



Patient & Family Guide  
2022

# Esophageal Soft Eating Guidelines



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# Esophageal Soft Eating Guidelines

Follow these guidelines for 4 weeks after your surgery or dilation. **If you have an esophageal stent, you will need to follow these guidelines as long as your stent is in place.**

These guidelines include soft, moist (wet) foods and liquids that are easy to swallow.

**It is important to avoid foods that may irritate (bother) your throat or block your stent.**

## Eating guidelines

- Make sure all food is soft and moist. Add sauces, gravies, butter, or margarine to moisten food.
- Cut food into small pieces.
- **Do not** swallow hard chunks or food that is dry and/or crumbly.
- Eat and drink slowly.
- Take small bites and chew solid foods very well.
- Eat 6 to 8 small meals a day.
- Take sips of liquid during and after your meal. **If you have a stent**, take a small sip after each bite.

- Stop eating when you start to feel full.
- Avoid food and drinks that are very hot or very cold.
- Sit upright when eating. Stay upright for at least 45 minutes after eating.
- Stop eating and drinking 3 hours before bedtime.
- To avoid gas or bloating, **do not** use straws, chew gum, or eat hard candies, mints, or lozenges. Avoid carbonated (bubbly) drinks, like pop.
- Chew food with your mouth closed.

**Note:** If your surgeon wants you to only have liquids and purees at first, follow Step 1: Puree Diet for \_\_\_\_\_ days, then move to Step 2: Esophageal Soft Diet.

## **Step 1: Puree Diet**

Have only liquids and **smooth** pureed foods, like:

- › Water, juice, milk
- › Milkshakes
- › Smooth yogurts, puddings
- › Broth, strained or blended soups

- › Ice cream, sherbet, sorbet
- › Jell-O® (soften Jell-O® to a liquid in your mouth before swallowing)
- › Nutritional supplement drinks (like Carnation Breakfast Essentials®, Ensure®, or Boost®)
- › Store-bought bottled, pureed meat, vegetables, and fruit (no chunks)
- › Campbell's® Trepuree® frozen pureed entrees, homemade strained pureed foods
- Foods should be the consistency of smooth applesauce or pudding, with no chunks or strings.
- Limit yourself to 1 cup (250 ml) per hour for the first 1 to 2 days. Be sure to eat slowly.
- Ask your dietitian for the pamphlet *How to Puree Foods*:
  - › [www.nshealth.ca/sites/nshealth.ca/files/patientinformation/0624.pdf](http://www.nshealth.ca/sites/nshealth.ca/files/patientinformation/0624.pdf)
- You can buy Campbell's® Trepuree® frozen pureed entrees from the VON (Victorian Order of Nurses for Canada) in some communities.
- Drink 3 to 4 store-bought or homemade (see recipes on page 8) high-protein, high-calorie drinks each day (like Ensure®, Boost®, or Carnation Breakfast Essentials®).
  - › For extra calories, choose Ensure® Plus Calories or Boost® Plus Calories.

## Step 2: Esophageal Soft Diet

<b>Best choices</b>	<b>Foods to avoid</b>
<p><b>Grain products</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cooked cereal (like oatmeal or Cream of Wheat®)</li><li>• Dry cereal that softens easily with milk (like Rice Krispies® or corn flakes)</li><li>• Pasta with sauce</li><li>• Soft casseroles (like macaroni and cheese without toppings)</li><li>• Rice that is soft and moist in soups and sauces</li><li>• Crushed crackers or pieces of bread with crusts off, soaked in soup</li><li>• Pancakes softened and soaked in liquid (like syrup, milk, or tea)</li><li>• Arrowroot or ginger snap cookies softened in liquid (like milk, tea, or coffee)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All fresh, “doughy”, or crusty bread, muffins, biscuits, waffles, toast, and baked goods (including pie crust)</li><li>• Granola, shredded wheat</li><li>• Breads and cereals containing nuts, seeds, coconut, or dried fruit</li></ul>

