



Eating Guide for Puréed Food and Mechanical Soft Food Diets

This information explains what puréed food and mechanical soft diets are. It also explains what foods you can and can't have while you're following a puréed food or mechanical soft food diet.

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What are puréed food and mechanical soft food diets?

Foods in the puréed food and mechanical soft food diets are smoother and easier to swallow than regular foods. They need very little or no chewing.

- If you're on a **puréed food diet**, you will eat foods you don't need to chew, such as mashed potatoes and pudding. You can also blend or strain other foods to make them smoother. You can add liquids (such as broth, milk, juice, or water) to foods to make them easier to swallow.
- If you're on a **mechanical soft food diet**, you will eat foods that need less chewing than on a regular diet. You can eat foods with different textures and thicknesses, including chopped, ground, and puréed foods.

For more information about what to eat on a puréed food diet or mechanical soft food diet, read the "What To Eat on a Pureed Food Diet" and "What To Eat on a Mechanical Soft Food Diet" sections of this resource.

If you're eating less than usual or losing weight, call your Registered Dietitian Nutritionist.

Reasons To Follow a Puréed Food or Mechanical Soft Food Diet

You may need to follow a puréed food diet or mechanical soft food diet if you:

- Have trouble chewing or swallowing.
- Had mouth surgery.
- Have trouble moving or have lost feeling in parts of your mouth, such as your lips or tongue.

If you don't know which diet is right for you, or have any questions, talk with your doctor or speech or swallowing specialist. You can also call 212-639-7312 to set up a consult with a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist.

Guide for Good Nutrition on a Puréed Food or Mechanical Soft Food Diet

Eat foods that have all the nutrients your body needs to keep you healthy.

Your body needs:

- Proteins.
- Carbohydrates.
- Fats.
- Fiber.
- Vitamins and minerals.

Make sure to drink plenty of liquids. Most people should drink 8 (8-ounce) cups of water a day. Ask your doctor or Registered Dietitian Nutritionist if drinking more or less would be right for you.

Protein

Protein helps your body build tissue and heal after surgery. Foods rich in protein include:

- Soft meat.
- Fish.
- Poultry (chicken, turkey).
- Milk, including dairy milk and powdered milk.
- Cheese and cottage cheese.
- Yogurt, especially Greek yogurt.
- Eggs and egg whites.
- Beans and bean purée.
- Creamy nut butters, such as creamy peanut butter.
- Soy products, such as soy milk, tofu, and edamame (soy beans).
- Protein powders.
- Liquid nutritional supplements, such as Ensure[®], Ensure Plus[®], Boost[®], or Boost Plus[®].

Carbohydrates (Carbs)

Carbs are starches and sugars. Most of the carbs in your diet should come from:

- Starchy vegetables, such as potatoes, green peas, and squash.
- Whole grains, such as oatmeal and brown rice.
- Cereals.
- Breads.
- Pasta.

Fat

Fat is the most concentrated source of calories. For example, 1 teaspoon of oil (a fat) has 45 calories, while 1 teaspoon of sugar (a carb) has 20 calories. It's necessary and healthy to have some fat in your diet.

Fats are found in:

- Soft meats.
- Dairy.
- Coconut and canned coconut milk or cream.
- Creamy nut butters, such as creamy peanut butter.
- Seeds.
- Vegetable oils.
- Avocados.
- Olives.
- Fried and sautéed foods.
- Baked goods.

Some fats are healthier for you than others. Unsaturated fats are healthier for you than saturated fats.

Unsaturated fats are found in:

- Olive oil.
- Canola oil.
- Peanut oil.
- Fish oil.
- Avocado.

Saturated fats are found in:

- Soft meats.
- Full-fat dairy products, such as whole milk, cheeses, heavy cream, and cream cheese.
- Butter.
- Coconut and coconut products, such as coconut oil.
- Palm oil.

Fiber

There are 2 kinds of fiber: soluble and insoluble. It's important to get enough of both kinds of fiber.

- **Soluble fiber** is found in foods like barley, oats, and skinless fresh fruits. Soluble fiber can help make your bowel movements softer and slow your digestion.
- **Insoluble fiber** is found in the skins of fruits and vegetables, legumes (beans, lentils), seeds, and whole grains. It's not broken down in your intestines and adds bulk to your bowel movements (stool). This can help you have more regular bowel movements. Even if fruits and vegetables are blended, the fiber is still there if the pulp hasn't been removed.

For more information about managing constipation, read the “Managing Symptoms and Side Effects Through Nutrition” section of *Eating Well During Your Cancer Treatment*. You can ask a member of your care team for a copy or find it at www.mskcc.org/pe/eating_cancer_treatment

Vitamins and Minerals

Vitamins and minerals are found in all foods in different amounts. People who eat a well-balanced diet will most likely not need vitamin supplements. Talk with your doctor or Registered Dietitian Nutritionist if you're thinking about taking a supplement.

Lactose

Lactose is a sugar found in milk and milk products, such as yogurt, cheese, and ice cream. Many people have trouble digesting lactose, which is called lactose intolerance. This may cause gas, cramping, or diarrhea (loose or watery bowel movements).

