

# Your diet following jaw surgery

 **Information for patients**  
Sheffield Dietetics



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# Introduction

This leaflet is designed to give you information and advice about what to expect following surgery.

Everyone undergoing this procedure will have difficulty eating and drinking after their surgery. This may be due to:

- the movement of your jaw being restricted by wires and/or elastics.
- acute swelling (oedema) which occurs after surgery
- tenderness from the operation

## **What type of diet will I need after jaw surgery?**

How quickly eating and drinking become easier depends on how quickly your swelling goes down and how much mouth opening you have.

If your mouth opening is limited you will find it difficult to eat or drink the amounts you usually manage. You may only be able to take fluids and a pureed diet for the first 1-2weeks.

Following this, your doctor will advise you when you can start to take very soft foods and build up gradually.

When advised by your doctor or surgeon, you will progress onto a soft diet over the 4 weeks following surgery. It is important to try and get onto a soft diet as soon as you are able to, after your surgery, to help ensure you are getting a variety of nutrients in your diet. The rate at which you progress from one consistency to another will be determined by how limited your mouth opening is.

We recommend that you do not try and chew hard or tough food, for example hard toast, crusty bread, tough meats, raw vegetables, hard fruit, toffees or chewy sweets, for 6-8 weeks after your operation. This is to make sure the jaw bones heal together well. At your regular outpatient appointments the doctor or orthodontist will give you an indication of how much you should be using your jaw to chew. You should also avoid biting into fruit such as uncut apples and crusty bread or pizza crusts while your brace is in place. Please check with your orthodontist if you have any questions about this at your follow up appointments after your surgery.

You may find eating with a teaspoon and using plastic cutlery more comfortable.

## **Is there anything I can do to help with swallowing?**

Below are some suggestions to help you with swallowing during the initial stages following surgery:

Begin with fluids only. As your mouth opening is limited and your mouth is swollen, fluids will be the easiest to manage.

Sit upright and make sure you are not tired when you are trying to drink. Gravity will help the liquid pass into the stomach. Making sure you are not tired when you try to drink will mean the muscles involved in swallowing will work well.

Tip your head back gently when you take a drink as your tongue may be swollen and cannot work well to move fluids to the back of your mouth to swallow. Tipping your head ensures that gravity will carry the fluid to the back of the throat instead.

Try different drinking utensils. If you are having difficulty drinking from a cup you could try a spouted cup, sports bottle or a straw. If your lips are very swollen a large syringe may be helpful to direct fluids to the back of your throat. The nurses can provide you with a syringe.

## **How can I make sure that I get enough nutrition?**

It is important to have regular nourishing liquids and blended meals throughout the day in order to provide an adequate nutritional intake. It will be easier to eat smaller meals 5-6 times per day instead of 3 large meals. Foods can be fortified to add in extra nutrients; ideas for this can be found in this booklet.

## **Will I need supplement drinks?**

Complan™ shake and Meritene™ shake are milk based nutritional supplements which you will need to take whilst on a liquidised diet to provide you with extra energy and protein. For those who enjoy milkshakes, Complan shake and Meritene shake can be bought in a variety of flavours. Try mixing extra items into the shakes such as ice cream, blended fruit, smooth yoghurt, cream and other suitable items to increase variety and energy content. The dietitian may recommend prescription supplements such as Fortisip compact or Fortisip compact protein. If these are required, the dietitian will provide you with them before you are discharged.

If you prefer savoury foods you can also buy Meritene or Complan soups or Complan shake in original flavour. These can be taken alone or mixed into other drinks, soup or main meal recipes. Meritene and Complan shakes and soups can be bought at supermarkets or chemists without a doctor's prescription. Alternative supplement drinks, 'meal replacement' drinks and soups can be purchased from supermarkets or pharmacists. If it is a powder supplement, please ensure you mix it with full fat milk.

If you have any questions about which drinks or soups may be suitable for you, please ask your pharmacist or contact the dietitian.

