

SOFT DIET

- **PURPOSE:** The soft diet is designed for the patient who cannot tolerate a general diet.
- **USE:** The soft diet is part of the post-surgical progression diet from clear liquid to full liquid, then advancing to soft solids and finally regular foods.
- **MODIFICATIONS:** This diet incorporates foods that are moderately low in fiber, have a soft texture and are moderately seasons. The diet is individualized to meet the needs of the patient and varies from smooth, creamy foods to foods that are slightly crispy. Fried foods and spicy foods may be intolerable for the post surgical patient. Foods appropriate for the diet are listed in Table D-9.
- **ADEQUACY:** When appropriate food choices are made, the diet is adequate in all nutrients based on the 1989 Recommended Dietary Allowances (see Appendix 5).

TABLE D-9: FOOD SELECTION GUIDELINES FOR SOFT DIET

FOOD CATEGORY	RECOMMENDED	NOT RECOMMENDED
Beverages	Milk and milk products, coffee, tea, carbonated beverages, cocoa, fruit juices, fruit drinks.	Alcoholic beverages.
Desserts	Cakes, cookies, pies, pudding, custard, ice cream, sherbet, and gelatin made with allowed foods: fruit ice and frozen pops.	All sweets and desserts containing nuts, coconut, or dried fruits: fried pastries (doughnuts, fritters)
Fats	Butter or fortified margarine; salad dressings; all fats and oils.	Highly seasoned salad dressings.
Fruits	All fruit juices; cooked or canned fruit; Avocado, banana, grapefruit and orange Sections without membrane; soft fruits Such as melon, peaches.	Other fresh and dried fruits; fruit skins
Meats and Meat Substitutes	All lean, tender meats, poultry, fish and shellfish; crisp bacon; eggs; milk-flavored cheeses; creamy peanut butter; tofu; plain or flavored yogurt.	Strong-smelling or highly seasoned meats, cheeses, or fish; yogurt with nuts or dried fruit; fried eggs.
Potato or Substitutes	Potatoes (without skin); sweet potatoes (without skin) enriched rice, barley, spaghetti, macaroni, and other pasta.	Potato chips, fried potatoes.
Soups	Soups made with allowed foods.	Highly seasoned soups and soups made with gas-producing vegetables.
Sweets	Sugar, syrup, honey; jelly and seedless jam; hard candies; plain chocolate candies; molasses; marshmallows	Any with nuts or coconut.
Breads and Cereals	White, refined wheat or light rye breads, soft rolls and crackers; cooked or ready to eat cereals.	Coarse cereals (bran); whole-grain breads or crackers with seeds; biscuits; breads or bread products with nuts or dried fruits; corn chips, potato chips; pretzels.
Vegetables	All vegetable juices; cooked vegetables and lettuce as tolerated; salads made from allowed foods.	Raw and fried vegetables; whole kernel corn; gas producing vegetables (broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, onions, leeks, cauliflower, cucumber, green pepper, rutabagas, turnips, sauerkraut, dried beans and peas).
Miscellaneous	Iodized salt; flavorings; mildly flavored gravies and sauces; pepper, herbs, spices, catsup, mustard, and vinegar in moderation.	Strongly flavored seasonings and condiments (garlic, chili sauce, chili pepper, horseradish); pickles; popcorn, nuts and coconut.

TABLE D-10: SAMPLE MENU FOR SOFT DIET

BREAKFAST	LUNCH	DINNER
½ c orange juice 1 scrambled egg ½ c grits 2 sl white toast 2 t margarine 1 c skim milk 1 c coffee salt, pepper, sugar	2 oz lean roast beef ½ c green beans ½ c potatoes 2 dinner rolls ½ c applesauce 1 c iced tea salt, pepper, sugar	3 oz baked chicken w/o skin ½ c carrots ½ c rice 2 sl white bread ½ c banana pudding 2 tsp margarine 1 c skim milk 1 c coffee salt, pepper, sugar
NUTRITIONAL ANALYSIS:	Kilocalories: 1816 Protein: 93 g Fat: 53 g Carbohydrate: 243 g	Sodium: 3352 mg Potassium: 3440 mg Fiber: 15 g

REFERENCE

1. The American Dietetic Association. *Manual of Clinical Dietetics*. 4th edition. Chicago, IL: The American Association; 1992;130-131.