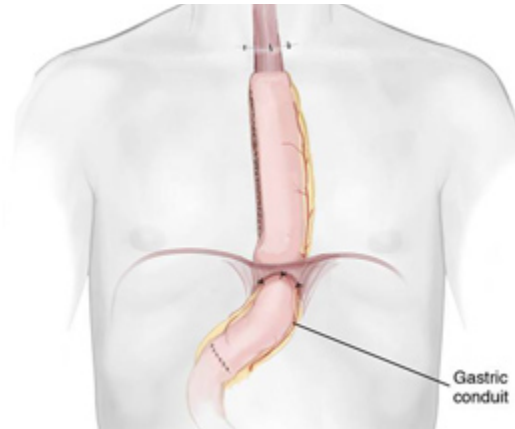


## Diet after an Esophagectomy

An esophagectomy is surgery to remove the esophagus. This operation can be done for cancer of the esophagus as well as other conditions that have caused the esophagus not to work properly.



### What can I expect?

You will be in the hospital about 5-7 days following your procedure however it will be anywhere from 7-21 days until you can start to eat again. You will have a feeding tube in place (jejunostomy tube) to supply your nutrition during this time. You will be tired and weak following the hospitalization, but you need to get up and walk around the house to regain your strength.

### What can I expect after surgery?

For the first few months after surgery, you may have problems such as:

- Weight loss
- Dumping syndrome (a reaction caused by over filling of the stomach, which can cause symptoms such as nausea, diarrhea, abdominal cramping, light-headedness)
- Excess gas
- Trouble swallowing

### What type of diet will I have?

Initially, you will not be allowed anything by mouth. Once beginning to eat, you will have several types of diet. Your surgeon will determine when you can begin to eat, and your diet will change slowly based on your rate of recovery and how well you can tolerate food. In general, your diet plan will advance as follows:

1. Clear liquid diet
2. Full liquid diet
3. Soft diet

Each person tolerates food in a different way. Your doctor will advance your diet plan based upon your progress after surgery. Information on individual diets is below. Your diet plan after surgery is designed to lessen your discomfort and allow you to enjoy eating.

## How can I help myself?

Follow the tips below to make eating more comfortable and enjoyable.

### *To reduce discomfort:*

- Eat small, frequent meals (6 to 8 per day). This helps you get all the nutrients you need without overfilling.
- Take small bites and chew your food well. This helps you to swallow and digest your food easier.
- Drink most of your fluids between meals. Limit fluid with meals to ½ cup (4 ounces). Limit fluid with snacks to 1 cup (8 ounces).
- If you eat sweets, eat them at the end of your meal. Sweets are digested more quickly than other foods. Eating sweets first could lead to low blood sugar.
- Choose foods that are soft and moist because they can be easier to digest. Avoid gummy foods, such as bananas and soft breads.
- Sit up straight when you eat. This way gravity can help food move through your digestive tract. After you eat, continue to sit upright for 30 to 60 minutes.
- Eat your last meal or snack at least 2 to 3 hours before you go to bed.

### *To avoid gas:*

- **Do not** use a straw, chew gum, or smoke because these activities make you swallow air. Keeping extra air out of your digestive tract helps to reduce gas.
- **Avoid** foods and drinks that produce gas, such as:
  - Broccoli
  - Cabbage
  - Cauliflower
  - Corn
  - Dried beans
  - Lentils
  - Onions
  - Peas
  - Alcoholic drinks
  - Caffeine
  - Citrus and tomato products
  - Sodas (carbonated drinks)

You may use over the counter anti-gas medications like Simethicone and Gas X. They may help alleviate symptoms until you adjust to your new diet. Please crush all medications and mix with a small amount of jello, applesauce, or pudding.

## Diet Information

### Clear Liquid Diet

When beginning to eat, you will follow a clear liquid diet, which includes:

- Clear juice (apple, grape, and cranberry)
- Clear broth (chicken, beef, and vegetable broth without vegetables or meat)
- Flavored gelatin (Such as Jell-O®)
- Tea and coffee

**Sodas (carbonated drinks) are not allowed for 6-8 weeks after surgery. After this time, you can try sodas in tiny amounts if cleared by your surgeon.**

### Full Liquid Diet

A full liquid diet contains all the liquids of the clear liquid diet, and in addition:

- Blended yogurt (**not** with pieces of fruits or seeds)
- Cream of wheat or cream of rice cereal
- Ice cream
- Instant breakfast drinks and liquid nutritional supplements (such as Boost® or Ensure®)
- Milk
- Pudding
- Sherbet
- Strained cream soups (**not** tomato or broccoli)

Note: Dairy products may cause diarrhea right after surgery. Dairy products include things like milk, cottage cheese, ice cream, and pudding. You may need to avoid dairy products at first. Try them in small amounts as you advance your diet. You can also try products that are reduced lactose or lactose free.

### Soft Diet

A soft diet consists of bland, lower-fat, soft foods and drinks. See below for recommended foods and foods to avoid. A general rule for soft diets is food that can be eaten if you had no teeth and had to gum the food.

