



**Royal Surrey
County Hospital**
NHS Foundation Trust

Liquid diet

Nutrition & Dietetics Department

Patient information leaflet

Who is this leaflet for?

The information in this leaflet is for you if you:

- Have been advised to follow a liquid diet
- Have difficulties swallowing food and therefore need to follow a liquid diet
- Need ideas which will help you to increase your nutritional intake whilst on a liquid diet

It is important to be referred to a Dietitian if you need to take food in a liquid form for more than 2 weeks. A Dietitian can ensure that you are getting all the nutrition you need.

How much should I drink?

It can be difficult to have enough nutrition in a liquid form. Liquids are often low in energy so it is important to choose nourishing ones to help prevent weight loss and meet your nutritional needs.

- Most people need at least 4 pints (approximately 2 litres) of fluid per day. If you have a dry mouth or are not passing urine as often as normal or it is darker than normal, increase the amount of fluid you are drinking. If symptoms persist speak to your Doctor.
- Weigh yourself weekly. If you are losing weight each week contact your Dietitian or Doctor.

How do I liquidise food?

- Use a food processor or hand blender
- Cut up food into small portions prior to blending
- If using meat or fish, remove skin, gristle, fat or bones, cut into small pieces then cook well before blending
- Add milk, cream, stock, gravy, sauce or soup to cover blades and blend at maximum speed until it reaches the consistency of a smooth soup
- You may need to sieve some foods to ensure that they are fully smooth

What should I drink?

The following drinks provide calories, protein and other essential vitamins and minerals. Try to avoid any fluids which contain lumps or ensure you blend until smooth. These drinks should form the basis of your diet. Always use whole milk in drinks and choose full fat foods.

- Whole milk
- Smooth yoghurts
- Yoghurt drinks
- Milk shakes
- Smooth thick soups
- Fruit smoothies
- Custard
- Ice Cream (melted)
- Milky Coffee
- Hot Chocolate
- Malted milk drink/Ovaltine®/Horlicks®
- Smooth thin milk puddings

Aim to have at least 1 pint of whole milk every day. If you are unable to tolerate cow's milk, a variety of different milks are available. Ensure that a dairy alternative is enriched with calcium.

Try making nourishing milkshakes and fruit smoothies in a blender at home.

Fortified milk

This is made by adding milk powder to whole milk to increase the amount of protein and energy it contains. Whisk 4 tablespoons of milk powder into a pint of milk and use it for your milkshakes or to thin down foods such as soups or smooth milk puddings.

Commercial products

It is possible to purchase products from your local pharmacy or some supermarkets to supplement your diet, e.g. Complan, Aymes Shake or Meritene. These are made in a powdered form. Follow the instructions on the packet when making them up, and preferably use whole milk rather than water. There are higher energy supplement drinks which can be prescribed by a GP. If you feel that you may benefit from these you should discuss this with your Dietitian.

There are other drinks available on the market which may provide a further variety of flavours. For example:

- Fuel 10k breakfast drink®
- Ufit Pro50 high protein®
- Up & Go®
- Upbeat Protein Drink®
- Weetabix on the go protein®
- Weetabix on the go®

Extra vitamins

Fruit juices and vegetable juices, such as tomato juice or blended vegetable juice, will provide you with vitamins and minerals. Include these in your diet every day.

What about medications?

Some medications are available in liquid form. Speak to your GP or pharmacist to see if your current medications can be converted to liquid form.

Will I get constipated on a liquid diet?

Liquid diets can be low in fibre so may lead to constipation. To increase the fibre in your diet choose soups with blended vegetables, lentils or beans and try blending fresh fruit with milk or yoghurt. You could also include fruit smoothies and commercial drinks with added fibre.

How can I add extra calories to my diet?

If you are losing weight you may need to 'fortify' the liquids you drink. The following products can be mixed into liquids to add extra calories and help prevent weight loss.

- Cream / Butter / Olive Oil / Vegetable oil
- Smooth nut butters / tahini
- Sugar / Syrup / Honey
- Evaporated / Condensed Milk / Skimmed milk Powder
- Chocolate / Toffee or Fudge Sauce
- Grated Cheese (to melt)
- Fruit Sauces
- Crème Fraiche / Sour Cream / Fromage Frais
- Yoghurt

How do I get enough protein?