If this is a problem for you, you may want to try dairy products that have little or no lactose. Cheese and yogurt have less lactose than milk or ice cream.

You can also look for low-lactose or lactose-free milk and cheese products in your supermarket's dairy section. Lactaid® is a brand that has several of these products. Or, you can try milks, yogurts, and cheeses made from plants or nuts instead of dairy. There are lots of non-dairy options to choose from.

What To Eat On a Puréed Food Diet

Here are some foods to include and avoid while you're on a puréed food diet.

	OK to Have on a Puréed Food Diet	Avoid While on a Puréed Food Diet
Milk and Dairy Products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milk, smooth yogurt (plain or without fruit pieces), buttermilk, evaporated or condensed milk, milkshakes, and malts. • Puréed cottage cheese, thin ricotta cheese, mild or processed cheeses melted into a sauce. • Ice cream and frozen yogurt. • Liquid nutritional supplements, such as Ensure or Carnation Breakfast Essentials®. • Smoothies made with bananas, peaches, or sorbets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solid cheeses, regular cottage cheese, farmer cheese, and pot cheese.
Vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetable juices like V8 Splash® or tomato juice, puréed cooked vegetables, and baby food vegetables. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All others, even well-cooked and fresh vegetables that don't require a lot of chewing.
Fruits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruit juices and nectars (without pulp). • Smooth applesauce, puréed fruits, baby food fruit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All others, including mashed banana and canned fruits.

	OK to Have on a Puréed Food Diet	Avoid While on a Puréed Food Diet
Starches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooked cereals, Cream of Wheat®, Farina®, Cream of Rice®. • Smooth or blended oatmeal, baby oatmeal, or baby cereal. • Hominy grits. • Whipped or smooth mashed potatoes. • Puréed pasta, puréed rice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All others.
Meat or Meat Substitutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strained or puréed meat, fish, and poultry. • Smooth chicken, tuna, and egg salad (no celery or onion). • Soufflés, hummus, and puréed beans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All others, including scrambled, fried, poached, hard-boiled, and soft-boiled eggs.
Fats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Butter, margarine, sour cream, cooking fats and oils, and gravies • Whipped toppings and heavy cream • Mashed or blended avocado with puréed foods items. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All others.
Soups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broth and bouillon. • Soups with puréed or strained vegetables. • Strained or puréed cream soups. • Puréed chicken noodle or chicken and rice soup. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All others.

	OK to Have on a Puréed Food Diet	Avoid While on a Puréed Food Diet
Sweets and Desserts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smooth custards and puddings. • Sherbet, ice cream, and frozen yogurt. • Flavored fruit ices, popsicles, fruit whips, flavored gelatins. • Clear jelly, honey, sugar, and sugar substitutes. • All syrups (such as chocolate syrup and maple syrup). • Mousse. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All others, including anything made with coconuts, nuts, or whole fruits.
Drinks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All drinks except those in the “Avoid” column. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drinks with raw eggs. • Bubble or boba tea.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salt, pepper, ketchup, mustard, and mayonnaise. • Herbs and spices. • Liquid sauces, such as barbeque or teriyaki sauce. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nuts. • Coconuts. • Olives. • Pickles. • Seeds. <p>* Do not eat spicy or acidic foods if you have mouth sores.</p>

Puréed Food Diet Sample Menu

Here are some examples of puréed food diet options for each meal of the day.

	Sample Menu
Breakfast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruit juice without pulp. • Puréed banana. • Cooked cereal with milk. • Puréed cooked egg. • Milk. • Coffee or tea.
Mid-morning snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vanilla or flavored yogurt.
Lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any puréed or strained soup. • Puréed chicken salad. • Puréed green beans. • Puréed fruit. • Puréed rice. • Tea with sugar.
Mid-afternoon snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure plus.
Dinner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puréed or strained soup. • Puréed meat or fish. • Mashed potato. • Puréed vegetables with olive oil or butter. • Applesauce.
Evening snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vanilla pudding.

If you need help planning your meals, call 212-639-7312 to set up a consult with a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist.

What To Eat on a Mechanical Soft Food Diet

You should moisten the following mechanical foods with a sauce, gravy or condiments.

	OK to Have on a Mechanical Soft Food Diet	Avoid While on a Mechanical Soft Food Diet
Milk and Dairy Products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milk, buttermilk, eggnog, yogurt (plain and with fruit), milkshakes, evaporated and condensed milk, and malts. • Cottage cheese, soft cheeses (such as ricotta or farmer), pot cheese sauces, and grated and shredded cheeses. • Ice cream and frozen yogurt. • Liquid nutritional supplements, such as Ensure or Carnation Breakfast Essentials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard cheeses and cheeses that have nuts and seeds in them.
Vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any well-cooked, diced vegetables, such as carrots, peas, green beans, beets, butternut or acorn squash, and wax beans moistened with a sauce or oil. • Chopped or creamed spinach. • Puréed vegetables. • Baby food vegetables. • Vegetable juices, such as V8 Splash and tomato juice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raw vegetables. • Stir-fried vegetables. • Fried vegetables. • Lettuce.