# Patient Education

## Soft Diet

Food Group	Foods to Choose	Foods to Avoid
<b>Breads</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· pancakes</li> <li>· waffles</li> <li>· French toast</li> <li>· crackers</li> <li>· toasted bread</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· bread, bread products, and crackers that contain nuts, seeds, fresh or dried fruit, or coconut or are highly seasoned, (i.e. garlic or onion flavored crackers)</li> </ul>
<b>Cereals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· any cereals (except those listed as foods to avoid)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· coarse cereals such as bran, Grape Nuts®, and granola</li> <li>· any cereals with fresh or dried fruit, coconut, seeds, or nuts</li> </ul>
<b>Desserts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· plain cakes, cookies and pies</li> <li>· pudding and custard</li> <li>· ice cream, ice milk, frozen yogurt, and sherbet</li> <li>· gelatin made from allowed foods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· desserts that contain chocolate, coconut, nuts, seeds, fresh or dried fruit, peppermint, or spearmint</li> </ul>
<b>Beverages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· regular milk</li> <li>· tea or coffee</li> <li>· powdered drink mixes</li> <li>· non-citrus juices such as cranberry, grape, apple or blends of these</li> <li>· nectars</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· sodas and other carbonated beverages</li> <li>· alcoholic drinks</li> <li>· citrus juices such as orange, grapefruit, lemon, and lime</li> <li>· drinks that contain herbal ingredients, such as St. John's wart or ginseng</li> </ul>
<b>Eggs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· any (except those listed as foods to avoid)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· fried eggs and highly seasoned eggs, such as deviled eggs</li> </ul>
<b>Fats (eat in moderation)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· butter and margarine</li> <li>· mayonnaise and vegetable oils</li> <li>· mildly seasoned salad dressings made with allowed ingredients</li> <li>· plain cream cheese</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· highly seasoned salad dressings, cream sauces, and gravies</li> <li>· bacon, bacon fat, ham fat, lard, and salt pork</li> <li>· fried foods</li> <li>· nuts</li> </ul>
<b>Fruits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· any canned or cooked fruits or fruit juice (except those listed as foods to avoid)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· all fresh and dried fruits</li> <li>· fruits with seeds or skin, such as berries, figs and raisins</li> <li>· all citrus fruits and juices</li> <li>· ripe bananas</li> </ul>

## Soft Diet (Continued)

Food Group	Foods to Choose	Foods to Avoid
<b>Meats, fish, poultry and cheese</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· finely ground lean beef, lamb, pork, veal, fish, and poultry prepared any way except fried</li> <li>· cottage and ricotta cheese</li> <li>· mild cheeses such as American, brick, baby Swiss, or mozzarella</li> <li>· smooth peanut butter</li> <li>· plain, flavored, or fruited yogurt (except those listed as yogurts to avoid)</li> <li>· casseroles and stews prepared with allowed ingredients</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· tough meats with gristle</li> <li>· fried, highly seasoned, smoked and fatty meats, fish, or poultry such as frankfurters, lunch meats, sausage, bacon, spareribs, beef brisket, sardines, anchovies, duck, and goose</li> <li>· chili and other spicy foods</li> <li>· shellfish</li> <li>· strongly flavored cheeses such as sharp cheese and cheese that contains peppers or other seasoning</li> <li>· crunchy peanut butter</li> <li>· any yogurt that contains nuts, seeds, coconut, strawberries, or raspberries</li> </ul>
<b>Potatoes and starches</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· peeled white or sweet potatoes</li> <li>· rice and barley</li> <li>· pastas, such as enriched noodles, spaghetti, and macaroni</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Fried potatoes, potato skins, and potato chips</li> <li>· Fried, brown, or wild rice</li> <li>· Popcorn</li> </ul>
<b>Soups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Mildly flavored meat stocks</li> <li>· Cream soups made with allowed ingredients</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Highly seasoned soups and tomato-based soups</li> </ul>
<b>Sweets (eat in moderation with a meal)</b> <i>Note: If dumping syndrome occurs, you may need to avoid these</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Sugar, syrup, honey, jelly, and seedless jam</li> <li>· Unfilled hard candies and plain candies made with allowed ingredients</li> <li>· Molasses</li> <li>· Other candy made with allowed ingredients</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Jam, marmalade, and preserves</li> <li>· Marshmallows</li> <li>· Any candy that contains nuts, seeds, fresh or dried fruit, coconut, peppermint or spearmint</li> </ul>
<b>Vegetables</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Cooked vegetables without seeds or skins, such as asparagus tips, baby peas, beets, carrots, chopped spinach, green and wax beans, and winter squash</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Raw vegetables</li> <li>· Tomatoes, tomato juice, tomato sauce, and vegetable juice (e.g., V-8®)</li> <li>· Gas-producing vegetables such as broccoli, Brussels</li> </ul>

# Patient Education

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		<p>sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, corn, cucumbers, green peppers, onions, radishes, rutabagas, sauerkraut, and turnips</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Dried beans, peas and lentils</li></ul>
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