



**Royal Surrey  
County Hospital**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# **Soft Fork Mashable Diet (Category E)**

**Nutrition & Dietetics Department and  
Speech & Language Therapy Department**

**Patient information leaflet**

## Who is this leaflet for?

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The information here-in is if you:

- Have been advised to follow a Category E soft fork mashable diet by your Speech and Language Therapist
- Need ideas which will help you to increase your nutritional intake whilst on a soft fork mashable diet

This advice is for short term use only, it is important to be referred to a Dietitian if you need to take food in a soft form for several months. A Dietitian can ensure that you are getting all the nutrition you need.

If you have been advised to have thickened fluids by your Speech and Language Therapist then please ensure all fluids taken are thickened appropriately. This includes all sauces, gravy and juice included with meals.

## Why is nutrition important?

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A soft fork mashable diet may be restricting and you may find you eat less than normal. It is important to make sure you are getting enough calories from your diet to keep your weight stable. This will help you feel well.

You may need to change the balance of your diet to include more energy rich food and drinks. This means that high calorie or 'unhealthy' foods can be good for you.

### Key tips

- Eat 'little and often'
- Try to include a small snack or nourishing drink between meals
- Have a dessert after meals (or as a snack)
- Use sauces, butter, gravy, cream or custard to soften foods and keep them moist
- Soften foods by chopping, mincing, and mashing
- Try to make sure you chew foods well

- Take small sips of a drink to help with swallowing – ensure these drinks are the correct consistency as recommended by your Speech and Language Therapist
- Avoid foods that need a lot of chewing or don't break down well when chewed, e.g. bread, whole meat and pastry

A soft fork mashable diet should always be moist with only soft lumps, which can be easily chewed. Some foods are already soft enough to eat, but others may need to be mashed with a fork and served with extra gravy or sauce.

## What foods do I need to avoid?

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Some foods are high risk and soft fork mashable diets should not include foods that are:

- **Chewy** (e.g. toffees)
- **Crunchy** (e.g. nuts/toast, flaky pastry, dry biscuits, crisps)
- **Stringy** (e.g. green beans, pineapple, celery, lettuce)
- **Dry and Crumbly** (e.g. biscuits, cake, toast or samosas)
- **Mixed Consistency** (e.g. yoghurt with fruit pieces)
- **Have outside skins** (e.g. peas, sweetcorn and grapes)
- **Sticky foods** (e.g. marshmallows, chocolate)

## What can I eat for breakfast?

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- Porridge or Ready Brek®\*
- Weetabix®\*
- Pureed sweetened fruit – tinned fruit, stewed fruit, fruit compote\*
- Full fat smooth yoghurt or fromage frais
- Glass of fruit juice, milkshake or smoothie
- Plain or cheese omelette, scrambled or soft boiled egg

\*If on thickened fluids ensure there is no free milk or juice

## What can I eat for a main meal?

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### Meat and alternatives

- Shepherd's pie, cottage pie, corned beef hash
- Minced cooked meats with gravy or sauce
- Small pieces of tender meat e.g. casserole, stew, hotpot
- Poached fish in sauce (check for bones)
- Fish pie, fish mornay (without prawns, peas etc)
- Tinned fish (tuna, salmon) with mayonnaise or sauce
- Scrambled egg, cheese omelette, egg mayonnaise
- Cheese sauce e.g. cauliflower cheese, macaroni cheese
- Dhal if lentils are cooked until soft and then pureed down

### Starchy Foods

- Mashed or boiled potatoes, sweet potato, yams or plantain
- Mash the inside of a jacket potato with butter and a soft filling e.g. tuna mayonnaise, cream cheese (remember don't eat the skin)
- Tinned spaghetti or ravioli
- Well cooked and chopped pasta with a smooth sauce

### Vegetables

Fresh, frozen, or tinned vegetables – cooked until soft and mashed down (avoid high risk vegetables).