	OK to Have on a Mechanical Soft Food Diet	Avoid While on a Mechanical Soft Food Diet
Fruits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ripe bananas. • Any diced canned fruits. • Any cooked fruits (without the skins), mashed or diced into small pieces. • Applesauce, puréed fruits, and baby food fruits. • Nectars and fruit juices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh fruits. • Fruit skins. • Fruits with pits. • Dried fruits.
Starches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diced soft breads, such as soft rolls, muffins, soft French toast, and pancakes. Moisten these with butter and syrup. • Dry cereal soaked in a small amount of milk. • White or brown rice with a sauce or gravy. • Casseroles. • Cooked cereals, Cream of Wheat, Farina, Cream of Rice, oatmeal, hominy grits, and couscous • Diced soft pastas or noodles, pasta salad, pastina, orecchiette, macaroni and cheese, and diced ravioli or tortellini • Soft whole grains (such as barley, farro) moistened with sauce or gravy • Mashed, baked, or creamed potatoes, and sweet potatoes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rye-crisps, dry crackers, popcorn, taco shells, and Melba toasts. • Breads and muffins with seeds or nuts, pita bread, rye and pumpernickel breads, bagels, French or sourdough breads, and toast. • Chowmein noodles. • Any cakes or breads made with nuts, seeds, raisins, or dates. • Kasha (buckwheat), wild rice, shredded wheat, and granola. • Hash browns, fried potatoes, potato skins, and French fries.

	OK to Have on a Mechanical Soft Food Diet	Avoid While on a Mechanical Soft Food Diet
Meat or Meat Substitutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ground, finely chopped tender meat or poultry with sauce or gravy. • Soft chicken salad, creamed tuna salad (without celery), and egg salad (without celery). • Diced meat loaf, meatballs, salmon loaf, and croquettes. • Casseroles. • Diced baked or broiled fish (fillet of sole, roughy, flounder, and salmon). • Well-cooked beans and tofu. • Scrambled eggs or diced hard-cooked eggs. • Cheese quiche without the crust. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole cuts or diced meat or poultry. • Hot dogs, sausage, knockwurst, bratwurst, pork chops, steak, and bacon. • Fried fish. • Haddock, halibut, and tuna. • Shellfish. • Chili with beans.
Fats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Butter, margarine, and cooking fats and oils. • Gravy, whipped toppings, salad dressings, and mayonnaise. • Finely chopped olives. • Avocado. • Creamy nut butters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nuts. • Seeds. • Coconuts. • Whole olives. • Crunchy nut butters.

	OK to Have on a Mechanical Soft Food Diet	Avoid While on a Mechanical Soft Food Diet
Soups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broth and bouillon. • Soups with puréed or strained vegetables. • Strained or puréed cream soups. • Diced chicken noodle soup. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any soups with chunks of meat or crunchy vegetables.
Sweets and Desserts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seedless jellies, honey, sugar, sugar substitutes, and syrup. • Ice cream, frozen yogurt, puddings, and custards. • Pies (without crust), pastries, and cakes without seeds, nuts, or dried fruits moistened with a milk or seedless jelly. • Diced soft cookies moistened with milk. • Mousse. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any sweets and desserts with coconut, nuts, or dried fruits. • Granola bars. • Pies with crust. • Chewy, crunchy, or hard candy. • Jelly or jam with seeds. • Crunchy cookies. • Licorice, taffy, and caramel.
Drinks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water, coffee, tea, carbonated drinks, hot cocoa, fruit punch, and coconut water. • Gatorade®, Pedialyte®, Isopure® lemonade without pulp. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drinks with raw eggs. • Juices with pulp. • Bubble or boba tea.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salt, pepper, ketchup, mustard, and mayonnaise. • Herbs and spices. • Jelly. 	<p>* Do not eat spicy or acidic foods if you have mouth sores.</p>

Mechanical Soft Food Diet Sample Menu

Here are some examples of meals you can have when you're on a mechanical soft food diet.

	Sample Menu
Breakfast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soft, diced peaches. • Cereal softened in milk. • Diced, soft pancakes with syrup and butter. • Scrambled eggs. • A soft butter roll cut into small pieces.
Mid-morning snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yogurt.
Lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetable barley soup. • Chicken salad or egg salad. • Diced, well-cooked spinach. • Canned fruit cocktail.
Mid-afternoon snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure plus.
Dinner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soup. • Baked fish filet (boneless) with sauce. • Diced, soft potatoes. • Diced, well-cooked broccoli with olive oil or butter. • Canned, diced pears.
Evening snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rice pudding.

If you need help planning your meals, call 212-639-7312 to set up a consult with a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist.

Planning Your Meals on a Puréed Food or Mechanical Soft Food Diet

Changing your eating habits for a puréed food or mechanical soft food diet can be hard. It's best to plan ahead for meals. This can help make sure you have enough of the right foods to eat at mealtimes. Here are some questions to think about when planning your meals:

- Where will you be eating? (At home, a restaurant, work, someone else's house?)
- If you're eating at a restaurant, can you call ahead and request special meals?
- Will you have a kitchen and refrigerator available? Can you boil water? Can you microwave? Can you use a blender or food processor?
- Can you carry a thermos with food already prepared and ready to eat?