Dairy products will provide some protein in your diet. If you eat meat or fish then add these to soups and blend well. You can also use beans and pulses in soups but ensure no skins remain (you may need to use a sieve).

Smooth peanut butter can be added to soups or smoothies as another useful source of protein.

Ready meals can be blended with extra liquid to make them a liquid consistency.

Soya products and Quorn® can be cooked and blended into soups or a blended meal.

Dried skimmed milk powder can be added to drinks or food.

Soups

Soups can provide variety in a liquid diet. If you are making soup then choose creamy soups.

Tinned, cartons or packet soups can also be used. However, bear in mind that soups often have a low energy and protein content. Add extra calories using some of the ideas above.

What can I add to my diet for taste?

These fluids do not contain many nutrients, but can be incorporated into your diet for added taste and variety.

- Bovril
- Oxo
- Tea
- Coffee
- Ginger Beer
- Lucozade®
- Fizzy Drinks
- Fruit Squashes
- Instant Packet Soups

Flavour

If you would like some extra variety and flavour, try adding some of the following to your soups.

- Worcester Sauce
- Tabasco Sauce
- Mint Sauce
- Parmesan Cheese
- Pepper
- Chilli
- Tomato ketchup
- Mustard
- Smooth peanut butter
- Any hot sauce
- Yeast extract spread e.g. Marmite® or Vegemite®

What would a daily meal plan look like?

Eat little and often, for example 5-6 small meals instead of 3 large meals

Breakfast

- Glass of fruit juice
- Large serving of smooth yoghurt, yoghurt drink or smoothie
- Cereal in a bottle drink

Morning

- Milky coffee e.g. Latté or tea with whole milk and sugar or
- Large mug of Hot Chocolate with cream or
- Glass of lemonade (full sugar)

Lunch

- Large bowl of smooth soup made with whole milk and grated cheese
- Liquidised main meal
- Custard with extra milk or cream

Afternoon

- Meritene soup or Complan shake or milkshake or
- Milky coffee with whole milk and sugar or
- Glass of tomato juice

Evening meal

(choose between soup or pudding if both seems too much)

- Large bowl of cream of vegetable soup with 20ml added cream
- Liquidised main meal
- 2 scoops of ice cream with chocolate sauce

Bedtime

- Large mug of malted milk drink e.g. Horlicks® or Ovaltine® made with whole milk

Recipes

Homemade Milky Drinks and Smoothies

Luxury Hot Chocolate

Ingredients

- 200ml full fat milk
- 2 tablespoons skimmed milk powder
- 2 tablespoons hot chocolate powder
- 1 tablespoon double cream or squirting cream on top
- 1-2 drops of peppermint essence for flavour (optional)

Directions

- Pour 200ml milk into a pan and add the skimmed milk powder and hot chocolate
- Turn on the heat and stir or mix with a whisk until the powder has dissolved
- Keep stirring and heat until just boiling
- Remove from the heat and pour into a mug
- Add the cream and serve

1 portion contains:

- 419 calories
- 13.4g protein

Iced latté

Ingredients

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

Directions

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

1 portion contains:

- 220 calories
- 7.7g protein

Basic fruit smoothie

Ingredients

- ½ pint full fat milk
- 1 scoop ice cream
- 100g full fat smooth yoghurt
- Add a variety of soft fruits e.g. banana, mango, peaches, raspberries, strawberries

Method

- Blend all ingredients together
- Sieve to ensure fully smooth

1 portion contains:

- 471 Calories
- 15g Protein

Peanut and Strawberry smoothie

Ingredients (2 portions)

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

Directions

- Place all the ingredients into a blender and blend until smooth

1 portion contains:

- 450 calories
- 15g protein

Banana Oat Shake

Ingredients

- 1 banana (chopped)
- 200ml full fat milk
- 2 tablespoons full fat yoghurt
- Pinch cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon honey
- For extra protein add 1 tablespoon skimmed milk powder (2g)
- For extra calories add 1 tablespoon double cream (66 calories)

Directions

- Place all the ingredients into a blender and blend for 30-60 seconds until smooth
- Pour into a glass and serve

1 portion contains:

- 250 calories
- 8.9g protein

Homemade Juice Style Drinks

Lemon and lime sublime

Ingredients

- 100ml lemonade
- 100ml lime juice
- 100ml apple juice
- 2½ tablespoons lemon curd
- 1 tablespoon golden syrup
- One teaspoon (5g) egg white powder (optional)

Directions

- Mix all ingredients together in a blender
- If using egg white powder gradually mix the 'neat' curd into the egg white powder using a spoon, then when it is combined,
- Gradually mix in the fruit juice.

