

Diet after Nissen Fundoplication Surgery

- After surgery, you will have swelling where the esophagus connects to the stomach.
- The swelling will make it hard for you to swallow or burp because the opening will be about size of a straw. The feeling of tightness and trouble swallowing will go away over the next 3-12 weeks.
- Follow these diet guidelines to prevent problems after surgery.
- Eating and drinking are key to getting enough calories and other nutrients to help you heal.
- To protect the area, prevent more swelling and to promote healing, follow a diet of soft, easy to swallow and easily chewed foods for at least 4-6 weeks after surgery.
- Follow this diet to prevent problems that could occur from swallowing food chunks that are too large or too rough to pass through the swollen tube.
- This diet will also help to control nausea, extra gas, diarrhea or problems swallowing.

Avoid stretching your stomach

- Because the top of your stomach is now wrapped around the bottom of your esophagus, your stomach will not be able to hold large amounts of food.
- Over stretching your stomach could put stress on the site and cause you to have nausea, retching, or pain.
- **Eat 5 or 6 small meals each day** instead of 3 large meals.
- **Eat slowly** and eat in a calm and relaxed place.
- **Drink at least 6-8 cups of liquid each day**, but limit your liquids to 4 oz or half a cup with meals and 8 oz or 1 cup with snacks. Drink the rest of your liquids between meals and snacks.
- **Eat sweet foods and desserts at the end of your meals** as these foods make digestion occur more quickly.

Avoid problems swallowing

- **Sit upright when eating and for at least one hour after eating.**
- **Take small bites and chew all your food to baby food consistency before swallowing.** If your food could not pass through a straw, it cannot be swallowed.
- **Eat only foods you can tolerate.** If you have trouble swallowing or feel pressure or food getting stuck, stop eating and give food time to pass. After the food passes, begin to eat again and chew the food more and add

more liquid to moisten the food. If soft food continues to cause problems, go back to a pureed or liquid diet for a few days

- **Keep food soft, well-cooked and moist.** Avoid gummy foods, such as breads, green bananas and peanut butter, which can be hard to swallow.
- **Do not eat dry bread products.** These foods can swell with your saliva and other liquids and could form a ball in your esophagus and cause a blockage.
- **Do not eat meat for at least the first two weeks.** No large or tough pieces of meat after that as they can be hard to pass through the esophagus into the stomach.
- Do not eat raw, crunchy fruits or vegetables. These foods have a sharp edge that could irritate or cause more swelling.

Avoid gas and bloating

- **Avoid liquids that are either hot or very cold** as they can cause spasms and pain in the esophagus.
- **Avoid talking during meals, drinking from a straw or bottle, and do not chew gum or tobacco.** These can cause you to swallow air and increase more gas in your stomach.
- **Limit or avoid foods that cause stomach gas or bloating.** These may include milk and other dairy products, sugar, broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, onions, and beans or legumes.
- **Avoid carbonated beverages, including beer for at least 3-4 weeks.** After that, be sure to pour the carbonated beverage into a cup or glass to allow some foods or combination to escape.

Diet after surgery

- **You will be on a full liquid diet, then advance to a period of blenderized diet and then advance to a soft diet.**
- You will go back to eating your normal diet in about 4-6 weeks. Foods for each phase of your diet are listed below.
- Remember: Anytime you have trouble swallowing, increased pain or feel like food is stuck, return to a full liquid diet for a day or two.

Week 1: Full liquid diet

- The first seven days after surgery requires special attention to prevent irritation to the surgery site. Your doctor will place you on a full liquid diet during this time
- You may have:
 - Water
 - Milk or cream
 - Fruit or fruit juices without pulp, such as grape or tomato
 - Nectars, grape and cranberry juices have more calories than citrus or vegetable juices.
 - Prune juice or apricot nectar may be effective in easing constipation.
 - Decaf coffee or tea
 - Drinks from powdered mixes such as protein smoothies or protein drinks (highly recommended)
 - Smoothies with frozen or fresh fruit without chunks
 - Instant breakfast drinks, like Carnation.
 - Boost or Ensure or other nutrition drinks
 - Cream soups without chunks
 - Yogurt without fruit chunks
 - Broth
 - Cream of wheat or cream of rice, thinly prepared
 - Pudding or custard
 - Ice cream, sorbet, frozen yogurt or milkshakes without fruit pieces, nuts or candies added
 - Jell-O without added fruit or other things
 - Eggnog that is alcohol-free

