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## Diet and Nutrition After Esophagectomy Surgery

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dietitian: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

During surgery, the surgeon probably put in a feeding tube to help you get the nutrition you need to heal until you are able to eat again. Ask your dietitian for a copy of the book 'When You Have a Feeding Tube' to learn more about your feeding tube.

About a week after surgery, you have a special x-ray done called a gastrograffin swallow. This is done to make sure everything has healed before you can start to eat.

After surgery, you progress through different diet stages before you get back to regular texture food. Your surgeon and your dietitian will advise you when you can move to the next stage and if you need to continue any tube feeding throughout each stage.

### **Stage 1 – Clear Fluids**

Clear fluids include broth, juice without pulp, gelatin products such as jello and lactose free nutritional supplements such as Boost Fruit Beverage.

When you start drinking, begin with small amounts such as 120 to 180 ml ( $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup) at a time throughout the day.

### **Stage 2 – Full Fluids**

Full fluids include milk, pudding, ice cream, strained cream soups and nutritional supplements such as Ensure and Boost.

You also continue to drink clear fluids.

### **Stage 3 – Soft Food**

The chart on the next page outlines food to try when the surgeon allows you to start eating solids.

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Type of food	Generally well tolerated	Avoid
<b>Beverages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All except those on the <b>Avoid</b> list</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carbonated drinks</li> <li>• Iced drinks</li> </ul>
<b>Milk products</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul>
<b>Meats and Alternatives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tender or minced, moist meat, fish and poultry. Use gravy and sauces.</li> <li>• Moist casseroles, stews, soft cooked eggs, cottage cheese, smooth peanut butter, legumes and lentils</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dry, tough or stringy meats such as spareribs,</li> <li>• Nuts, seeds</li> <li>• Crunchy peanut butter</li> <li>• Stringy cooked cheese such as mozzarella</li> </ul>
<b>Grain products</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hot cereals</li> <li>• Well soaked cold cereals</li> <li>• Pasta</li> <li>• Rice</li> <li>• ‘Dunked’ cookies and crackers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fresh “doughy” bread</li> <li>• Popcorn</li> <li>• Chips</li> <li>• Any grain containing coconut, nuts, seeds or dry fruit</li> </ul>
<b>Fruit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canned or cooked fruit, ripe fresh fruit without skin or seeds, juices and nectars</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course abrasive fresh fruit such as pineapple, apples and oranges</li> <li>• Dried fruit</li> <li>• Coconut</li> </ul>
<b>Vegetables</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well cooked or canned vegetables. Use vegetables in soups, sauces or stews.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raw vegetables</li> <li>• Stringy cooked vegetables such as asparagus and spinach</li> </ul>
<b>Fats and Oils</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul>

### Sample Meal Plan

#### Breakfast

- Unsweetened apple juice
- Oatmeal made with milk
- Scrambled egg with cheese

#### Mid-morning

- Yogurt or cottage cheese or custard

#### Lunch

- Milk
- Macaroni and Cheese
- Carrots- well cooked

#### Mid- afternoon

- Banana or canned fruit

#### Dinner

- Milk
- Meatloaf with gravy
- Mashed potato
- Broccoli-well cooked

#### Before Bed

- Pudding or yogurt



**It is also very important to drink 1.5 to 2 litres (6 to 8 cups) of non-caffeinated fluid each day to prevent dehydration.**

#### Stomach changes after surgery:

During surgery, the esophageal sphincter is removed. This is the muscle between the esophagus and stomach that helps keep the stomach contents from coming into the esophagus.

After surgery, your stomach:

- is smaller
- often becomes part of the “new esophagus”
- is higher up in your chest area

These changes **may** cause you to feel full quickly, lose weight, have heartburn and / or diarrhea. If you have any of these symptoms, try the suggestions on the next page.

### **To avoid feeling too full:**

- Eat small amounts of food, more often. Instead of eating 3 meals a day, eat 6 small meals or snacks each day.
- Have fluids separate from meals. You may drink a small amount with your meal or snack but try to drink most fluids 30 minutes before or after you eat.

### **If you are losing weight:**

- Weigh yourself once a week. If you continue to lose weight, you need to eat more food or eat more often. Try drinking a high calorie nutrition supplement such as Ensure Plus, Boost Plus or Resource 2.0.
- Make every bite count. Choose foods that have a lot of energy. If only a few foods appeal to you eat these as often as you like.

### **To control heartburn:**

- Do not lie down for at least 1 hour after eating or drinking.
- Do not eat or drink for 2 to 3 hours before bedtime.
- When resting or sleeping, you may need to raise the head of your bed 15 to 20 cm (6 to 8") with bed blocks.
- Avoid bending over at the waist. Bend at your knees to pick up objects.
- Eat small meals and snacks more often to avoid overfilling stomach.
- Smoking, alcohol, spicy and acidic foods may be bothersome.

### **To control diarrhea after meals:**

- Reduce the amount of sweets in your diet such as sugar, jam, dessert, candy, large amounts of juice.
- Eat small amounts often throughout the day.
- Eat solid foods first at meals. Wait 30 to 45 minutes after eating to have fluids such as soup and drinks.
- Be sure to eat protein foods such as cheese, eggs, meat or peanut butter with each meal or snack.
- Avoid natural laxatives such as prunes, figs, flax and licorice.
- If diarrhea continues, call the dietitian for more tips.