1 portion contains:

- 303 calories (325 calories with egg white powder)
- 1.5g protein (6g protein with egg white powder)

Mango Lassi

Ingredients

- 125g natural Greek yoghurt
- 200ml mango pulp (available in most supermarkets)
- Water to dilute
- Squeeze of lemon juice (optional for a sharper/tarter flavour)
- Sugar or honey to taste (optional for a sweeter flavour)

Directions

- Mix or blend until smooth

1 portion contains:

- 300 calories
- 11.3g protein

Nourishing 'Shots'

These recipes are for 'shot'-style drinks which will give you lots of extra energy in a small volume. They are especially useful if you struggle to finish bigger drinks.

Fortified lemon cream

Ingredients (2 portions)

- 300ml double cream
- 70g caster sugar
- Juice of 1–1 ½ lemons
- 30g skimmed milk powder

Directions

- Put the cream and milk powder in a small saucepan
- Gently heat until the milk powder has dissolved
- Add the sugar
- Bring to the boil and boil for 3 minutes
- Thoroughly mix in the lemon juice to taste
- Pour into 3 small dessert bowls and chill or drink as 2 x 50ml 'shots' each day
- Will keep covered in fridge for 3 days

2 x 50ml portions contains:

- 590 calories
- 5g protein

Fortified chocolate caramel cream

Ingredients (2 portions)

- 150ml double cream
- 30g skimmed milk powder
- 30ml full fat milk
- 2 x standard size (51g) Mars or similar nougat-caramel chocolate bars

Directions

- Put cream and milk powder in a small saucepan
- Gently heat until milk powder has dissolved
- Add finely chopped Mars Bars. Heat gently, stirring all the time, until Mars Bars have completely melted
- Pour into 3 small dessert bowls and chill or drink as 2 x 40ml 'shots'
- Will keep covered in fridge for 3 days

2 x 40mls portion contains:

- 424 calories
- 6g protein

Nutty Choc shot

Ingredients

- 50g Nutella®
- 100ml evaporated milk

Directions

- Put Nutella® and evaporated milk in a small saucepan
- Gently heat until Nutella® has dissolved
- Allow to cool and keep refrigerated.

3 x 50ml portions contain:

- 435 calories
- 10.6g protein

Cream shots

Ingredients

- 30ml double cream
- 10ml flavoured syrup of your choice e.g. Crusha® syrup, Monin® syrup

Directions

- Combine cream and syrup
- You may want to make up the whole amount at one time

3 x 40ml portions contain:

- 518 calories
- 1.2g protein

Soup

If you plan on making soups, try making it in batches and freezing as individual portions.

Tips:

- Try adding in some well cooked rice, pasta or potato to add extra energy. Blend and sieve to ensure fully smooth.
- Add beans, lentils or other pulses into soups to add extra protein. Blend and sieve to ensure fully smooth
- Add extra full fat milk or 2 tablespoons double cream to soups to make them thinner if required and add extra calories

Energy soup in a cup

Ingredients

- 200mls whole milk
- 1 packet of soup in a cup
- 1 heaped tablespoon milk powder

Directions

- Heat the milk and whisk in the soup in a cup
- Add milk powder

1 portion contains:

- 273 Calories
- 12.6g Protein

Tomato soup (serves 1)

Ingredients

- ½ tin (200g) chopped tomatoes
- 30ml (2 tablespoons) double cream
- ½ pint full fat milk
- ½ tin cream of tomato soup

Directions

- Blend all ingredients together and serve warm

1 portion contains:

- 463 Calories
- 14g Protein

Potato and cheese soup (makes 3-4 portions)

Ingredients

- 50g butter
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 3 medium potatoes, peeled and diced
- 750ml of vegetable or chicken stock
- 150ml full fat milk
- 200g full fat cream cheese

Directions

- Melt butter and cook onion and garlic gently over heat
- Add potatoes, cover and cook for 10 minutes
- Add stock and milk and cook for 20 minutes
- Add cheese and blend until smooth
- Add extra milk or cream to thin if required

