



Soft No-Chew Diet

Helping your child eat a soft no-chew diet after their mouth surgery

What is a soft no-chew diet and why does my child need it?

The soft no-chew diet is a diet of soft, moist foods that your child does not need to chew. These foods will help your child recover from their mouth surgery and help make eating easier.

This handout lists the foods that are safe and easy for your child to eat. It also tells you what foods you should avoid giving to your child.

If you have any questions, call the dietitian at the number in the “To Learn More” box on the last page or call your child’s healthcare provider.

What should I expect when my child is on a soft no-chew diet?

After surgery, it is important for your child to eat enough and drink enough liquids. This helps their body heal. Here are some things to remember when your child is on a soft no-chew diet.

Make sure your child is eating enough calories

After surgery, your child may not eat as much as usual. It is important to give them foods and drinks that are high in calories and protein.

To add more calories and protein:

- Blend regular foods with whole milk or broth
- Add sauces or extra butter to meals
- Add “instant breakfast” mix or dry milk powder to drinks
- Whenever you can, add butter, oil, or whole-milk dairy products to your child’s foods

Check your child’s weight once a week. This will help you to make sure that your child is eating enough. If your child is losing weight, it is important to call your child’s dietitian.

Make sure your child is drinking enough liquids

Drinking enough liquids is also very important for your child. Choose drinks with a lot of calories, like fruit smoothies, milkshakes, fruit juice, whole milk and Gatorade.

Your child should drink _____ 8-ounce servings of liquid each day.
An 8-ounce serving is equal to 1 cup.

Help your child avoid constipation

Some children have problems with not being able to have a bowel movement (constipation) after surgery. Drinking enough liquid each day will help your child avoid constipation. Eating foods with a lot of fiber, like oatmeal, fruits, vegetables, beans and lentils (legumes) will also help avoid constipation.

Give your child plenty of time to eat

Make sure that mealtimes are calm. It can be harder for your child to eat if meal times are rushed.

Provide your child smaller meals more often

Your child will probably have some mouth pain when they eat after their surgery. They may also get tired more quickly. Smaller meals make it easier for them to eat and take less time. When your child is eating small meals, they should eat more often. Offer your child 6 small meals a day and include a beverage at each meal.

What foods should my child eat or avoid while they are on the soft no-chew diet?

For about a week after surgery, avoid citrus juices and fruits. These foods can cause your child's mouth to sting where they had surgery. Once the wound has had a chance to heal, these foods should be OK to try.

Here is a table that shows a list of foods that are good to give your child and a list of foods to avoid.

Kind of food	Safe Foods	Foods to Avoid
Dairy	All dairy products are OK. Whole milk, yogurt, frozen yogurt, melted cheese	Avoid low-fat or non-fat dairy products.
Breads and cereals	Hot cereals, cold cereals soaked in milk until soft	Bread, donuts, dry crackers, dry toast, hard rolls, cornbread, muffins with nuts or seeds, sweet rolls, dry cereal
Fruits	Blended (pureed) canned fruits, mashed banana, applesauce, mashed avocado, mashed soft canned fruits	Raw fruits (except bananas and avocados), fibrous fruits and fruits with seeds (pineapple, citrus fruits, prunes, mandarin oranges, raspberries), dried fruits
Vegetables	Pureed cooked vegetables and mashed well-cooked vegetables	Raw vegetables, fried vegetables, lettuce
Starches	Well-cooked pasta in bite-size pieces, Spaghetti Os, mashed rice, mashed potatoes	Fried potatoes, hash browns
Meat and other kinds of protein	Soft tofu, scrambled eggs, small-curd creamy cottage cheese, pureed cooked meats or pureed or well-mashed beans or lentils (legumes)	Hard-boiled or fried eggs, chunks of meat, sausage, bacon, fried chicken, aged hard cheeses (like parmesan), crunchy peanut butter

Kind of food	Safe Foods	Foods to Avoid
Soups	Blended soups or soups with small, very soft noodles, vegetables, meats (such as canned chicken noodle soup). For extra calories make soup with whole milk, half-and-half or liquid whipping cream	Soups with large chunks of meat or vegetables
Fats for extra calories	All kinds of fats are OK. Gravy, smooth sauces, Alfredo or cheese sauce, butter, mayonnaise, olive oil, canola oil, whipping cream, half-and-half, soft cream cheese	
Sweets and desserts	Milkshakes, mousse, fruit smoothies, rice pudding, pudding, sherbet, ice cream, cheesecake, hot fudge sundae	Dry cookies, desserts with dried fruits, seeds and nuts, pie crusts
Other foods or condiments	Tartar sauce, salt and pepper, BBQ sauce, mustard, ketchup	Relishes, pickles, popcorn, nuts, coconut

Recipes

Here are some recipes that work well for a soft no-chew diet.

Strawberry breakfast drink (serves 2)

1 cup sliced strawberries (frozen or fresh)
½ cup egg substitute
2 tablespoons sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla
2 cups cold whole milk
Put all the ingredients except the milk into a blender and blend until smooth (about 10 seconds). Add milk and blend until foamy.

Baked rice pudding

Make this in the evening and enjoy the next day (serves 8)

½ cup uncooked white rice
1 quart milk
¼ cup sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla
⅛ teaspoon salt
Preheat oven to 325°F. Combine rice, milk, sugar, vanilla and salt. Pour into a buttered casserole dish. Cover tightly.
Bake 2 hours or until rice is soft. Remove cover and bake a few minutes longer.

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Cream of vegetable soup

2 cups whole milk
2 cups cooked, blended and strained vegetables
3 tablespoons margarine or butter
1 tablespoon flour
1 teaspoon minced onion
½ teaspoon salt
Put all ingredients into the blender and blend until smooth (about 30 seconds). Pour mixture into a saucepan and cook over low heat until mixture bubbles and thickens. Simmer for 1 minute.

Yogurt whammy

1 container yogurt
½ package frozen fruit*
Blend 20 seconds. Add additional liquid for a thinner drink.
*Note: Avoid fruit with seeds (raspberries, etc.) if your child's jaws are wired.

Scrambled eggs (serves 2)

3 eggs
½ cup whole milk
½ teaspoon salt
dash pepper

Serve with mashed potatoes

1½ ounces cream cheese
½ tablespoon butter or margarine
Blend all ingredients in a blender. Melt butter in a frying pan. Before it browns, add egg mixture. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly until thick and creamy.

To Learn More

- Nutrition 206-987-4758
- Your child's dietitian: _____

- Ask your child's healthcare provider
- www.seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your child's nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line, 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.

Seattle Children's offers interpreter services for Deaf, hard of hearing or non-English speaking patients, family members and legal representatives free of charge. Seattle Children's will make this information available in alternate formats upon request. Call the Family Resource Center at 206-987-2201.

This handout has been reviewed by clinical staff at Seattle Children's. However, your child's needs are unique. Before you act or rely upon this information, please talk with your child's healthcare provider.

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