



Elias Darido, MD, FACS

HOUSTON
HEARTBURN
& REFLUX CENTER

Diet After Anti-Reflux Surgery

Most patients are concerned about what they can eat after Nissen fundoplication. Immediately after the surgery, swelling around the esophagus prevents you from swallowing regular food. For this reason, for the first two weeks after surgery you will be permitted liquids only. As healing progresses and swelling goes down, you will advance to mechanically soft diet or blended food. For those two weeks, you will consume moist and soft diet before you introduce regular food around one month after surgery.

This nutritional guideline was put together by Dr Darido to help you make the right dietary choices after surgery. Advancing your diet too fast may lead to complications. The most common complication is food impaction at the lower esophageal sphincter. Retching and dry heaving due to food impaction immediately after surgery may disrupt the wrap. Eat slowly, avoid carbonated beverages, and drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration. Do not take a large gulp. Protein shakes are an important source of proteins for healing after surgery. Avoid protein shakes with high sugar content as these may cause dumping. Dumping occurs when too much sugar is emptied fast from stomach into intestines leading to nausea, diarrhea and abdominal discomfort. Dumping can also occur with certain food items that are labeled as

sugar free, but they contain high concentration of sugar alcohols. Sugar alcohols can cause bloating, diarrhea, and abdominal discomfort. Now that your anti-reflux barrier has been restored you can drink coffee or tea without experiencing any heartburn or discomfort. Just remember to crush all pills until you are tolerating regular diet. If you are taking an extended release type of pill, please ask your doctor to prescribe an alternative pill that can be crushed.

DIET GUIDE After Surgery

- Week 1 & 2: **Liquid Diet**

Anything you can pour out of a cup is considered liquid

Day 1: Clear liquid diet:

Water, Crystal light

Clear broth

Jello-O

Tea and coffee

Diluted fruit or vegetable juice

Gatorade

Day 2 and after: Full liquid diet

Blended soups with no chunks (strained pureed soup): Cream of mushroom soup, potato soup

Yogurt: no added fruit chunks

Milk

Pudding

Ice cream

Protein shakes: Premier, Boost, Ensure

Cream of wheat

Apple sauce

- **Week 3 & 4: Soft Diet**

Anything you can blend in a blender is considered mechanically soft diet.

You can also buy a variety of packaged pureed meals from your local grocery store or online.

Scrambled eggs

Pureed meats: chicken, pork, beef or fish

Cottage cheese

Pureed fruits or cooked vegetables

Canned fruits

Mashed potatoes with no skin

Foods to avoid:

Raw vegetables, dried fruits like raisins, nuts and seeds, popcorn, chips, pretzels, and bread.

- **Week 5 & 6: Solid Diet**

Start to gradually add solid foods to your diet. Advance diet as tolerated.

- **Week 7 & After**

Add bread, tough/chewy meats, and stringy vegetables like asparagus