Tips for Eating at Home

Most foods can be changed to meet your needs. For example, a portion of soup can be put aside, then strained or blended.

Many main dishes, such as noodles, stews, and casseroles, can be put into a blender with some liquid. You can use milk, gravy, tomato sauce, broth, juice, or water. Add liquid until the food is the right consistency.

Kitchen Items To Help Prepare Foods

Here are some items that you may find helpful to prepare your foods at home:

- **Blender:** You can use a blender for all types of foods including meats, vegetables and fruits, but you may have to add liquid to make the food the right texture. Blenders are great for soups and shakes. However, they're not always the best to use for making 1 portion.
- **The Magic Bullet® and Nutribullet®:** These are small blenders that don't take up a lot of space. The Vitamix® and Ninja® are other powerful blenders that can purée a variety of foods.
- **Hand-held blender:** You can use a hand-held blender to quickly purée your favorite soups right in the pot. It can also be used to soften well-cooked foods in a small bowl for 1 or 2 portions.

- **Food processor:** Food processors are useful for shredding, slicing, chopping, or blending foods. They come in different sizes. If you often prepare just 1 portion of food, buy a small processor.
- **Household mesh strainer or sieve:** You can use this to strain fruits and vegetables, but not meats. They are inexpensive, good to make 1 portion, and don't need electricity. However, this method can be slow.
- **Baby-food grinder:** This item can often be found in stores that sell baby clothes or furniture. They are good for all foods and require no liquid. The small ones are ideal for grinding 1 portion of food. They can be hand or battery-operated.

However, when using a baby-food grinder, food may not come out as smooth as some people may need. Ask your Registered Dietitian Nutritionist, doctor, or speech or swallowing therapist if it's right for you.

Tips for Eating at Restaurants

Eat at restaurants that offer a variety of foods and that will cater to people on special diets. Many places will purée or prepare foods for your needs. Call ahead and speak to a manager or chef. You may be surprised at how helpful they will be. You may also want to order sides of broth, gravy, or milk to moisten your foods.

Here are some ideas of things you can order. Some of these may need to be mashed or blended for the puréed diet:

Breakfast

- Fruit and vegetable juices.
- Fruits.
- Hot cereal.
- Cold cereal softened in milk (for mechanical soft diets).
- Scrambled eggs or chopped, hard-boiled eggs for mechanical soft diets.
- Soft breads, such as muffins and pancakes, soaked in liquid to soften them for mechanical soft diets.
- Coffee, tea, or hot chocolate.

Lunch and Dinner

- Soups, which can be easily blended or strained in the restaurant. Egg drop soup is a good source of protein.
- Fruit and vegetable juices.

Main Dishes

- Ground meat products, such as hamburger patties, meatloaf, and meatballs.
- Soft, flaky fish (such as fillet of sole, flounder, or tilapia) steamed, baked, or broiled.
- Noodles and macaroni dishes, blended for puréed diets.
- Soufflés.
- Cottage cheese and soft fruit platters.
- Sandwiches, such as tuna or egg salad on soft bread.

Vegetables

- Baked or mashed potatoes.
- Any soft cooked vegetables, such as cooked carrots.
- Creamed spinach.
- Vegetable soufflé.
- Guacamole). Avoid spicy guacamole if you have mouth sores.
- Hummus.

Desserts

- Ice cream or frozen yogurt.
- Gelatin desserts.
- Milkshakes.
- Mousse.
- Puddings and custards.
- Applesauce or other soft fruits.
- Fruit sorbets.

Tips for Eating Away From Home

It's also possible to eat away from home, such as at work or at a friend's house. Here are some tips for taking food with you while you're away from home:

- Bring a food grinder or small food processor. If electricity is needed, make sure it's available where you're going.
- Buy a thermos. Make soup or hot cereal and carry it with you.
- Ask if there is a microwave where you're going. You can make food at home and freeze it in portion-sized, microwave-safe containers or Zip-Loc® bags. Bring the food with you in an insulated pack and heat it when you want to eat.
- Freeze soups or puréed foods in ice cube trays. Cover the tray with foil or plastic wrap to prevent freezer burn. When you're hungry, use 2 or 3 cubes for a small meal or snack, or more cubes for a larger meal.

Read *Food Safety During Cancer Treatment* to learn how to safely make and store food to prevent foodborne illness. You can ask a member of your care team for a copy or find it at www.mksc.org/pe/food_safety

Your Caloric Needs

Your caloric needs are the number of calories you need every day to maintain your weight. You get calories from food and drinks. Eating the number of calories your body needs can help you maintain your weight.

You can adjust the number of calories you eat in order to reach your weight goal:

- If you need to gain weight, you can eat or drink more calories.
- If you need to lose weight, you can eat or drink fewer calories.

Each person needs a different number of calories. This is based on their age, sex, height and weight, and level of physical activity.

Generally, people who are older or less active need fewer calories. Your doctor or Registered Dietitian Nutritionist can help you find out how many calories you need every day.

The easiest way to check if you're eating enough is to weigh yourself. Try to weigh yourself twice a week and write down how much you weigh. This will help you keep track of your weight loss or gain.

