

Post-Nissen diet

For patients who have had:

- Nissen fundoplication
- Paraesophageal hernia repair
- Hiatal hernia repair
- Heller myotomy
- Esophageal surgery

Immediately after your procedure, you will experience swelling where your esophagus connects to your stomach. Because of the swelling, the width of this area may be reduced to about the size of a normal straw, making it difficult to swallow or burp. The feeling of tightness will gradually go away in three to 12 weeks.

In the meantime, a diet of soft, easily swallowed, easily chewed food is necessary to avoid postsurgical complications such as increased pain, blockage and tearing at your surgical site.

- You will need to **strictly** follow this diet to allow healing and prevent additional swelling that may result from swallowing foods too large or too rough in texture to pass through the swollen area.
- You will follow this diet for **six weeks** after your procedure.
- This diet will help control difficulty swallowing, nausea, excess gas and diarrhea, which may occur after this procedure.
- Planning your meals ahead of time will help you meet your nutritional needs and promote healing of your surgical site.

Avoid stomach stretching

After the surgery, your stomach will not be able to hold large amounts of food. It is important to avoid over stretching your stomach as this may place stress on your surgical site and cause nausea, retching and pain.

- Eat five or six small meals rather than three large meals.
- Eat slowly in a calm, relaxing environment.
- Drink at least six to eight cups of liquid per day but limit fluids to ½ cup (4 fluid ounces) with meals and 1 cup (8 fluid ounces) with snacks. Stay hydrated by drinking between meals and snacks.

Avoid difficulty swallowing

- **If you take any medications that are bigger than a standard M&M candy, you will need to crush this medication or switch to a liquid medication for the first month after surgery.**
- Take small bites and chew your food to baby food consistency before swallowing it. Remember: If your food cannot be passed through a straw, it cannot be swallowed!!
- Keep your foods soft, thoroughly cooked and moist. Avoid gummy foods such as breads, green bananas or peanut butter, which can be hard to swallow.

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Avoid difficulty swallowing (continued)

- No dry bread products. These foods will mix with your saliva and other fluids and may swell into a blockage inside of your esophagus.
- No meat for at least the first two weeks. When you do eat meat, cut it into small pieces and don't swallow until it is baby food consistency.
- No raw, crunchy fruits or vegetables. These foods have sharp edges, which can irritate and cause additional swelling.
- Sit upright while eating. Remain sitting upright for at least an hour after eating.
- Eat only foods that you can tolerate. If you have difficulty swallowing, feelings of pressure or of food getting stuck, stop eating and give the food time to pass. After food passes and you resume eating, attempt to chew food more thoroughly and add fluid to moisten food. If soft food continues to cause problems, try going back to a liquid or blended diet for a few days.

Avoid gas and discomfort

- If you have difficulty with gas, attempt to limit or avoid foods that cause stomach gas or bloating. These include broccoli, cauliflower, onions, milk and other dairy products, sugar, beans/legumes, and cabbage.
- Avoid talking during meals and drinking from straws and bottles. Do not chew gum or tobacco. These actions cause you to swallow air and create excess gas in your stomach.
- No carbonated beverages or beer for at least three to four weeks. When carbonated beverages are resumed, they should be poured into a cup or glass to allow excess carbonation to be released.
- Avoid liquids that are either hot or very cold. Extreme temperatures can cause esophageal spasms and pain.
- Prune juice and apricot nectar may be effective for relieving constipation.

Examples of liquid protein supplements



- Carnation Instant Breakfast
- Ensure
- Boost
- Muscle Milk
- Odwalla protein shakes
- Naked Juice Co. protein drinks

Low-sugar formulas

- Premier Protein
- Glucerna
- Muscle Milk Light
- Ensure light

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Recommended foods after surgery

FIRST WEEK — FULL LIQUID DIET

The first week immediately after surgery is the most critical, and special attention must be given to your diet. Your physician recommends following a full-liquid diet during this period.

Foods to include:

Milk, coffee/tea (caffeine in small quantities), Carnation instant breakfast, creamed soups, cream of wheat (thinly prepared), puddings, sorbet, V-8/tomato juice, water, cream, Boost/Ensure, yogurt (no fruit chunks), cream of rice (thinly prepared), ice cream (no fruit pieces, nuts or candy), gelatin, milk shakes, fruit/vegetable juices (without pulp), powdered drink mix, broth, smoothie (no fruit chunks or seeds), custard, frozen yogurt, eggnog (alcohol free)

Foods to avoid:

Carbonated and/or alcoholic beverages

SECOND WEEK — BLENDED DIET

Around seven days after surgery, esophageal swelling has begun to decrease, allowing you to introduce thicker foods back into your diet. During this period, your physician recommends adding pureed or blended foods to your full-liquid diet. If you experience any difficulty swallowing, increased pain or feeling as if food gets stuck, return to a full liquid diet.

