

Low residue diet for surgery



Information for patients

Northern General Hospital



Why do I need to follow a low residue diet?

Residue includes any food, including fibre (the undigested parts of plant foods) that remain in your bowel and increases the size and number of your stools.

A low residue diet reduces the size and number of your stools. This diet is being recommended to reduce your stools prior to your surgery.

What is a low residue diet?

Foods that have high fibre content should be reduced in the diet. These include wholegrain cereals, wholemeal bread/biscuits, nuts, seeds, dried fruits and skin/stalks of vegetables.

For the short duration of this diet it is recommended that you avoid all fruit and vegetables. It is worth you considering taking a multivitamin whilst on this diet. An 'over the counter' all-in-one multivitamin supplement is all that is required.

The following table illustrates food that you can have and those that should be avoided.

How long do I need to follow this diet?

It is recommended that you follow the low residue diet for 5 days before your surgery. On the day before your operation you will be asked to avoid all food. This is to help ensure all residue is removed from your bowels.

To ensure you are having sufficient energy and nutrients prior to your surgery you will be given up to 6 drinks (called Pre-op drinks) to provide you with all the goodness you need.

Examples of a low residue diet

	Foods to include	Foods to avoid
Meat and fish	All kinds of meat and fish	Skin and bones of fish, gristle, tough cuts of meat. Stews, casseroles and pies containing vegetables listed below
Dairy produce	Milk, cheese, butter or margarine, eggs and plain yoghurts	Yoghurts or cheese containing fruit or nut pieces.
Fruit and vegetables	Boiled potatoes without skins. All fruit and vegetables.	Baked beans, lentils, and split peas
Breads and cereals	Cornflakes, Rice Krispies. White flour, white bread, white rice and pasta. Pastry and Yorkshire puddings. Plain teacakes and plain rolls	Wholewheat breakfast cereals, for example: Weetabix, branflakes, muesli, shredded wheat, porridge. Wholemeal or wholegrain breads and flour, wholemeal pasta, brown rice, oats, bran and pearly barley. Fruit teacakes or rolls with seeds or oats on top

	Foods to include	Foods to avoid
Biscuits / Pastries / Puddings	Sponge cakes made with white flour (no nuts or dried fruit), for example, swiss rolls with seedless jam. Plain biscuits, for example: rich tea, shortbread, plain crackers. Plain muffins.	Puddings or cakes made with wholemeal flour or dried fruit, for example: fruit scones, mince pies, fruit crumble, cakes with seeded jam fillings. Wholemeal crackers, bran biscuits, digestives, oatcakes and fruit biscuits.
Nuts	None	All nuts, coconut and almond, marzipan
Confectionary	Plain chocolate, fudge, toffee, boiled sweets, mints, chewy sweets, sugar, syrup. Seedless jam and marmalade	Chocolate and toffee made with dried fruit or nuts. Popcorn. Jam with seeds, marmalade with peel.
Miscellaneous	Custard, ice cream, jelly, milk puddings. Salt, pepper, gravy, clear soups and stock cubes. Teas, coffee, smooth fruit juice, squash, water	Herbs with stalk and leaves. Peanut butter Pickles, chutney, thick vegetable / lentil soup.

Are there any other dietary considerations?

- Avoid excessive caffeine and alcohol that can irritate the bowel
- Have spicy foods in moderation
- Eat regularly and chew foods well

Will I need to continue on a low residue diet after my operation?

Following your operation your bowels will need a period of time to recover before you are encouraged to eat again. The doctors and nurses will guide you through this process on the ward. It is expected that once you have recovered you will be able to eat your normal diet.

Contact details

Urology Nurse Specialists:

- Paula Muter or Carol Eggington on **0114 271 5624**
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