Tips for Adding More Calories to Your Diet

If you need to eat more calories, here are some tips:

- Eat small meals 6 to 8 times a day instead of 3 main meals.
- Add 2 to 4 tablespoons of canned coconut milk or cream to smoothies, shakes, cereals, or yogurts for extra calories. You can also add it to rice or diced chicken for extra calories, flavor, and moisture.
- Choose creamy soups rather than soups with clear broths.
- Have puddings and custards rather than gelatin desserts, such as Jell-O®.
- Add sauces, gravies, or extra vegetable oil to your meals.
- Drink apricot, pear, or peach fruit nectars. They are less acidic than other nectars.
- Drink fruit shakes or fruit smoothies made with yogurt or ice cream.
- Make ice cubes from milk or fruit nectar. Use these high-calorie ice cubes in smoothies or to keep your shakes cold. As they melt, they will add calories to your beverages.
- Drink high-calorie drinks, such as milkshakes, soy milkshakes, or pasteurized eggnog.
- Drink a liquid nutritional supplement, such as Ensure or Boost, instead of milk to make a nutritious, high-calorie milkshake.
- Add honey to smoothies, tea, yogurt, hot cereals, shakes, or ice cream.
- If you aren't on a low-fat diet, add sour cream, half and half, heavy cream, or whole milk to your foods. You can add it to mashed potatoes, sauces, gravies, cereals, soups, and casseroles.
- Add mayonnaise to your eggs, chicken, tuna, pasta, or potatoes to make a smooth, moist salad.
- Add avocado to dishes or smoothies.
- Add nut butters, such as peanut butter, to shakes and smoothies.

Tips for Adding More Protein to Your Diet

If you need to increase the amount of protein in your diet, here are some tips:

- Add tofu to cooked vegetables, soups, smoothies, or in place of chicken or meat if you're having difficulty eating animal proteins.
- Add cooked eggs to your soups, broths, and cooked vegetables. Purée the cooked eggs, if needed.
- Use plain Greek yogurt in smoothies, cream sauces, or wherever you would use sour cream.
- Use a plain protein powder, such as a whey protein powder, in liquids and shakes.
- Add cheese (shredded or grated) to your soups, cooked eggs, vegetables, and starches.
 - For example, adding full-fat ricotta cheese can moisten a dish and add calories and protein. Add cottage cheese to smoothies, purées, or canned fruits.
- Use fortified milk (see recipe in the “Recipes” section) rather than regular milk to double the amount of protein in it. Use this milk in shakes, hot cereals, mashed potatoes, hot chocolate, or with instant puddings to create a high-protein, high-calorie dessert. You can also add non-fat dried milk powder alone to purées and smoothies to add more calories and protein.

Liquid Nutritional Supplements

If you can't make your own shakes, there are many nutritional supplements that you can buy. Some are high calorie, ready-prepared drinks that have vitamins and minerals added to them. Others are powders that you can mix into other foods or drinks. Most are also lactose-free, which means that you can have them even if you're lactose intolerant.

Check your local market or drug store to see if they carry any of the brands below. You can also order them online for home delivery.

Liquid Nutritional Supplement	Calories	Protein (g)	Lactose Free
Ensure® (8 ounces)	220	9	Yes
Ensure Active Clear™ (10 ounces)	180	9	Yes
Ensure Plus™ (8 ounces)	350	13	Yes
Ensure Complete (11 ounces)	350	30	Yes
Ensure Enlive® (8 ounces)	350	20	Yes
Ensure Compact® (4 ounces)	220	9	Yes
Ensure Max (11 ounces)	150	30	Yes
Ensure Pudding® (4 ounces)	170	10	Yes
Glucerna® (8 ounces)	200	10	Yes
Boost® (8 ounces)	240	10	Yes
Boost Plus® (8 ounces)	360	16	Yes
Boost Compact® (4 ounces)	240	10	Yes
Boost Glucose Control® (8 ounces)	190	16	Yes
Boost Nutritional Pudding® (5 ounces)	240	7	Yes
Orgain (11 ounces)	250	20	No
Premier Protein (11 ounces)	150	30	Yes
Carnation Breakfast Essentials® Powder (1 packet)	130	5	No
Carnation Breakfast Essentials Ready-to-Drink® (11 ounces)	250	14	No
Boost VHC® (8 ounces)	530	22.5	Yes
Resource® Boost Breeze (8 ounces)	250	9	Yes
Resource Benecalorie® (1.5 ounces)	330	7	Yes
Resource Beneprotein® Instant Protein Powder (7 grams)	25	6	Yes

Puréed Food and Mechanical Soft Food Diet

Recipe Ideas

Many of these recipes came from people who were on these diets. We hope they are helpful.

For additional recipes, tips, and ideas, check out the book *Eat Well Stay Nourished*. It was written by Support for People with Oral and Head and Neck Cancer (SPOHNC). You can order it by calling 800-377-0928 or online at www.spohnc.org/recipe_resource_guide.php

Drinks for Puréed Food and Mechanical Soft Food Diets

These are good drink options if you want to increase your calories. Try various fruits and juices.

Fortified milk

Use this recipe to increase the calorie and protein content of a glass of milk. Also, use it as a substitute for milk in your favorite recipes for soups or custards.