## **What will I need to have ready at home for after my surgery?**

- Blender or food processor
- Complan shake or Meritene shakes or other meal replacement shakes. You are likely to need several of these per day depending on how much other liquidised food you eat
- Scales to monitor your weight regularly
- Full fat milk and double cream
- Homemade, tinned or packet soups
- Other foods and drinks you enjoy which can be taken in liquid form or added into soups, shakes and meals. See recipe ideas in this booklet

## **How do I liquidise / puree 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 nourishing fluids such as stock, gravy, sauce or soup to cover the blades and blend at maximum speed until it reaches the consistency of a smooth soup
- You will need to sieve some foods to ensure that they are fully smooth
- Use nourishing fluids (for example stock, cream, milk, gravy, soup and sauces) to blend and thin down liquidised food to its required texture
- It may be easier to liquidise meals in bulk then freeze in portions, defrosting and reheating as required

## **Will I get constipated on a liquid diet?**

Keeping some fibre in your diet will help to prevent constipation. Try including vegetables, beans, lentils and other pulses into soups, and include fruit blended into smoothies. It is important to drink regularly over the day to keep hydrated and prevent constipation. Aim for a minimum of 6-8 cups of fluid a day.

## **What sorts of foods should I be including in my diet?**

It is important to try and include all the different food groups into your diet whilst following a liquidised or puree diet.

## Breakfast

<b>Puree / Liquidised</b>	<b>Soft / Easy to chew</b>
Smooth instant oat cereal or porridge	Poached or scrambled eggs
Wheat biscuit cereal soaked in hot or cold milk until smooth	Omelette with cream or cheese
Smooth yoghurt	Cereals soaked in milk until soft – avoid cereals with hard nuts or dried fruit
Mousse or custard	Skinless sausage
Liquidised/ blended soft ripened fruits with seeds or bits removed	Baked beans or tinned spaghetti with Croquette potatoes or potato waffles (fully soaked so no skins)
Smoothies or milk shakes made with full fat milk or ice cream	Yoghurt with soft mashable lumps, no hard biscuit bits, seeds or nuts.
Blended eggs with cream and butter	Smoothies or milk shakes made with full fat milk or ice cream
	Crustless bread can be eaten if it is fully soaked in sauce, such as tinned tomatoes, so that it is moist.
– Also bread could be used when preparing other dishes such as blended into a thick, smooth soup. No crusts, grains or seeds.	– Also bread could be used when preparing other dishes such as blended into a thick, smooth soup. No crusts, grains or seeds.

## Light Meals

<b>Puree / Liquidised</b>	<b>Soft / Easy to chew</b>
Smooth pate or potted meat	Poached or scrambled eggs Omelette (plain or cream / spreadable cheese) Chopped boiled egg in mayonnaise or salad cream
Smooth soup made with full fat milk or cream	Houmous
Pureed potato with cream cheese or cottage cheese	Smooth pate
Puree macaroni cheese	Smooth peanut butter blended into sauces or smoothies
Dahl or smooth houmous	Fish mousse
Smooth peanut butter blended into sauces or smoothies	Spaghetti hoops or tinned baked beans
Liquidised soft, ripened varieties of fresh fruit, tinned fruit, stewed fruit or fruit juices (without bits)	Cheese spread, cottage cheese, cream cheese and other soft cheeses (no rinds)
Smooth, thick yoghurt, fromage frais, soya dessert	Cheese soufflé
Egg custard blended no crusts	Cheese triangles
Smoothies, milkshakes or enriched milk (see adding extra nourishment section)	The inside of jacket potatoes* with margarine or butter and soft filling such as cream cheese, cottage cheese, tuna and mayonnaise or Quorn™ pieces
Fish mousse	Cauliflower cheese

## Main meals

<b>Puree / Liquidised</b>	<b>Soft / Easy to chew</b>
Pureed minced meats or poultry such as chicken or turkey	Small pieces of soft, well cooked, tender meat and poultry in a thick, smooth sauce or gravy, such as a stew or casserole
Pureed tender pieces of meat, poultry or skinless sausages	Finely minced meat or poultry in a thick smooth sauce or gravy such as bolognaise, moussaka or cottage pie
Liquidised potatoes, yam or plantains	Tinned sausages (with skins removed) or corned beef in a thick smooth sauce or gravy
Liquidised fresh or tinned vegetables	Tinned meat or poultry such as stewed steak, minced beef, chicken in white or curry sauce Corned beef hash
Puree ready meals	Steamed or poached flaked fish* served in a thick smooth sauce. Try using 'boil in the bag' for an easy alternative
Soups without bits	Tinned fish mixed with mayonnaise or thick sauce* Fish pie with potato topping* Fish mousse
Pureed tinned meats such as corned beef, minced beef, chopped ham and pork, chicken or sausages	Well cooked or tinned lentils, mushy peas and other pulses Lentil curry

