

Soft Diet

Practical tips to increase your energy intake on a soft diet

If you have problems **swallowing** ask your GP to refer you to a Speech & Language Therapist.

If you have problems chewing, you may require changes to your diet so that you can manage to eat and drink easily. If you have a small appetite, you may find small frequent meals easier to manage than large meals. Ensure you have a balanced and varied diet from the table below. Always choose full fat and full sugar* foods and drinks if you have recently lost weight unintentionally or need to gain weight.

Preparation tips:

To ensure a soft consistency, foods should be well cooked and mashable with a fork.

Food Type	Suitable foods
Milk, cheese & dairy Aim for two or three servings a day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole milk and milk shakes, double cream or sour cream Thick and creamy yoghurts/milky puddings (Full fat cream cheeses, add grated cheese to mashed potatoes, sauces and soups (mix well to ensure it does not go stringy) Butter/margarine to be added to mashed potatoes, vegetables and soups
Meat, fish, poultry & meat alternatives (beans, pulses, quorn, tofu, nuts and seeds) Aim for two servings a day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choose tender meat and casseroles to ensure meats are soft. Use soft tinned meats or small pieces of ready-cooked meats with sauce or gravy Steam, bake or microwave boneless fish (without batter) and serve with a sauce made with fortified whole milk (mix 1 pint of milk with 4 tablespoons of skimmed milk powder) Alternatively use tinned (boneless fish) such as tuna or salmon Choose baked beans or dahl/pulse dishes Eggs can be scrambled, poached, boiled or made into an omelette. Extra butter, margarine, cream or whole milk may be needed to make them softer Boiled eggs may be grated or mashed with butter/ mayonnaise Choose dishes such as macaroni cheese, spaghetti bolognese, cottage pie or lasagne
Breads, rice, cereals, pasta and potatoes Base your meals around these foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use soft white bread and remove the crusts to make soft sandwiches. Choose soft fillings such as tinned fish, egg mayonnaise, hummus, pâté or spreads Porridge or Weetabix™ made with full fat milk (choose a fine oatmeal for a smoother texture). Avoid 'mixed consistency' cereal such as cornflakes, rice Krispies™ and muesli that may have hard bits such as nuts/dried fruit in it
Fruits and vegetables Aim for five servings a day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fresh, frozen or tinned vegetables can be cooked until soft; add margarine/butter or serve with a tomato or white sauce. Alternatively mash vegetables (such as swede) with margarine/butter/whole milk and add grated cheese Choose soft fresh (remove skin, seeds, pips) or tinned fruit or any fruit that can be stewed (with added sugar*) or mashed. Serve with custard, yoghurt, double cream, ice cream, fromage frais, condensed or evaporated milk
Sweets & desserts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homemade, tinned and packet puddings are all suitable e.g. custard, rice pudding, semolina, sago, tapioca, sponge or stewed fruit with custard, double cream or evaporated/condensed milk Other options include thick and creamy yoghurts, fromage frais, crème caramel, chocolate and fruit mousses Honey*, sugar* or syrup* can be added into other foods for extra flavour and calories Use full fat products where possible

*If you're diabetic please monitor your bloods sugars or discuss this with your diabetes GP/health professional

If you are struggling to follow this advice, please contact the person who gave you this sheet.