Soft food diet

Swallowing recommendations for: __________________________________________

What is a soft diet?

A soft diet may be recommended for people who have difficulties with chewing and/or swallowing. A soft diet:

- Consists of moist, soft food that can be broken into pieces with a fork. It does not need to be mashed.
- Contains only small food particles, which can be broken down easily in the mouth using little effort.
- Maintains a single consistency and does not separate when chewed, for example juice running from chewed apple.
- Needs to be served with some form of moisture, for example thick gravy or sauce. The sauce must blend in with the food.

What can help?

- Sitting up straight.
- Tucking the chin slightly down (avoid throwing head back).
- Don’t eat when sleepy.
- Make sure food is not getting stuck in your cheeks.
- Go slowly and take small amounts at a time.
- Ensure your mouth is empty before the next mouthful.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foods to try</th>
<th>Foods to avoid</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Breads and cereals</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Pasta (chopped) with sauces</td>
<td>x Hard bread rolls</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Weetabix</td>
<td>x Toast</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Porridge</td>
<td>x Pastries and cakes</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ ‘Dunked’ biscuits</td>
<td>x Biscuits</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Sandwiches with soft/moist fillings, (cut up small; no crusts)</td>
<td>x Bread containing grains</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>x Dry or crunchy cereal or cereal with nuts</td>
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<td></td>
<td>x Rice</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Meat and alternatives</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Minced or finely chopped meat in gravy</td>
<td>x Large pieces of meat</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Fish in sauce (avoid bones)</td>
<td>x Sausages, pies</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Eggs</td>
<td>x Sausage rolls</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Mashed pulses</td>
<td>x Hard cheese</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Soft cheese, for example cottage cheese or cheese sauce</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fruit and vegetables</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Stewed fruit, for example apples</td>
<td>x All fruit containing pips, seeds or with skins</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Mashed soft fruit for example banana</td>
<td>x Vegetables with skins, for example peas, broad beans, sweetcorn</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Pureed or mashed vegetables</td>
<td>x Salads, raw vegetables</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Mashed potatoes</td>
<td>x Chips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Inside of jacket potatoes</td>
<td>x Stringy fruit or vegetables, for example rhubarb, celery</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Puddings</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Yoghurt</td>
<td>x Dry pastry</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Smooth ice-cream</td>
<td>x Muffins and crumpets</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Soft puddings with custard</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Mousses</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Baked custard</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Miscellaneous</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Pureed soups</td>
<td>x Thin soup with ‘bits’</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Chocolate that ‘melts in your mouth’</td>
<td>x Nuts</td>
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<td></td>
<td>x Crisps</td>
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<td></td>
<td>x Boiled sweets, chocolates</td>
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<td></td>
<td>x Chocolates with hard shells</td>
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</table>
Ideas for a soft breakfast

- Omelette or scrambled egg with plenty of milk to soften
- Porridge
- Yoghurt
- Weetabix soaked in plenty of milk to soften

Ideas for soft, savoury main courses

- Shepherd’s pie or cottage pie
- Bolognaise
- Lasagne
- Smooth pâté (fish or meat)
- Noodles
- Savoury mince
- Pasta – ravioli, tortellini etc with different sauces like goat’s cheese, mushroom or creamy tomato
- Soft poached or flaked fish (without bones) in sauce
- Fish (without bones) and potato in a creamy sauce
- Tinned tuna and salmon mashed with salad cream, mayonnaise, cheese sauce
- Mixed vegetables mashed with butter and melted cheese or cooked until very soft
- Chicken (tender) in cream sauce
- Egg mayonnaise
- Baked egg custard with cheese
- Tinned spaghetti with grated cheese
- Jacket potato (avoid the skins) with butter, grated cheese or cream cheese
- Mashed potato with butter/margarine and milk or sauce/gravy
- Cauliflower cheese
- Ratatouille
- Macaroni cheese
- Dips such as hummus, guacamole, taramasalata, cream cheese
- Lentils made into dahl
- Soup without ‘bits’ (make sure soup is thick if you’re on thickened fluids)
- Corned beef hash

Ideas for soft desserts

- Mousse
- Ready-made chocolate desserts
- Egg custard
- Crème caramel
- Milk jelly or blancmange
- Milk puddings - homemade, tinned
- Custard - homemade, powdered, cartons or tins
- Fruit fools and purées
- Fruit that is soft, mashed, stewed without skins, pips, cores
- Ice cream or sorbet (avoid these if on thickened fluids)
- Yoghurts, thick and creamy or
or snack pots
✓ Instant pudding mixes – whips, Angel Delight
✓ Rice pudding
✓ Trifle
✓ Tinned or stewed fruit with yoghurt or cream

Greek yoghurt with honey or stewed fruit
✓ Fromage frais
✓ Bread and butter pudding
✓ Sponge pudding with custard or cream
✓ Mashed banana and cream

**Soft diet recipe book references:**

- The 'I-Can’t-Chew Cookbook’: delicious soft diet recipes for people with chewing, swallowing, and dry mouth disorders by J. Randy Wilson.
- The Dysphagia Cookbook by Elayne Achilles.
- 'Easy-to-swallow, Easy-to-chew Cookbook: Over 150 Tasty and Nutritious Recipes for People Who Have Difficulty Swallowing’ by Donna L. Weihofen, Joanne Robbins, Paula A. Sullivan.

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