Pureed pasta dishes such as spaghetti Bolognese or lasagne, macaroni cheese, pasta in tomato or cream sauce, ravioli	Tofu (soya bean curd), 'Quorn™' or textured vegetable protein in dishes such as vegetable casserole, curry or chilli Dahl
Sieved, pureed beans, lentils, chickpeas or other pulses such as dahl or smooth houmous	Well cooked pasta cut into small pieces, or rice in dishes such as spaghetti bolognese, pasta in sauce, curry
Pureed tinned fish with thick sauce or mayonnaise	Tinned pasta such as spaghetti, ravioli or macaroni cheese Lasagne (no hard crusts)
Meat substitutes such as tofu (soya bean curd), 'Quorn™' or textured vegetable protein used in dishes such as vegetable curry, soups, dhal and chilli. Add extra fluid and liquidise until smooth	Moussaka made with aubergine which has been peeled
Boneless, skinless fish only, cooked well and pureed until smooth in a pourable white, cheese or parsley sauce	Creamed potatoes plantains or yams, instant or well boiled and chopped *
Potted meat or smooth pate	Soft chips fully soaked with sauce (no hard pieces and skins must dissolve or be removed)

<p>For adding to main courses, consider extra sauces or gravy such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• stock cubes,</li><li>• meat and vegetable extracts,</li><li>• packet sauce mixes,</li><li>• gravy mixes or soups (packet, tinned or condensed).</li></ul>	<p>Cheese and potato bake (no pastry or hard crusts)</p> <p>Polenta in a thick, smooth sauce or gravy</p> <p>Well cooked carrots, parsnips, swede, courgettes, peppers, tops of cauliflower, or broccoli florets*</p> <p>Tinned tomatoes, mushy peas, carrots or other vegetables*</p> <p>Cauliflower cheese</p> <p>Vegetable curry</p>
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## Snacks

<b>Puree / Liquidised</b>	<b>Soft / Easy to chew</b>
Soup without bits Dahl without bits Smooth Houmous Soft cheese	Vegetable juices such as tomato and carrot Vegetable soups Ripe avocado Smooth guacamole
Puree fruit	Biscuits soaked in milk or dunked in tea or coffee
Mousse, ice cream or smooth yoghurt	Soft cake or sponge pudding with ice cream / custard or sauce
Smoothies or milkshakes	Chocolate without fruit or nuts / hard biscuits

## Puddings

<b>Puree / Liquidised</b>	<b>Soft / Easy to chew</b>
Jelly Thick instant whip Pannacotta	Egg custard (no pastry)
Ice cream or frozen yoghurt	Sweet white sauces
Soya dessert	Yoghurt or fromage frais – avoid those with muesli, nuts, grains or seeds, crumble, cereal or candy toppings
Smooth mousse, yoghurt or fromage frais avoid muesli, nuts, grains or seeds, crumble, cereal or candy toppings	Crème caramel
Blancmange, instant whip and milk jelly	Soft trifle
Milk puddings such as custard, rice, semolina, tapioca – use evaporated and condensed milks as a topping for desserts, puddings and puree fruit.	Stewed fruit such as apples, pears or plums* Soft tinned fruit such as apricots, peaches or pear segments
Smooth cheesecake (no biscuit base)	Soft sponge (without dried fruit or nuts) with thick custard or cream Sponge pudding (without dried fruit or nuts) served with thick custard or cream.
Crème caramel	Ice cream, frozen yoghurt, mousse or sorbet

Sponge pureed with custard to a smooth, thick consistency

Banana with thick custard or cream

Tinned fruit with thick custard or cream

## **Alternatives**

### **What if I can't drink milk or eat dairy?**

For various reasons people may not be able to drink milk. These reasons may include a dislike of milk, being vegan, being lactose intolerant. Depending on the reasons for your milk avoidance, you could try using lactose free milk, or non-dairy soya, rice, oat or nut milks available from supermarkets. Try to use full fat varieties and those enriched with calcium where possible. Non-dairy yoghurts and cream substitutes are also available.

