Corn chips
  - Popcorn, popcorn cakes, or rice cakes
  - Crackers with nuts, seeds, or spicy seasonings
  - French fries
- Fried or greasy foods
- Whole-grain breads, rolls, and crackers
- Breads and rolls with nuts, seeds, or bran
- Bran and granola cereals
- Berries with seeds, such as strawberries, raspberries, and blackberries
- Acidic fruits, such as oranges, grapefruits, lemons, limes, and pineapples
- Raw vegetables
- Mild or hot peppers
- Sauerkraut and pickled vegetables
- Tomatoes or tomato products, such as tomato paste, tomato sauce, and tomato juice
- Barbecue sauce
- Spicy or flavored cheeses, such as jalapeño and black pepper cheese

- Crunchy peanut butter
- Dried cooked beans, such as pinto, kidney, or navy beans
- The following meats:
  - Fried or greasy meats
  - Processed, spicy meats, such as sausage, bacon, ham, and lunch meats
  - Ribs and other meats with barbecue sauce
  - Tough or stringy meats, such as corned beef or beef jerky

## Drinks to stay away from

- Alcohol
- Coffee and regular teas
- Colas and other drinks with caffeine
- Cranberry, orange, pineapple, and grapefruit juice
- Lemonade
- Vegetable juice
- Whole milk, if you are lactose intolerant
- Peppermint

## Follow-up

Follow up with your healthcare provider, or as advised.

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