Week 2: Pureed or blenderized diet

- About 7 days after surgery, your swelling should be less. You will be able to take in some thicker foods.
- You can add these pureed foods to the full liquids you have been eating:
 - Peaches, pears or applesauce
 - Very thin mashed potatoes with lots of gravy
 - **Do not blenderize pasta, rice or bread.** These foods can swell and cause blockage in your esophagus

Week 3: Soft diet (week 3 up to week 6 if needed)

- You can continue any of the foods you have been eating from the full liquid and pureed diets and add these items:

Drinks

- Regular tea or coffee in small amounts to limit caffeine
- **Avoid alcohol.**
- **Avoid carbonated beverages until at least 3 weeks after surgery.** After that, pour into glass to allow carbonation to escape.

Breads, grains and starches

- Soft cooked oatmeal, thinly prepared.
- Finely chopped pasta.
- **Avoid any breads or bread products, dry cereals, pancakes, waffles, crust and baked goods.**
- **Avoid any deep-fried chips and fries, popcorn, crackers and other hard or crunchy snack foods.**

Vegetables

- Chop or dice small pieces and steam or cook vegetables well to “mashable” texture, such as carrots, squash and zucchini
- **Avoid all raw or deep-fried vegetables**
- **Avoid coarse, fibrous vegetables**, such as beets, cabbage, spinach, corn, Brussels sprouts, greens, celery, asparagus, lettuce and peas.
- **Avoid gas causing vegetables**, such as broccoli, cauliflower, onions, cabbage, beans and legumes

Soups

- Blenderize soups or stews with soft cooked meats and vegetables.
- Add cream or half and half to increase calories.
- **Avoid soups with whole kernal corn, large chunks of vegetables or meat.**

Fruits

- Remove all skins, seeds or peels.
- Blenderize fruit.
- Soft, cooked or canned fruit.
- Soft, ripe bananas.
- Blenderized fruit with milk or yogurt to create smoothies.
- Juices with pulp.
- **Avoid fresh fruits**, such as oranges, pineapple, apples, coconut, raisins, prunes, kiwi, strawberries, grapes, peaches or nectarines unless used in a smoothie.
- **Avoid dried fruits and green bananas.**

Meats or other protein foods

- Wet scrambled eggs moistened with milk or other liquid to make thin.
- Ground, minced poultry, fish, beef or pork mixed with gravy or sauce.
- Tender, soft baked flaky fish. (no fried fish)
- Small bits of shrimp.
- Soft tofu scrambles.
- **Avoid large or tough pieces of meat or meat substitutes, such as garden burgers or fish.**
- **Avoid fried eggs, hot dogs and sausages.**
- **Avoid nuts and chunky peanut butter or other nut butters.**
- **Avoid textured vegetable proteins or firm tofu.**

Milk and milk products

- Sour cream, cottage cheese, cream cheese, melted grated cheese.
- **Avoid hard cheeses unless melted for sauce.**

Desserts and snacks

- **Avoid any bread or bread products, pies, cakes and cookies.**
- **Avoid hard candies, licorice, taffy and any products that contain nuts or dried fruit chunks.**

Fats and oils

- **Avoid deep fried foods.**

Week 4: You may slowly reintroduce a regular diet

- Slowly start adding regular foods into your diet.
- If any point in time anything you swallow gets stuck in your chest that means you should avoid that item for the next 3-4 days.
- If you do feel food is stuck try drinking fluids to help it go down.
- Meats and breads are the hardest things to swallow. Take very small bites of these and chew very well and swallow with liquids if needed.