Soft Diet after Colon Resection  (Updated 10.08)

If your doctor has prescribed a soft diet to rest your colon after surgery, please follow these suggestions to speed your recovery. Typically, a soft diet is recommended for the first 2 to 8 weeks following surgery. You will then slowly advance to a regular diet; depending on your progress and tolerance for food. The foods you tolerate can vary greatly from one person to the next. Use the guidelines below to choose a soft diet and adjust it according to your own needs.

**Key Factors**

- Eat small, frequent meals. We recommend eating 6 times per day, or every 2 to 3 hours.
- Eat foods that are easy to swallow and digest. These usually consist of soft, moist foods such as soup, gelatin, pudding, and yogurt. Avoid gummy foods such as bread and tough meats, as well as spicy, fried, or gas-producing foods.
- To prevent swallowing air, which produces excess gas, avoid drinking through a straw and don’t chew gum or tobacco. Take small bites, chew your food well, and avoid gulping.
- Avoid any foods that you know cause stomach gas and distention, including corn, beans, peas, lentils, onions, broccoli, cauliflower, and cabbage.
- Use a blender to puree foods, such as soup or fruit, to a tolerable consistency.
- To preserve nutrients when cooking foods, steam or microwave vegetables. When boiling potatoes, peel after cooking.

**Eating Guide for a Soft Diet**

A soft diet serves as a transition from liquids to a regular diet. It generally eliminates foods that are difficult to chew or swallow and also spicy, fried, or gas-producing foods.

**To ease digestion, the following foods are generally eliminated:**

- Tough meats.
- Raw fruits and vegetables.
- Chewy or crispy breads.
- Nuts and seeds.
- Fried, greasy foods.
- Spicy foods.
- High fiber foods like whole grain breads and cereals.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Group</th>
<th>Recommended Foods</th>
<th>Foods to Avoid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beverages</td>
<td>Milk, Decaf tea, Powdered drink mixes, Non-citrus juices</td>
<td>Chocolate drinks, Caffeinated drinks, Decaf coffee, Carbonated drinks, Alcohol, Citrus juices</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grains</td>
<td>Ready to eat cereal, Refined bread, Crackers, Plain white rice, Pasta, Pancakes</td>
<td>Whole-grain breads and cereals, Anything with seeds, nuts, raisins, dried fruit, coconut, Whole grain rice, Sweet rolls, coffee cake, donuts, Seasoned crackers, Popcorn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meats and</td>
<td>Tender meat, pork, poultry, fish (baked, broiled, roasted, stewed, or simmered),</td>
<td>Anything fried, Tough meats with gristle, Smoked meats, Sausage, Shellfish, Fatty meats, Cold cuts/lunch meat, Fried eggs, Dried beans, Nuts and seeds, Crunchy peanut butter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beans</td>
<td>Eggs, Tofu, Smooth peanut butter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dairy</td>
<td>Low-fat milk products, Smooth yogurt, Mild cheese, Cottage cheese</td>
<td>Sharp/strong cheeses, Dairy with nuts or seeds, Cheese with peppers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>Soft-cooked or canned vegetables, Fresh lettuce and tomato, Potatoes without</td>
<td>Raw vegetables, tomatoes, tomato sauce, Gas-producing vegetables: broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, onions, cauliflower, corn, green peppers, cucumber, radishes, sauerkraut, Dried beans, peas, and lentils, Fried potatoes or potato chips</td>
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<td>the skin, Peeled white or sweet potatoes (boiled, mashed, baked or creamed)</td>
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Continued...
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<th>Food Group</th>
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</table>
| Fruit      | Soft raw fruits (without skin)  
Cooked and canned fruits  
Fruit juice | Dried fruits  
Fruits with skins, seeds or pits, such as berries, figs or raisins  
All citrus fruits and juices  
Ripe bananas  
Coconut |
| Fats and Sweets | Ice cream, sherbet, and frozen yogurt  
Pudding  
Cake and cookies without hard pieces  
Sugar, syrup, honey, jelly, seedless jam  
Molasses  
Marshmallows  
Butter and margarine  
Mayonnaise and vegetable oils  
Mildly seasoned salad dressings, sauces, and gravies  
Plain cream cheese and sour cream | Spicy salad dressings  
Bacon, bacon fat, ham fat, lard, salt pork  
Fried foods  
Nuts  
Anything with dried fruit, nuts, coconut, candied fruit  
Peanut brittle |