## What can I eat for dessert?

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- Milk puddings e.g. custard, rice pudding, semolina, tapioca
- Sponge pudding or cake with no dried fruit or nuts (soaked with cream or custard to soften)
- Blancmange, mousse, fruit fool, trifle, milk jelly
- Stewed fruit with pips and skins removed with custard/ cream/ crème fraiche
- Smooth yoghurt, fromage frais, crème caramel
- Ice cream, sorbet (avoid if on thickened fluids)
- Full fat Greek yoghurt with honey

## What can I eat for a snack meal?

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- Bowl of creamy smooth soup (may need to be thickened using potato or thickener)
- Well cooked and chopped pasta mixed with Cheese spread or cream cheese
- Dips e.g. sour cream, houmous, taramasalata, smooth guacamole
- Tinned spaghetti or ravioli
- Avocado with flaked crab meat in a cocktail sauce
- Scrambled, poached or soft boiled eggs or egg mayonnaise
- Plain or Cheese omelette
- Sandwiches with a soft filling but only if assessed as suitable by your Speech and Language Therapist

## What sweet snacks can I eat between meals?

- 'Dunked' biscuits in tea or a warm milky drink (drink thickened if on thickened fluids)
- Sponge cake soaked with cream/cake (no dried fruit or nuts)
- Fruit fools, mousses, instant whips or crème caramel
- Milky puddings e.g. custard, rice pudding
- Smooth yoghurt or fromage frais
- Ice-cream, mini ice-creams, choc ices, frozen yoghurt (only if not on thickened fluids)
- Bowl of cereal e.g. Weetabix® or porridge

## What savoury snacks can I eat between meals?

- Corn snacks e.g. Skips®, Wotsits®, Quavers® – as advised by your Speech and Language Therapist
- Dips e.g. sour cream, houmous, taramasalata, smooth guacamole

## What can I drink?

It is desirable to include at least 8-10 cups (6-8 mugs) of fluid per day to prevent dehydration. This may be a lot if you have a small appetite. Spread them evenly throughout the day and try not to drink with meals, as you may find this fills you up. (don't forget to thicken if on thickened fluids).

Choose nourishing drinks, such as:

- Cold milk, milkshake or yoghurt drinks
- Hot milky drinks e.g. coffee, hot chocolate, cocoa, malted milk, Ovaltine, Horlicks, Milo
- Full sugar fizzy drinks or squash/cordial added to water or lemonade – fizzy drinks only if approved by your Speech and Language Therapist

- Fruit juices or smoothies
- Nesquik®, Crusha® syrup or Complan Shakes® (flavoured or unflavoured)
- Build-up® or 'gourmet' smooth soups

## What if I am losing weight?

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If you notice you are losing weight, the following tips may help you:

- Ensure you are having at least 6 small meals, snacks or nourishing drinks during the day
- Aim to have a pint of full cream milk everyday. (Thicken if necessary) This can be drunk as milk or used in cooking or blending foods such as porridge or cereal
- Avoid foods labelled 'low calorie'; 'diet' or 'low fat' and choose 'full fat' options. These may be labelled as 'luxury' or 'thick and creamy'
- 'Fortify' your meals, snacks and fluids by adding sugar, syrup, honey, jam, cream, butter, spread, cheese, yoghurt or ice cream (see table on page 8)
- A full plate of food can put you off eating. Try having your food on a smaller plate, you can always go back for more!
- Try to make the most of the time of day when your appetite is best.
- There is no need to stick to traditional mealtime foods. Breakfast cereal can make a good evening snack
- Don't fill up on low energy foods such as fruit and vegetables
- Try Complan® and Build-Up® soups and shakes (thickened if on thickened fluids). These are available from chemists and supermarkets, and can be drunk between meals
- Fortify your milk. This is a good way to get extra protein into your diet. Add 2-3 tablespoons of milk powder to a pint of milk and mix well. Keep refrigerated and use instead of milk in drinks and with food

## How do I add extra nutrition to my food?

You may find it difficult to eat large amounts at meals. Try to enrich food and drinks by adding extra ingredients using the table below:

Add sugar, jam, honey to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Cereal or porridge</li><li>■ Puddings</li><li>■ Hot Drinks, milkshakes or smoothies</li></ul>
Add extra fats (e.g. butter, margarine, spread, oils, mayonnaise) to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Mashed potato</li><li>■ Pasta dishes</li><li>■ Sauces</li></ul>
Add cream, crème fraîche, full cream milk to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Sauces and soups</li><li>■ Mashed potato or pasta dishes</li><li>■ Puddings and cakes</li><li>■ Cereal or porridge</li><li>■ Milkshakes or smoothies</li></ul>
Add grated cheese to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Sauces and soups</li><li>■ Mashed potato or pasta dishes</li><li>■ Scrambled eggs or omelettes</li><li>■ Tinned pasta</li></ul>
Add skimmed milk powder to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Milk (see recipe on page 7)</li><li>■ Porridge</li><li>■ Mashed potato</li><li>■ Creamy sauces and soups</li><li>■ Custard and milky puddings</li><li>■ Milkshakes</li></ul>
Add cream, evaporated or condensed milk, yoghurt, crème fraîche, custard or ice cream to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Puddings and cakes</li><li>■ Stewed fruit</li><li>■ Jelly</li></ul>

## Nourishing drink recipes

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Here are a few nutritious drink recipes for you to try at home. Make them by placing all the ingredients together in a blender and mixing well until smooth. (NB. Some recipes contain nuts).