<b>Best choices</b>	<b>Foods to avoid</b>
<p><b>Vegetables and fruit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soft, very well-cooked vegetables with skins removed, chopped fine and used in soups, sauces, and stews</li> <li>• Soft, moist, mashed white or sweet potatoes, turnips, carrots, squash, or parsnips, with peels removed, in gravy or sauce</li> <li>• Soft scalloped potatoes</li> <li>• Canned, ground, or crushed tomatoes, tomato juice, and tomato soup</li> <li>• Minced yellow or green beans and minced soft peas in gravy or sauce</li> <li>• Canned and cooked fruit with peels removed</li> <li>• Fruit and vegetable juice</li> <li>• Ripe banana, mashed or chewed well</li> <li>• Applesauce blends</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raw or stir-fried vegetables, salads, coleslaw</li> <li>• Tough or stringy cooked vegetables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Spinach</li> <li>› Celery</li> <li>› Whole peas</li> <li>› Whole green and yellow beans</li> <li>› Brussels sprouts</li> <li>› Stewed and diced tomatoes</li> <li>› Asparagus</li> <li>› Corn</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Raw fruit (bananas are OK)</li> <li>• Pineapple, grapes, kiwi, grapefruit, oranges, rhubarb, berries</li> <li>• Dried or candied fruit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Raisins</li> <li>› Currants</li> <li>› Dates</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<b>Best choices</b>	<b>Foods to avoid</b>
<p><b>Milk products</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Milk and milk substitutes (like white, chocolate, almond, soy, oat)</li> <li>• Smooth yogurt, pudding, ice cream, frozen yogurt, mousse, custard, sherbet</li> <li>• Cottage cheese with liquid, chewed well</li> <li>• Thin cheese sauce</li> <li>• Ricotta cheese used in a sauce, or milk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stringy, cooked cheese (like melted cheddar or mozzarella)</li> <li>• Hard cheese</li> <li>• Yogurt, ice cream, and frozen yogurt with nuts, granola, or chunks of fruit</li> <li>• Dry cottage cheese</li> </ul>
<p><b>Meat and alternatives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minced tender meat or poultry, or soft boneless fish in gravy, sauce, or broth</li> <li>• Scrambled, poached, or soft-boiled eggs, chopped and topped with melted margarine or sauce</li> <li>• Well-cooked, tender or mashed legumes and lentils in soup or sauce (like soft baked beans)</li> <li>• Soft tofu in soup or sauce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dry, tough, stringy or gristly (chewy) meats</li> <li>• Fish with bones or batter</li> <li>• Bacon</li> <li>• Nuts and seeds</li> <li>• Hard-boiled and fried eggs</li> <li>• Peanut butter (unless it is blended in a smoothie or pudding to remove stickiness)</li> <li>• Firm tofu (unless it is blended)</li> </ul>

<b>Best choices</b>	<b>Foods to avoid</b>
<p><b>Other</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nutritional drinks (like Ensure®, Boost®)</li> <li>• Milkshakes, Carnation Breakfast Essentials®</li> <li>• Store-bought eggnog, sherbet, Jell-O®</li> <li>• Smooth filling from a pudding-type pie (like banana cream, butterscotch, or pumpkin pie filling) with whipped cream and without chunks or pieces of coconut (soft pieces of banana chewed well are OK)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Popcorn, chips, taco chips</li> <li>• Foods containing coconut, nuts, seeds, or dried fruit</li> <li>• Pickles, olives</li> <li>• Gelatin-type candies (like gum drops, jelly beans)</li> <li>• Cake, pie, pastry</li> <li>• Toffee</li> </ul>

**Note:** Ask your dietitian if you should take a liquid or chewable multi-vitamin and mineral supplement. Be sure to chew tablets completely and have a drink to help any pieces go down.



# High-Protein, High-Calorie Drink Recipes

## High-Protein Milk

- › 1 cup (250 ml) whole milk
- › 1/4 cup (60 ml) skim milk powder

Add powder to milk. Mix until dissolved. Keep in the fridge.

Makes: 1 serving

Energy: 260 calories

Protein: 19 grams

Can be used:

- › As a drink, in milkshakes
- › On cereal and with cooked or pureed fruit
- › In soups, puddings, cream sauces, and mashed potatoes

## High-Protein Milkshake

- › 1 cup (250 ml) whole milk
- › 1/2 cup (125 ml) plain ice cream or frozen yogurt
- › 1/4 cup (60 ml) skim milk powder
- › 1/2 cup (125 ml) fruit (try bananas or peaches)

Place ingredients in blender. Blend ingredients together until smooth. Keep in the fridge.

Makes: 1 serving

Energy: 345 calories

Protein: 22 grams

## **To use homemade drinks safely:**

- Keep drinks in the fridge and throw out after 24 hours (1 day).
- **Do not keep drinks at room temperature** for longer than 2 hours.
- **Do not add raw eggs to blended drinks.** Try Egg beaters® or Naturegg™ egg substitutes. These are found in the cold or frozen section at the grocery store.

**What are your questions?**

**Please ask. We are here to help you.**

# Notes:

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Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.  
For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>  
Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time: call 811 or visit <https://811.novascotia.ca>  
Learn about other programs and services in your community: call 211 or visit <http://ns.211.ca>

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.