If you do not feel you can manage any milkshake type drinks you need to ensure that you are having blended meals, fruit smoothies or enriched soups regularly over the day; see ideas in this booklet. The dietitian may suggest a juice type nutritional supplement which can be provided in hospital after your surgery.

### **I'm vegetarian / vegan, what can I do?**

If you are vegetarian or vegan it is even more essential to plan your liquidised diet carefully. You will need to ensure that you include regular protein choices into your diet such as soya products and Quorn™.

Tinned or well-cooked lentils, beans and chickpeas can be pureed and blended into soups and meals. Smooth peanut butter can be blended into sauces and smoothies. If you are vegan, the use of non-dairy soya, rice, oat or nut based milks, yoghurts and creams will be useful. Try to ensure you use full fat varieties and those enriched with calcium where possible.

## **Food fortification and nourishing drinks**

It can be very difficult to meet your energy requirements whilst on a liquid diet therefore it is often necessary to add in extra calories to help prevent weight loss. The following can help to add extra energy to meals:

- Cook food such as meat, fish, potatoes, vegetables in plenty of margarine, butter or oil before blending
- Try adding 2 tablespoons of double cream into a serving of soups, milkshakes and puddings
- Sugar, seedless jam, syrup or honey can be added to cereals, milkshakes, other drinks and puddings
- Use full fat products such as milk, yoghurts, fromage frais when preparing milkshakes and smoothies
- Add ice cream into milkshakes and smoothies
- Grated cheese or soft cheese can be added to mashed potato, vegetables and soup before blending
- Smooth peanut butter can be added into smoothies

If you are diabetic speak to your dietitian as some of these suggestions may not be appropriate due to the high sugar content.

# Recipe ideas

## Nourishing drinks

Whether you are buying ready made milkshakes, or making your own, there are foods you can add to increase calories and variety. Try adding blended fruit, ice cream, yoghurt, honey, chocolate powder, smooth peanut butter, flavoured milk, milkshake powder, ice cream sauces and fruit juices.

### Milkshake

½ pint full fat milk  
30ml (2 tablespoons) double cream  
2 x scoops ice cream

Method: Blend all ingredients together and serve.

### Basic fruit smoothie

½ pint full fat milk  
1 scoop ice cream  
100g full fat smooth yoghurt

Add banana, mango, peaches, raspberries, strawberries or other soft fruit to taste and blend in with the above.

Method: Blend all ingredients together and serve cold. Sieve to ensure fully smooth.

## **Breakfast smoothie**

1 banana  
½ pint full fat milk  
2 tablespoons honey  
½ cup cereal or instant oats  
1 tablespoon greek yoghurt

Method: Blend all ingredients together until smooth. Serve cold, or alternatively leave out the yoghurt and warm the milk prior to blending for a warm drink. Sieve to ensure fully smooth.

## **Chocolate peanut butter smoothie**

1 banana  
1 tablespoon smooth peanut butter  
Chocolate syrup to taste  
1 tablespoon instant oats  
½ pint full fat milk

Method: Blend all ingredients together, serve cold. Sieve to ensure fully smooth.

## **Coconut and mango smoothie**

1 mango, cut into small pieces  
2 tablespoons honey  
1 tablespoon natural / greek yoghurt  
100ml full fat milk  
100ml coconut milk

Method: Blend all ingredients together until smooth. Sieve to ensure fully smooth.

## **Iced coffee**

½ pint full fat milk

1 x scoop ice cream (vanilla or coffee flavour)

1 teaspoon instant coffee dissolved in a small amount of hot water

30ml (2 tablespoons) double cream

Method: Blend all ingredients together and serve.

## **Chocolate peppermint drink**

½ pint full fat milk

1 scoop chocolate ice cream

30ml (2 tablespoons) double cream

1-2 drops peppermint essence

Method: Blend all ingredients together and serve cold.

## **Hot chocolate**

⅓ pint full fat milk

8 squares chocolate

30ml (2 tablespoons) double cream

Method: Heat milk and chocolate together gently in microwave or pan, stir until chocolate melted. Serve warm.

