



PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Clear Liquid Diet

This information will help you follow a clear liquid diet. Keep this resource in your kitchen so you can easily see what you can and can't eat or drink while on a clear liquid diet.

About a Clear Liquid Diet

A clear liquid diet includes only liquids you can see through. These liquids are easily digested and don't leave any residue in your intestinal tract.

Your healthcare provider may prescribe a clear liquid diet before your surgery or procedure, for the first few meals after your surgery or procedure, or if you have certain digestive problems. Clear liquids don't have a lot of calories or nutrients, so you shouldn't stay on a clear liquid diet for longer than your healthcare provider tells you to.

While you're following a clear liquid diet:

- Don't eat any solid foods.
- Try to drink at least 1 (8-ounce) glass of clear liquid every hour you're awake.

- Drink different types of clear liquids. Don't just drink water, coffee, and tea.
- Don't drink sugar-free liquids unless you have diabetes and a member of your healthcare team tells you to do so.

Your healthcare provider might tell you to avoid anything red, orange, or purple, including liquids, gelatin, and hard candies. If you have questions, talk with your nurse.

For people with diabetes

If you have diabetes, ask the healthcare provider who manages your diabetes what you should do while you're following a clear liquid diet.

- If you take insulin or another medication for diabetes, ask if you need to change the dose.
- Ask if you should drink sugar-free clear liquids.

While you're following a clear liquid diet, make sure to check your blood sugar level often. If you have questions, talk with your healthcare provider.

Examples of Clear Liquids

Clear Liquid Diet		
	Drink	Do Not Drink
Soups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear broth, bouillon, or consommé 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any products with pieces of dried food or seasoning

Sweets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gelatin (such as Jell-O®) • Flavored ices • Hard candies (such as Life Savers®) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All others
Drinks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear fruit juices (such as lemonade, apple, cranberry, and grape juices) • Soda (such as ginger ale, 7-Up®, Sprite®, and seltzer) • Sports drinks (such as Gatorade®) • Black coffee • Tea • Water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juices with pulp • Nectars • Milk or cream • Alcoholic drinks

If you're allowed to have red, orange, and purple liquids, you can also have Boost® Breeze, Ensure Clear™, and Diabetishield® nutritional drinks.

If you have any questions, contact a member of your healthcare team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5:00 PM, during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

Clear Liquid Diet - Last updated on June 28, 2019

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