# Mechanical Soft Diet

**What is a mechanical soft diet?**
This diet is designed for people who may not have enough energy or enough teeth to chew all foods. The foods in this diet are easy to eat and do not need a lot of chewing to swallow safely.

**Why is this diet safer for me?**
This diet is designed to help prevent you from becoming tired and not having to chew so much. This will help you eat more and be able to heal. This diet is helpful if you are missing teeth or have just had surgery and are not able to chew hard foods. This diet does include soft breads and rice so it is important that you are able to move food in your mouth and be able to swallow safely.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Groups</th>
<th>Safe Foods</th>
<th>Avoid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Milk Products</strong></td>
<td>Smooth or fruited yogurt</td>
<td>Hard cheese cubes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cottage cheese</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Soft sliced cheese</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Meat and Protein</strong></td>
<td>Ground cooked meat and poultry</td>
<td>Thick cold cuts, sausage, wieners, hamburgers, large chunks of cheese, and casserole with chunks of meat</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Baked, poached or broiled fish</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Casseroles with ground or 1/4 inch diced meat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eggs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cottage cheese</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sandwiches with soft bread</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shaved deli turkey or ham</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tuna salad or egg salad</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>without celery or raw vegetables</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Vegetables</strong></td>
<td>Soft cooked vegetables</td>
<td>Corn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Legumes, potatoes, and squash</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minced 1/8 or Diced ¼ inch vegetables</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(you may find that some do not mince well)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Groups</td>
<td>Safe Foods</td>
<td>Avoid</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fruits</strong></td>
<td>- Applesauce</td>
<td>Canned fruit with juice or syrup unless allowed to drink thin liquids, skins, and seeds</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Drained canned fruits (unless you are allowed thin liquids)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Soft, fresh fruits such as peaches, nectarines without skin, melon, berries and bananas</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **Breads, Cereals, and Starches** | - Cream of Wheat®, Cream of Rice®, oatmeal, Malt-o-Meal®, or Co-Co Wheats®<sup>®</sup>  
- Pancakes, soft French toast  
- Soft pasta  
- White rice  
- Soft breads, rolls, or muffins  
- Plain cold cereal softened with milk | Brown or wild rice, cold cereals with dry fruit or nuts |
| **Soup**     | - Any cream soups or broth soups strained or put in a blender.  
- Plain broth                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| **Desserts** | - Custards or pudding  
- Rice or bread pudding without dried fruit  
- Sherbet or sorbet  
- Gelatin  
- Ice cream and popsicles  
- Cakes and pies without nuts  
- Soft cookies without dried fruit or nuts  
- Chocolate candy without nuts | Avoid desserts with nuts, seeds, or dried fruit  
Candy with nuts  
Hard or chewy candy |
| **Beverages**| - All beverages                                                                                                                                                                                             | None, unless you have been told to thicken your liquids then see Health Facts For You # 468.                                                                                                           |
| **Other**    | - Butter, margarine, oils, vegetable shortening,  
- Salad dressings, mayonnaise  
- Vinegar,  
- Gravies  
- Salt, pepper, spices  
- Catsup, mustard,  
- Jelly or preserves  
- Sugar, honey, molasses, or syrup,  
- Horseradish  
- Chili sauce | Cream cheese  
Olives                                                                                                                                       |
How to Prepare Diced Meat and Vegetables
All food must be in pieces that are no larger than ¼ inch.

1. Cut meat or veggies into strips that are ¼ inch or less.
2. Turn and cut every ¼ inch or less. You will want to be sure that all cubes are smaller than ¼ inch.

How can I increase my calories without a lot of chewing?
Add nutritional supplements such as Ensure®, BOOST®, or Carnation Instant Breakfast® to your diet. Most people on this diet are happy to find out that desserts are a fun way to increase calories. In the morning, you can fix what you might want to call “Super Duper Cereal”. It can be made based on what tastes you like.

**Super Duper Cereal**
1 package of plain instant oatmeal
4 ounces of high protein nutrition supplement such as Boost Hi Protein®, Ensure High Protein®, or similar product. You pick the flavor.
Nutmeg or cinnamon
Empty instant oats into a microwave bowl. Add supplement. Microwave uncovered for 1 ½ -2 minutes or until thickened. Use potholders to remove. Sprinkle with nutmeg or cinnamon. Serve with milk or cream as desired. Each serving will provide 212 calories and 20.5 grams of protein.

**Butterscotch Oatmeal**
1 egg, beaten
1 ¾ cups milk
¼ cup packed dark brown sugar
1 cup quick cooking oats or blended rolled oats
2 tablespoons butter
In a sauce pan over medium heat, whisk together the egg, milk, and brown sugar. Mix in the oats. When the oatmeal begins to boil, cook and stir until thick. Remove from the heat. Stir in the butter until melted. Makes two servings. Each serving will provide 497 calories and 16.4 grams of protein.
Teach Back

What is the most important thing you learned from this handout?

What changes will you make in your diet/lifestyle, based on what you learned today?

If you are a UW Health patient and have more questions please contact UW Health at one of the phone numbers listed below. You can also visit our website at www.uwhealth.org/nutrition.

Nutrition clinics for UW Hospital and Clinics (UWHC) and American Family Children’s Hospital (AFCH) can be reached at: (608) 890-5500.

Nutrition clinics for UW Medical Foundation (UWMF) can be reached at: (608) 287-2770.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person’s health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 3/2014 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Clinical Nutrition Services Department and the Department of Nursing. HF#363