Tip: Add more or less chocolate to your taste. Try adding cinnamon to sprinkle on top for a different flavour or add a teaspoon of instant coffee to create a mocha. To add extra energy try also adding hot chocolate powder, extra melted chocolate, or add a chocolate Meretine shake or Complian shake.

# Soups

## **Asparagus and butter bean soup (serves 2)**

500g asparagus spears, chopped into large pieces  
1 tablespoon butter  
½ onion, chopped  
½ litre chicken or vegetable stock  
100ml (6 tablespoons) double cream  
Large tin butter beans

Method: Fry onion in butter until softened, add asparagus. Add stock and season. Simmer until asparagus cooked through. Blend until smooth.

## **Broccoli and chickpea soup (makes 2 portions)**

1 tablespoon olive oil  
½ onion  
1 garlic clove  
1 broccoli, stalk removed and cut into florets  
500ml chicken or vegetable stock  
100ml (6 tablespoons) double cream  
4 tablespoons chickpeas

Method: Fry onion and garlic in oil until softened. Add broccoli, chickpeas and stock and simmer until the broccoli is soft. Add cream and blend until smooth.

## **Potato and cheese soup (makes 3-4 portions)**

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 cream cheese

Method: 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.

## **Other soup options**

Tinned or packet soups can also be used. It is important to remember that soups tend to have a low energy and protein content. The following are some examples of how the protein and calorie content of tinned soups could be increased.

## **Chicken soup (serves 1)**

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 need thinner texture)

Method: Blend the chicken for approximately 20 seconds. Add the soup, cream and milk and blend together. Heat before serving.

### **Tomato soup (serves 1)**

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

Method: Blend all ingredients together and serve warm.

### **Beef and vegetable soup (serves 1)**

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

Method: 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.

### **Ham and pea soup (serves 1)**

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

Method: Blend all ingredients together until smooth and heat gently to required temperature.

## **Broccoli and stilton soup (serves 1)**

30g (1 small matchbox sized piece) grated cheese

30ml (2 tablespoons) double cream

125ml full fat milk

½ tin (200g) broccoli and stilton soup

Method: Blend all ingredients together until smooth. Serve warm.

Easy alternative for soups: Mix one sachet of Build Up soup or Complian shake (original flavour) with a tin of soup and blend well to add extra calories and protein. Add extra cream or full fat milk if you need a thinner texture.

## **Main Meals**

### **Spaghetti bolognese (serves 2)**

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

Method: Cook pasta according to packet instructions until soft. Fry onion and garlic until softened, add beef and heat until cooked through. Add tomatoes, herbs, tomato paste and beef stock until warmed through then add cooked pasta. Blend until smooth. Sieve to ensure fully smooth.

Easy option – use a ready made jar of bolognese sauce, add cooked pasta and blend until smooth.

### **Thai chicken (serves 1)**

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

Method: 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.

## **Chicken satay (serves 2)**

1 red chilli  
2-3 tablespoons peanut butter  
4 teaspoons soy sauce  
2 teaspoons sesame oil  
1 chicken breast cut into small pieces  
125ml coconut milk  
30g cooked rice

Method: Fry chicken and chilli in oil. Add peanut butter and soy sauce, heat until chicken is cooked. Add coconut milk and rice and warm through. Blend and sieve to ensure fully smooth.

## Desserts

### Custard (serves 1)

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

Method: Mix the skimmed milk powder with half of the milk, bring to the boil stirring continuously. Mix the rest of the cold milk with the sugar and custard powder and add the hot milk. Return to the pan and bring to the boil stirring continuously.

Easy alternative: Make up a packet of instant custard powder with hot full fat milk rather than water or add 2 tablespoons double cream to tinned custard and warm before serving.

### Rice Pudding

½ tin (200g) rice pudding  
125ml full fat milk  
45g ready made custard  
30ml (2 tablespoons) double cream

Method: Blend ingredients until smooth. Add extra milk to thin down if required. Heat gently to the required temperature.

Tip: Try adding seedless jam, syrup or honey to add different flavours.

Please note that you will not see the dietitian after your hospital discharge unless requested. Please monitor your weight regularly following your surgery and contact the dietitian if you have any concerns.

Name:

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Dietitian:

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Hospital:

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Contact number:

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