Ingredients

- 1 cup of non-fat dried milk powder
- 1 quart of skim or 1% milk (use whole milk if you need extra calories)

Instructions

Combine all the ingredients. Stir well.

Store any leftover fortified milk in your refrigerator.

Milkshake

You can also add malted milk powder, syrups, nut butters, or fruits. Try other flavors and consistencies you may enjoy.

Ingredients

- 1 cup of milk
- 1 cup of ice cream or frozen yogurt

Instructions

Put all the ingredients in a blender. Blend well.

Choco-Banana Swirl

Ingredients

- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup of vanilla yogurt
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup of vanilla ice cream or frozen yogurt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of chilled and sliced ripe banana (about half of a medium banana)
- 2 teaspoons of chocolate-flavored syrup

Instructions

Put all the ingredients in a blender. Blend until the mixture is smooth.

Fruit Smoothie

Ingredients

- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup of vanilla yogurt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit nectar
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup of chilled or frozen fruit of your choice
- 1 tablespoon of honey
- 4 ice cubes

Instructions

Put all the ingredients in a blender. Blend until the mixture is smooth.

Blender Breakfast

This drink is easy to make and is full of calcium, vitamins, and fiber.

Ingredients

- 1 banana, peach, or nectarine, peeled and cut into chunks
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of milk or fortified milk (you may also use $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of low-fat yogurt instead)
- 1 teaspoon of sugar or honey
- 1 tablespoon of natural bran

Instructions

Put all the ingredients in a blender. Blend until the mixture is smooth.

Sauces for Puréed Food and Mechanical Soft Food Diets

Use these sauces to moisten your foods and make them more tasty. Some are used in other recipes in this resource.

Basic White Sauce

Ingredients

- 1 cup of skim, 1%, whole, or fortified milk
- 2 tablespoons of any kind of oil or butter
- 2 to 3 tablespoons of flour

Instructions

1. Mix the flour and oil or butter in a saucepan.
2. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly until the mixture is smooth and bubbly.
3. Remove from heat.
4. Stir in the milk.
5. Boil for 1 minute, stirring constantly.
6. After a few minutes, it will begin to thicken. The more flour you add, the thicker the sauce will be.

Basic Brown Sauce

Follow the Basic White Sauce recipe, but use $\frac{2}{3}$ cup of low-sodium beef or chicken broth instead of milk.

Soups and Stews for Puréed Food and Mechanical Soft Food Diets

Eating soup is a good way to get more liquid and vegetables in your diet. Try some of these recipes or change the ingredients to make it right for you.

If you're on a puréed diet, you must put the soup through a blender or strainer. People on a mechanical soft diet can tolerate some of these soups without having to blend them.

Creamy Soup

This is a recipe for a basic creamy soup. Add whichever vegetables and spices you like.

Ingredients

- 1 cup of cooked Basic White Sauce (see earlier recipe)
- ½ cup of puréed vegetables or baby food vegetables
- Salt and pepper to taste

You can also try adding other cooked or puréed vegetables, such as green beans, carrots, broccoli, squash, peas, mushrooms, or asparagus. Try adding dill, garlic, thyme, onion, or celery.

Instructions

1. Follow the recipe for Basic White Sauce.
2. Mix in the puréed vegetables.
3. Add salt and butter to taste.

Vegetarian Creamy Tofu Soup

Ingredients

- 2 ounces of tofu
- 8 ounces of Creamy Soup (see recipe above)

Instructions

Put all the ingredients in a blender. Blend until the mixture is smooth.

Avocado Soup

Ingredients

- 1 ripe, medium avocado (flesh only)
- 1 small onion, cut up
- ½ teaspoon of salt
- 3 cups of chicken or vegetable broth
- 1 cup of yogurt
- 3 tablespoons of lemon juice (strained, if fresh)

Instructions

1. Purée the avocado and onion with 1 cup of broth.
2. Add the salt, remaining broth, and lemon juice, and mix for a few seconds.
3. Add the yogurt and sour cream and blend until smooth.
4. Serve cold.

Spa Vegetable Soup

This is an easy way to make vegetable soup. You can change the vegetables as much as you like and add other herbs and spices. You can also try adding tofu chunks to increase the amount of protein or drizzle some olive oil into the soup as you purée it for extra calories.

Ingredients

- 3 cups of chicken or vegetable broth
- 1 carrot, sliced
- 1 cup of broccoli florets
- 1 cup of cauliflower florets
- ½ cup of red cabbage, thinly sliced (or try spinach)
- 1 green onion, thinly sliced
- Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

1. In a saucepan, bring the broth to a boil.
2. Add the carrot and simmer for 20 minutes.
3. Add the remaining vegetables and simmer until completely cooked through.
4. Place in a blender and purée.
5. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Lentil and Carrot Stew

Ingredients

- 6 ounces of dry lentils
- 3 cups of water
- 4 medium carrots, peeled, quartered lengthwise, and cut into 1-inch pieces (2 ½ cups)
- 1 onion, diced
- 1 small stalk of washed, trimmed, and chopped celery (¼ cup)
- 3 bay leaves
- 1 teaspoon of salt (optional)
- 1 bunch of fresh cilantro or parsley, washed
- 2 teaspoons of olive oil

Instructions

1. Sort the lentils and throw away any stones or damaged lentils.
2. Wash them in a sieve under cold water.
3. Drain out all the water.
4. Place the lentils in a large pot.
5. Add the water, carrots, onions, celery, bay leaves, and salt.
6. Remove the cilantro or parsley leaves and set them aside as a garnish.
7. Chop the stems and roots and add them to the pot.
8. Bring the mixture to a boil over high heat.
9. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and cook at a very gentle boil for 55 minutes.
10. Let the mixture cool.

