

# SOFT DIET

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## What is a soft diet?

A soft diet generally eliminates foods that are difficult to chew or swallow, and also spicy, fried, or grassy foods. A mechanical soft diet simply eliminates foods that are difficult to chew or swallow.

## Why should I follow a soft diet?

A soft diet is often prescribed as a transitional diet following certain types of surgery or illnesses. It may also be recommended for people who are undergoing radiation therapy to the head, neck or abdominal area. A mechanical soft diet may be prescribed if you are having trouble chewing food, for instance due to lack of teeth, or if you have difficulty swallowing.

## Soft diet basics:

Foods permitted on a soft diet may be naturally soft, or if not, they may be mashed, chewed, or cooked to achieve a soft consistency. Foods that are generally eliminated include: 1) tough meats, 2) raw fruits and vegetables, 3) chewy or crispy breads, 4) nuts and seeds.

Depending on why you need a soft diet, your doctor may also recommend that you avoid grassy foods. Foods that are tolerable on this diet can vary greatly from one person to the next. Work with your doctor or a registered dietitian to determine the types and textures of foods that you can tolerate. Use the below chart as a guide and then customize it to your needs.

Food Group	Foods Recommended	Foods to Avoid
<b>Grains</b>	Cereal (without nuts or dried fruit), Refined breads, crackers, muffins, pancake, or waffles, Pasta Plain, white rice	Whole grain bread, crackers, muffins, pancakes, or waffles, Wild or whole grain rice.
<b>Vegetables</b>	Soft-cooked or canned vegetables, Raw salad greens or tomatoes, Cooked potatoes without the skin (except fried or chips)	Fried potatoes, Hard, raw vegetables with large seeds or tough skins
<b>Fruits</b>	Soft raw fruits (without skin) Cooked and canned fruits (without skin)	Dried fruits Fruits with skins, seeds, or pits Coconut
<b>Milk</b>	Milk and milk drinks Yogurt Cheese, cottage cheese	Cheese with nuts or seeds
<b>Meats and Beans</b>	Tender meat, pork, poultry and fish Eggs Tofu Smooth Peanut butter	Deli meats, such as salami or pepperoni Bacon Anything fried (including fried eggs) Shellfish Fish with bones Nuts and seeds
<b>Fats and Sweets</b>	Ice cream, sherbet and frozen yogurt Pudding, Plain chocolate Cake and cookies without hard pieces (e.g. chocolate chips, raisin, nuts)	Products with seeds, dried fruit, nuts, or other hard pieces Fruit or nut pies