Foods to include:

Pureed peaches, pears, applesauce, very thin mashed potatoes with lots of gravy

Foods to avoid:

Pasta, rice and bread — even blended, they can still swell and cause a blockage

STARTING 15 DAYS POST-OP — REINTRODUCING SOLIDS

Continue enjoying foods from the previous weeks if you are doing well with them. Continue avoiding carbonated or alcoholic beverages until medically cleared.

CONDIMENTS/SPICES

Foods to include:

Ketchup, mustard (not spicy), dressings, mild sauces, mild oil and vinegar, salt and salt substitutes, finely ground pepper, spices (i.e. onion powder, garlic powder, paprika and others spices in moderation), vanilla and other flavor extracts

Foods to avoid:

Coarse pepper, chili powder, curry, hot peppers, hot sauces such as spicy barbecue sauce, taco sauce, Tabasco, etc.

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STARTING 15 DAYS POST-OP — REINTRODUCING SOLIDS (continued)	
BREADS, GRAINS AND STARCHES	
Foods to include:	Foods to avoid:
Mashed potatoes (thinly prepared with gravy), soft cook oatmeal (thinly prepared), cream of wheat or cream of rice (thinly prepared)	Any pasta, bread, rolls, muffins, bagels, pancakes, French toast, waffles, cakes, cookies, rice, cereals (Cheerios, shredded wheat, etc.), hashbrowns, popcorn, French fries, potato or corn chips, pretzels or other hard snack foods, crackers, piecrust, pizza crust, tortillas and taco shells TIPS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finely chopped pasta may be attempted after week 4 • Fluffy, soft white fries may be attempted after week 4 • Soft food pieces of potato or baked potato (with sauce or gravy) may be attempted after week 4
DESSERTS	
Foods to include:	Foods to avoid:
Jell-O, custard, pudding, tapioca, ice cream (no nuts or hard candies/hard food pieces), fruit smoothie, sherbet, yogurt (small fruit pieces okay) yogurt drinks, frozen yogurt	Any bread or bread products, pie, cakes, cookies, hard candies, licorice, taffy, any products containing nuts or dry fruit chunks
FATS AND OILS	
Foods to include:	Foods to avoid:
Butter, margarine, cooking oils, mayonnaise, salad dressings (mildly flavored), oil, vinegar, whipped toppings	Deep-fried foods
FRUITS	
Foods to include:	Foods to avoid:
Fruit juices, blended fruit, soft, cooked or canned fruit (small diced pieces with all skins, seeds and peels removed)	Anything hard or crunchy, green bananas, dried fruit, oranges, pineapple, apples, coconut, grapes, peaches, nectarines (too crunchy and acidic) TIP: Blend fruit with milk or yogurt to create smoothies.
MEATS AND MEAT SUBSTITUTES, PROTEIN FOODS	
Foods to include:	Foods to avoid:
Moist scrambled eggs, soft eggs with runny yolk, ground or finely minced poultry, fish or beef well mixed with sauce or gravy, tender flaky fish, small shrimp meat, soft tofu scrambles	Large, tough pieces of meat, meat substitute (garden burgers), fish, fried eggs, hot dogs, sausages, nuts, chunky peanut butter, textured vegetable protein, firm tofu TIP: Add milk to eggs while scrambling to keep them moist and thin.

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STARTING 15 DAYS POST-OP — REINTRODUCING SOLIDS (continued)

MILK AND DAIRY

Foods to include:	Foods to avoid:
Smooth or frozen yogurt w/small soft fruit pieces, sour cream, milk, cottage cheese, cream cheese, plain ice cream, instant breakfast drinks, Ensure/Boost, melted grated cheese	Large chunks of fruit, candy or nut toppings, hard brick-type cheeses (unless melted for sauce)

SOUPS

Foods to include:	Foods to avoid:
All soups made with allowable ingredients, which have been prepared in an appropriate manner, soups or stews with small pieces of soft, cooked meats or vegetables	Avoid soups with whole kernel corn or other large chunks of meat or vegetables TIP: Add cream or half-and-half to increase calories in soup.

VEGETABLES

Foods to include:	Foods to avoid:
Vegetables steamed or cooked to mashing texture (carrots, zucchini, squash, cauliflower), bite-sized thoroughly cooked vegetables, V-8, tomato juice and all vegetable juices	Raw vegetables and all coarse/fibrous vegetables (beets, cabbage, spinach, corn, Brussels sprouts, celery, asparagus, lettuce, peas), deep fried vegetables, gas-causing vegetables (broccoli, cauliflower, onions, beans/legumes, cabbage) TIP: Use mayonnaise, salad dressing, or cheese-based sauces over soft, cooked vegetables for added calories.

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