If you're on a puréed diet, place it in a blender and process until smooth. Garnish with the cilantro or parsley leaves when serving.

Cereals for Puréed Food and Mechanical Soft Food Diets

Try these recipes for a healthy start to your day.

Cooked cereals

When making instant hot cereals, use milk instead of water to provide more nutrients and calories. You can use skim, 1%, whole, soy, almond, rice, or fortified milk. Some people also add heavy cream or half and half for extra calories.

Add applesauce, puréed banana, cinnamon, honey, yogurt, nut butters, or brown sugar and blend.

High-protein Oatmeal

Ingredients

- 1 cup of cooked oatmeal, prepared as instructed on the package
- ½ cup of fortified milk
- 2 teaspoons of sugar, honey, or brown sugar
- 1 small jar of baby food bananas
- Cinnamon to taste (optional)

Instructions

Mix all the ingredients together and serve hot.

Main Dishes for Puréed Food and Mechanical Soft Food Diets

Soufflé

This is appropriate for a puréed or mechanical soft diet.

Ingredients

- ¼ cup of butter
- ¼ cup of flour
- 1 ½ cup of milk or fortified milk
- ¼ teaspoon of salt
- ½ teaspoon of Worcestershire sauce (optional)
- 4 eggs, separated (yolks and whites in different bowls)
- ½ pound of low-fat cheddar cheese

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 350° F.
2. Melt the butter in a saucepan.
3. Stir in the flour until it's well blended.
4. Remove from heat.
5. Add the milk and cook until thickened.
6. Turn off the heat.
7. Add the cheese and stir until melted.
8. Let the mixture cool
9. Beat in the egg yolks one at a time.
10. In a separate bowl, whip the egg whites until they're stiff.
11. Fold (mix gently, in small amounts at a time) the whipped egg whites into the sauce.
12. Pour the mixture into a 2-quart size casserole dish.
13. Bake for 30 to 45 minutes.

Cottage Cheese Pie

This recipe is only for those on a mechanical soft diet.

Ingredients

- 3 medium eggs or egg substitute
- 2 springs of parsley, chopped
- 1 pound of cottage cheese
- 1 small onion, diced
- ½ cup of Parmesan cheese
- ½ cup of mozzarella cheese, diced or grated
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Cornmeal

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. Mix eggs, cottage cheese, onion, Parmesan cheese, mozzarella cheese, and parsley together in a bowl.
3. Grease a 9-inch glass pie pan with oil.
4. Sprinkle cornmeal lightly to cover the entire pan.
5. Pour the mixture into the pie pan.
6. Bake for 45 minutes.
7. Place a toothpick into the center of the pie. If it comes out dry, then it's done.

Quiche Custard

This is a puréed diet version.

Ingredients

- ¼ of an onion, chopped finely
- 1 tablespoon of butter
- 1 tablespoon of Parmesan cheese
- ¼ cup of milk, fortified milk, or soy milk
- ¼ cup of heavy cream
- 1 egg or egg substitute
- ¼ cup of grated cheese (Swiss, cheddar, or mozzarella)
- Pinch of salt
- Pinch of nutmeg

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 350 °F.
2. Sauté the onion in the butter until the butter melts.
3. Place onion, milk, cream, and egg in blender.
4. Blend until onions are puréed.
5. Place the cheeses into a small, greased casserole dish.
6. Pour egg mixture and seasonings over the cheese.
7. Place the casserole dish in a large pan with hot water.
8. Bake until the mixture sets, about 25 to 30 minutes.

Sweet Potato Pie

This dish can be eaten as is by people on a mechanical soft diet. It must be mashed or puréed for those who are on a puréed diet.

Ingredients

- 1 ½ cups of cooked mashed sweet potatoes (or one 15-ounce can of pumpkin purée)
- 1 can of evaporated skim milk
- ½ teaspoon of nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon of cinnamon
- ½ cup of sugar (increase to 1 cup if you prefer a sweeter pie or want to add more calories)
- Cornmeal

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 350° F.
2. Mix the sweet potatoes (or pumpkin) with the evaporated milk and spices.
3. Add the sugar and mix.
4. Grease a 9-inch pie pan with oil.
5. Sprinkle the pan with cornmeal to cover it.
6. Shake off the extra cornmeal.
7. Bake for 45 minutes.
8. Place a toothpick into the center of the pie and pull it out. If it comes out dry, then it's done.