Don't forget to add your thickener if needed to achieve the correct consistency.

### Tips

- Try using different appropriate fruits to vary the taste and make up your own combinations
- Use fresh, frozen or tinned fruit
- Stew or microwave fruit such as apples
- Add extra honey, sugar or syrup to sweeten
- Add extra whole milk, natural yoghurt or cream cheese to make them less sweet
- Add extra milk or fruit juice to make them thinner

### Rich banana milkshake

- 150ml whole milk
- 50ml double cream
- 2 scoops vanilla ice cream
- 100ml condensed milk
- 2 tablespoons smooth peanut butter
- 1 banana

### Peanut and strawberry smoothie

- A few handfuls of strawberries
- 3 heaped tablespoons smooth peanut butter
- 1 large banana
- 200ml Greek yoghurt
- 200ml whole milk
- 50ml double cream

## **Very berry milkshake**

- A few handfuls of raspberries, strawberries and blackberries
- 250ml whole milk
- 3 tablespoons brown sugar
- 25g cocoa powder
- Few drops vanilla essence
- 20ml double cream

## **Fruity shake**

- Mixed fruit e.g. peeled apple, banana, strawberry or peeled peach
- 300g Greek Yoghurt
- 1 tin of fruit in syrup e.g. peaches or pears
- 100ml smooth orange juice
- Ice cubes (optional)

## **Ice-cream float**

- 1 large glass lemonade, cola or cream soda
- 1 scoop vanilla ice cream

Blend together or allow ice-cream to melt.

## **Iced latté**

- 200ml whole milk
- 2 teaspoons coffee powder
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 1 scoop ice cream

Dissolve the coffee in a little hot milk. Add the remaining milk, sugar and ice cream. Whisk and chill thoroughly.

## **Honey and lemon cup**

- 200ml whole milk
- 2 dessert spoons of honey
- Dash of lemon juice

Heat the milk with the honey. Remove from the heat, add the lemon juice and serve immediately.

## **Morning refresher**

- 300ml whole milk
- 1 heaped tablespoon milk powder
- 1 pot (150g) thick and creamy yoghurt
- 1 ripe banana

## **Energy soup in a cup**

- 200ml whole milk
- 1 heaped tablespoon milk powder
- 1 packet of smooth 'cuppa-soup'

Heat the milk and whisk in soup in a cup and milk powder.

## **Soup swirl**

- 200ml whole milk
- 1 tin smooth condensed soup
- 20ml cream

Heat the soup and milk in a pan. Pour into a bowl and swirl in the cream.

## **Luxury hot chocolate**

- 250ml whole milk
- 3 tablespoons brown sugar
- 25g cocoa powder
- Few drops vanilla essence
- 20ml double cream

Heat the milk and sugar until the chocolate dissolves – do not boil but let the mixture get steaming hot. Reduce the heat and add the vanilla essence and double cream.

## **Reference source**

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- Gandy J. (ed) (2014) Manual of Dietetic Practice, 5th Edition. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell
- Dysphagia Diet Food Texture Descriptors (April 2011)

The information in this leaflet was correct at time of writing.

Please note that product changes are not the responsibility of the author. If you have any questions about the information in this leaflet please contact your GP or Consultant and ask to be referred to a Registered Dietitian.







## Dietetic Department contact details

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If you have any questions about the information in this leaflet please contact the Dietetic Department at the address below:

### **Nutrition & Dietetics Department**

Royal Surrey County Hospital, Egerton Road, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 7XX.

**Switchboard telephone:** 01483 571122 **ext** 4202

**Telephone:** 01483 464119

**Fax:** 01483 464868

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## PALS and Advocacy contact details

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Contact details of independent advocacy services can be provided by our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who are located on the right hand side as you enter the main reception area. PALS are also your first point of contact for health related issues, questions or concerns surrounding RSCH patient services.

**Telephone:** 01483 402757

**Email:** [rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net)

**Opening hours:** 9.00am–3.00pm, Monday to Friday

If you would like information documents in large print, on tape or in another language or form please contact PALS.

Past review date: January 2018

Future review date: January 2021

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**PIN180109–1425**