1 portion contains (above divided into 4 portions):

- 435 Calories
- 9g Protein

Chicken soup (serves 1)

Ingredients

- 85g (1 small breast) cooked chicken
- ½ tin (200g) cream of chicken soup
- 30ml (2 tablespoons) double cream
- 50ml full fat milk (or more if a thinner texture is needed)

Directions

- Blend the cooked chicken for approximately 20 seconds
- Add the soup, cream and milk and blend together
- Sieve to ensure smooth
- Heat before serving

1 portion contains:

- 270 Calories
- 26g Protein

Beef and vegetable soup (serves 1)

Ingredients

- 50g corned beef
- 30ml (2 tablespoons) double cream
- ½ tin (200g) of beef and vegetable soup
- 50ml full fat milk
- 1 tablespoon mashed potato (mixed with cream and milk)

Directions

- Cook and mash potatoes
- Add cream and milk
- Chop corned beef into small pieces; blend all ingredients together until smooth
- Add extra milk if required to thin down

1 portion contains:

- 397 Calories
- 21g Protein

Ham and pea soup (serves 1)

Ingredients

- 45ml (3 tablespoons) double cream
- ½ tin (200g) ham and pea soup
- 55g cooked ham
- 50ml full fat milk

Directions

- Blend all ingredients together until smooth and heat gently to required temperature

1 portion contains:

- 498 Calories
- 18g Protein

Broccoli and stilton soup (serves 1)

Ingredients

- 30g (1 small matchbox sized piece) grated cheese
- 30ml (2 tablespoons) double cream
- 125ml full fat milk
- ½ tin (200g) broccoli and stilton soup

Directions

- Blend all ingredients together until smooth.
- Serve warm.

1 portion contains:

- 435 Calories
- 15g Protein

Main meals

Thai chicken (serves 1)

Ingredients

- ½ tablespoon of oil
- ½ tablespoon Thai curry paste
- ½ chicken breast cut into small pieces
- 125mls coconut milk
- ½ onion
- ½ pepper
- 30g cooked rice

Directions

- Fry onion, pepper and chicken in oil and curry paste until cooked
- Add coconut milk and cooked rice until warmed through
- Blend and sieve to ensure fully smooth

1 portion contains:

- 304 Calories
- 20.5g Protein

Spaghetti Bolognese (serves 2)

Ingredients

- 75g spaghetti (or other pasta)
- 750ml beef stock
- 2 teaspoons tomato puree
- 200g chopped tomatoes
- 200g minced beef
- ½ onion
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 teaspoon mixed herbs
- 1 tablespoon oil

Directions

- Cook pasta according to packet instructions until soft
- Fry onion and garlic in oil until softened
- Add beef and heat until cooked through
- Add tomatoes, herbs, tomato puree and beef stock until warmed through
- Add cooked pasta
- Blend and sieve until smooth

1 portion contains:

- 389 Calories
- 23g Protein

Puddings

Rice Pudding

Ingredients

- ½ tin rice pudding
- 125ml full fat milk
- 45g ready made custard
- 30ml (2 tablespoons) double cream

Directions

- Blend ingredients until smooth
- Add extra milk to thin down if required
- Heat gently to required temperature
- Try adding seedless jam, syrup or honey to flavour

1 portion contains

- 452 Calories
- 12g Protein

Custard (serves 1)

Ingredients

- 1 heaped tablespoon skimmed milk powder
- ½ pint full fat milk
- ½ level tablespoon custard powder
- 1 heaped tablespoon sugar

Directions

- Mix skimmed milk powder with half of the milk
- Bring to the boil, stirring continuously
- Mix the rest of the cold milk with sugar and custard powder then add to the hot milk
- Return to the pan and bring to the boil, stirring continuously

1 portion contains:

- 470 Calories
- 26g Protein

References

Thomas, B. Bishop J. (2007) Manual of Dietetic Practice, 4th Edition. Oxford: Blackwell

This leaflet is produced by the dietetic department at Royal Surrey County Hospital, NHS Foundation Trust. It is not a substitute for dietary advice given to a specific individual by a dietitian. If you need to see a dietitian, ask your GP or consultant for a referral.

Please note that the information in this leaflet was correct at time of writing. The ingredients of manufactured products can change.

Dietetic Department contact details

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

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PALS and Advocacy contact details

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

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.

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