Chicken Tamale Pie

Ingredients

- ½ cup of cornmeal (or polenta)
- 2 cups of chicken broth
- 1 to 2 cups of cooked chicken, cut up
- 1 cup (8-ounce can) of tomato sauce
- Dash of garlic powder
- Dash of oregano
- Dash of thyme
- Grated parmesan or cheddar cheese

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 350° F.
2. Cook the cornmeal in the chicken broth until it's thick.
3. Cool it slightly and spread it into a greased casserole dish.
4. Grind or purée the chicken according to your needs.
5. Spread the chicken on top of the cornmeal mixture.
6. Season the tomato sauce with garlic, oregano, and thyme.
7. Spread the tomato sauce on top of the chicken.
8. Sprinkle cheese over the layer of tomato sauce.
9. Bake for 30 minutes or until the cheese melts.

Meatloaf

Ingredients

- 1 ½ pounds of lean ground beef or turkey
- 2 cloves of garlic, minced
- 1 cup of dry bread crumbs
- 1 egg, beaten
- ¼ cup of minced onion
- 1 tablespoon of Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon of chopped parsley
- 2 tablespoons of tomato sauce
- 1 teaspoon of salt (optional)

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 350° F.
2. Mix all the ingredients thoroughly.
3. Spread the mixture in an ungreased 9 x 5 x 3-inch loaf pan.
4. Bake for 1½ hours.

If you're on a puréed diet, you can place the cooked meat loaf in a blender with some liquid and blend it to the consistency you need.

Side Dishes for Puréed Food and Mechanical Soft Food Diets

Winter Squash and Carrot Purée

Ingredients

- 1 butternut squash (3 pounds, cut in half, lengthwise with the seeds removed)
- 4 carrots, thinly sliced
- 1 clove of garlic, thinly sliced
- ¼ teaspoon of thyme
- 1 tablespoon of unsalted butter, cut into small pieces
- 2 cups of water
- Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 350° F.
2. Set the squash, cut side down, on a lightly oiled baking sheet.
3. Bake it for 45 minutes or until soft.
4. Combine the carrots, garlic, thyme, and water in a saucepan.
5. Cover and bring to a boil, then simmer over low heat for 20 minutes or until the carrots are tender.
6. Transfer the contents from the pan to a food processor and purée.
7. Scoop the squash out of its skin and purée it with the carrots.
8. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
9. Spread the purée on a buttered, shallow baking dish.
10. Dot with the butter.
11. Bake for 20 minutes or until hot and serve.

Lima Bean Purée

Ingredients

- 8 ounces of large, dry lima beans
- 3 cups of water or vegetable broth
- ½ teaspoon of salt
- 1 teaspoon (or more) of olive oil

Instructions

1. Sort the beans, throwing away any stones or damaged beans.
2. Wash the beans in a sieve under cold water and drain.
3. Place them in a saucepan or pot.
4. Add the water and salt.
5. Bring the mixture to a boil.
6. Cover, reduce the heat to low, and boil gently for 45 minutes, until the beans are very tender.
7. Transfer the mixture (there should be about 3 cups, including the liquid) to a food processor.
8. Add the oil and process for 20 to 30 seconds until very smooth.
9. You can also use your favorite beans or chickpeas in place of the lima beans.

Butternut Squash Purée

Ingredients

- 1 large butternut squash
- 1 tablespoon of maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon of butter or margarine

Instructions

1. Peel the squash and cut it into small pieces.
2. Boil until tender.
3. Mash the squash with a fork.
4. Mix the mashed squash with maple syrup and butter or margarine.

Desserts for Puréed Food and Mechanical Soft Food Diets

Peach Sauce

You can put this sauce over ice cream or frozen yogurt, or you can eat it on its own. Those on a mechanical soft diet can also use it to soften cakes.

Ingredients

- Canned peaches (any size)

Instructions

Drain the syrup from the peaches. Blend the peaches until they're smooth. Store in the refrigerator.

Puréed Fresh Fruits

You can purée any fruit in a baby food grinder, blender, or food processor. Make sure to remove any peels, seeds or stems. Sprinkle apples with lemon juice to avoid browning. You can add cinnamon or mix a few different kinds of fruit together for a fruit punch flavor.

Peaches and Cream

Ingredients

- 1 banana
- 1 peach
- ½ cup of ice cubes
- 2 tablespoons of plain yogurt
- Peach nectar

Instructions

1. Place the banana, peach, ice cubes, and yogurt into a blender.
2. Blend until smooth.
3. Add enough peach nectar to reach the 16-ounce mark on the blender.
4. Blend until smooth.

Ricotta Cherry Mousse

Ingredients

- 1 pound (2 cups) of ricotta cheese
- 3 tablespoons of sifted powdered sugar
- ¼ teaspoon of almond extract
- 1 teaspoon of vanilla extract
- 2 cups of dark cherries, sliced, with pits removed (or use frozen unsweetened cherries if fresh ones are not available)
- ½ cup of semisweet chocolate chips, ground to a coarse meal in a blender

Instructions

1. Put the ricotta in a medium-size mixing bowl.
2. Beat the ricotta with an electric mixer at high speed for about 3 minutes.
3. Slowly add sugar.
4. Stir in the extracts.
5. Cover and chill.
6. Fifteen minutes before you serve the mousse, fold in the cherries.

Serve it topped with the ground chocolate.

For more information about puréed food and mechanical soft food diets, call 212-639-7312 to set up a consult with a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist.

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

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