

PATIENT INFORMATION

Information regarding your Antireflux Surgery, Hiatus Hernia Repair, Heller's Myotomy

Preparing for your surgery:

- Ensure you have access to a food blender or similar.
- Read this leaflet and the post-operative dietary information and stock your cupboards according to your preferences.
- You may not be able to work for 4-6 weeks after so make any arrangements with your workplace and ask the surgeon to write you a fit note.
- You may need help around the home with chores as you will be restricted in what you are able to lift for approximately 6 weeks after surgery.
- Have a shower or bath either the day of your operation or the previous day.

What should I expect afterwards?

You will be transferred from the theatre to a ward or the day surgery unit if you are being discharged the same day.

Difficulty eating: The Oesophagus (food pipe) may be swollen and sore for a while after the surgery. This will make the passage of food down the oesophagus more difficult and you should expect to have to modify the texture and temperature of foods for approximately 6 weeks (Follow the diet instructions below). It is common to lose weight in the 2 months after surgery. Please take the supplement drinks supplied to reduce this loss and provide you with nutrients to aid your recovery. If you are worried about your weight loss please speak to us on the number supplied.

Pain: It is normal to feel moderate upper abdominal pain and bloating, especially after eating. You may also have pain in the chest. Shoulder pain for a day or 2 is also common and caused by the gas used to inflate your abdomen during surgery. Taking regular pain relief will help. You may need soluble tablets as you may struggle to swallow large tablets.

Wind: You may find it more difficult to burp, this may cause abdominal cramping pains as you will not be able to release trapped gas. You will find that you are more windy than normal. It may be advisable to avoid foods that you know give you excess wind.

Caring for yourself at home:

Personal care: You may shower from the day after your operation. It is OK to get the wounds wet but do not have a bath until the wounds are healed.

Activity: Avoid lifting anything heavier than 10 pounds for 2-3 weeks and no heavy lifting for 6 weeks.

Rest when you are tired but try to walk each day. Increase the distance each day, this will help reduce the risk of chest infections, blood clots in the legs (DVT) and constipation.

Do not do any exercise or activity that uses your abdominal muscles e.g strenuous gym exercises or sit ups. Avoid potential blows to the abdomen.

Sexual activities can be resumed as soon as you feel comfortable.

Driving: You may drive when you are able to control your vehicle and do an emergency stop without discomfort (usually around 10 days after your operation). We advise informing your insurance company of the operation before driving again so as to not invalidate your insurance.

Work: Returning to work will depend on your job. Please check with your surgeon or specialist nurse for advice. You may need up to 6 weeks off if your job involves heavy lifting.

Wound care: Your wounds have been closed with dissolvable stitches which will take approx. 3-6 weeks to be absorbed. The glue over the wounds will protect them without the need of a dressing. Do not scratch the glue off. You may get bruising around the wounds, this is normal. Please observe for signs of infection; increasing redness, heat or a discharge of pus. If you are worried about the wounds, please make an appointment with your practice nurse at your GP surgery.

Bowels: Avoid becoming constipated. A change in your diet and painkillers may make this a possibility. Please take a laxative at the first sign of constipation as you should not strain to open your bowels. You may have been discharged from hospital with a supply of these but if not a pharmacist will be able to advise you.

Medications: You may continue your regular medications afterwards (unless your surgeon advises otherwise). If any of your tablets are large you may need to ask if they can be crushed or if a liquid alternative is available. You can usually stop your antacid medications (i.e Lansoprazole, Omeprazole, Ranitidine) please check this with your surgeon.

When should I be worried?

- Severe pain that does not subside with pain relief or is worsening over time.
- Fever.
- Vomiting and unable to swallow fluids.
- Pain, redness or swelling in calf, back of knee, thigh or groin (could be a sign of DVT)
- Severe breathlessness.

General Guidelines for Eating and Drinking:

- Eat and drink slowly.
- Eat small amounts more frequently (i.e. 6 times daily). You may find you can only take a few tablespoons of food before feeling full.
- Avoid fizzy drinks as these will caused excessive bloating.
- Do not chew gum.
- Fluids such as tea, coffee, squash and water are not particularly nourishing and may fill you up, so try to have these drinks after meals rather than before.
- Try to have more nourishing drinks such as milkshakes and smoothies between meals. Use the supplement drinks supplied to increase your daily calories, vitamin and mineral intake. This will help to prevent too large a weight loss.
- Sit upright when eating meals and for 1 hour afterwards.
- It is important to give your body the right nutrition to help with your recovery. Please try to vary your diet by picking foods from different food groups

Dietary Advice

Operation day: Immediately after your operation you will usually be allowed to drink. If you tolerate water well, you can have any kind of fluid except fizzy drinks. Soup and yoghurt is allowed but should be lump free. Ice-cream and jelly can also be consumed.

Puree Diet:

Day 1 to 2 weeks post op: The day after your surgery, if you feel no pain swallowing fluids you can usually progress onto a puree diet. If you struggle with the puree diet, go back to a fluid diet for a few more days, then, try again.

- Try not to eat large meals as this will cause pain and bloating. Small and often is better.
- It may be necessary to add some liquid to foods when pureeing to get the right texture.

- You can puree foods separately rather than all together if you feel this would make the meal more appetizing.
- Adding herbs and spices etc. will help to make the food tastier.
- Do not use baby food. It does not have the right amount of nutrients for adults.
- Take 2 supplement drinks per day as supplied.
- There are home food delivery companies that you can purchase puree meals from if you feel this will be easier for you.

Soft Diet:

2 weeks to 6 weeks: If you are tolerating a puree diet you may move to a soft diet. If you struggle with this, go back to a puree diet for another few days, then try again.

- If food is not naturally soft (for example, meat, vegetables, fruits) try finely chopping it or mashing with a potato masher. Cook food well and add gravy or sauces to produce a softer texture.
- Chew food well before swallowing.

Normal Diet:

6 weeks onwards: Progress to a normal diet as you are able. Please note, however, there are some foods that you may still struggle to swallow such as bread, gristly meat and fizzy drinks.

Please note: these time frames may vary depending on your tolerance to foods and the specifics of the surgery carried out.

***If you are concerned or need advice on anything contained in this leaflet please contact the Specialist Nurses
(Mon – Fri 8am – 5.30pm, excluding bank holidays).***

FOOD GROUP	PUREED DIET	SOFT DIET	FOOD TO AVOID
Bread, cereal, rice, pasta, noodles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smooth lump free cereals e.g pureed porridge, ready brek, Weetabix with warm milk • Pasta (well cooked) in cheese sauce – pureed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Porridge or cereal softened with milk. • Well cooked pasta and rice with sauce • Well cooked noodles, mashed. • Rice pudding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bread, • Crackers, • Dry cereals, • Cereals with dried fruit/nuts
Vegetables, potatoes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetable juice. • Pureed vegetables with added milk/butter. • Pureed potatoes with added milk, cream, butter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetable Juice • Well-cooked and mashed vegetables. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raw vegetables • Fibrous stringy vegetables e.g corn, broccoli stalks, green beans.
Fruit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruit Juice/smoothies. • Pureed stewed fruit, skin and pips removed. • Pureed well-ripened fruits eg banana, pear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruit juice/smoothies • Canned or stewed fruit • Soft flesh fruits e.g, mashed banana, mango, pear, watermelon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard fibrous fruits e.g pineapple. • Dried fruits
Milk, yogurt, cheese	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milk/milkshakes • Yoghurt (no lumps), mousse • Cheese/cheese spread – liquidised with cauliflower or pasta • Cheese sauce • Custard/milk puddings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milk/Milkshakes • Yoghurt, mousse • Soft cheese • Grated cheese • Cheese sauce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard cheese
Meat, Offal, Fish, Poultry, tofu, eggs. Beans and pulses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pureed cooked meat, Offal, fish and poultry with gravy or sauce. • Liquidised stew. • Pureed Tofu • Pureed egg with cheese or white sauce. • Egg custard • Lentils/beans pureed in a casserole/soup 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minced meats with gravy or sauce e.g. cottage pie. • Poached or steamed fish, fish pie, tinned fish in mayonnaise, sardines in tomato sauce. • Scrambled egg, boiled egg mashed with mayonnaise/salad cream. • Baked beans in sauce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tough gristly meat • raw fish • chicken skin • Raw nuts and seeds.

Some people will manage soft bread without crust with a moist filling such as tuna mayonnaise, egg mayonnaise, cheese spread once on a soft diet, however, for most it is advisable to wait until 6 weeks to try this

Meal plan suggestions

MEAL	PUREED DIET	SOFT DIET
BREAKFAST	Pureed porridge Weetabix with warm milk Pureed soft or stewed fruit Yoghurt (no lumps)	Porridge or other cereal softened with milk. Scrambled, poached egg or omelette. Boiled eggs Baked beans
LUNCH	Soups (no lumps) Pureed meat, fish, poultry, beans or pulses. Pureed potato and vegetables. Pureed pasta in cheese sauce.	Baked potato without skin (add butter) with tuna/egg mayonnaise, grated or soft cheese, baked beans. Soup with soft lumps. Fish with sauce and mashed potato Canned or soft fresh fruits with custard or cream.
DINNER	As for lunch	Soft cooked meat, poultry, fish with gravy or sauces. e.g. fish pie, cottage pie. Casserole cooked well Rice or pasta, cooked well with sauce. Potato and vegetables cooked until soft and mashed with a fork. Canned or soft fresh fruits with custard or cream.
SNACKS	Yoghurt Mousse Milkshake Fruit smoothie Ice cream Semolina Thin custard Crème caramel	Biscuits dunked to soften Custard Mousse Ice cream Rice pudding Canned or soft fresh fruit

For further assistance or to receive this information in a different format, please contact the department which created this leaflet.