

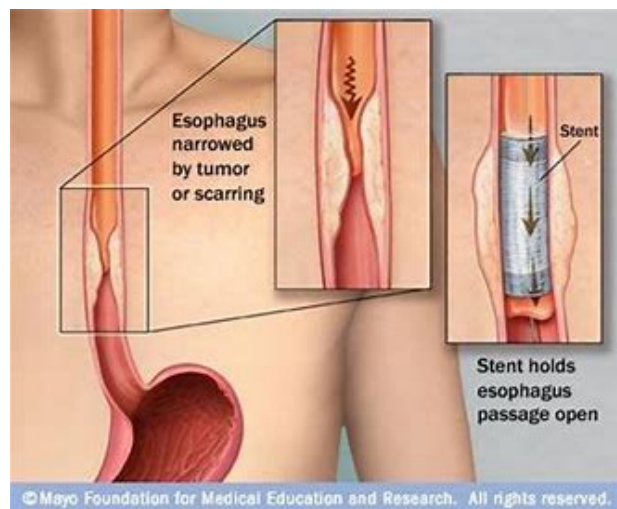
## Diet following insertion of an upper gastrointestinal (GI) stent

This resource will help you understand what an upper gastrointestinal (GI) stent is and what diet changes you should make following stent insertion. It is not for people who have had a lower gastrointestinal stent (placed in the large bowel or colon).

### What is an upper gastrointestinal stent?

An upper GI stent is a flexible tube placed in your oesophagus (food pipe) and/or stomach and small intestine (small bowel) to help keep it open. Your gastroenterologist will tell you where your stent is.

This stent expands and allows food and liquid to pass from your mouth to your stomach and intestines. This allows your body to break down food so it can be taken up and used.



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### Why do I need to change my diet?

- To make sure food can move through your GI tract.
- The stent is a narrow tube and is not as flexible as your oesophagus (food pipe). It may become blocked if you eat foods that are too hard or too sticky.
- To prevent the side effects of a blocked stent. These may include nausea, vomiting, reflux, bloating or pain. If this happens, you may need to go back to hospital.

## **What should I eat?**

- Choose foods that are soft and moist (see table on the next page).
- Add sauces, gravies, butter or margarine to moisten savoury foods that you eat.
- Add milk, yoghurt, cream, custard or ice-cream to moisten sweet foods that you eat.
- Eat 6 small meals a day instead of 3 larger ones.
- Cut your food into smaller pieces, take small mouthfuls and chew food well. If you wear dentures, make sure they fit well so you can chew your food.
- Drink small sips of fluids before, during and after meals.

## **Other helpful hints:**

- You may need to eat and drink more often to prevent weight loss and dehydration.
- Sit upright during and after a meal for 30 minutes to 1 hour. Avoid eating within 3 hours of bedtime.
- Talk to your doctor or pharmacist if medicines or tablets are hard to swallow. Ask if they come in liquid form or if they can be crushed.

## **What should I do if I think the stent is blocked?**

- Stop eating.
- Increase your fluid intake.
- Have a gentle walk around and then continue to drink fluids.
- See your doctor if the blockage does not clear.

## **What problems might I have with my stent?**

- Acid reflux (heartburn) – especially if your stent is between the oesophagus and stomach. Anti-reflux medicine may be helpful (consult your doctor for a prescription/ advice). Try not to sleep too flat – prop yourself up using two or three pillows or a wedge.
- Pain – as the stent expands it can cause some pain in the chest area. This usually improves after 3 days. Please contact your doctor if you are worried.

## **Summary:**

- Choose soft, moist foods and add sauces or gravies to meals
- Take small mouthfuls of food and chew well
- Avoid eating within three hours of bedtime

	RECOMMENDED FOODS	FOODS TO AVOID
Meat chicken fish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tender cuts of meat – cooked slowly to tenderise (they should be fork-mashable when cooked)</li> <li>Mince dishes</li> <li>Casseroles and stews</li> <li>Fish dishes that are moist or with sauce (easily broken up with the edge of a fork)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tough, stringy, chunky, gristly or dry meats</li> <li>Dry fish or fish with bones or skin</li> </ul>
Protein alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eggs (all types except fried or whole hard-boiled eggs)</li> <li>Well-cooked legumes e.g. baked beans</li> <li>Soft tofu e.g. silken</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fried or hard-boiled eggs</li> <li>Dishes with nuts or seeds</li> <li>Hard or fibrous legumes</li> </ul>
Vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Well cooked, peeled non-fibrous vegetables served in small pieces or soft enough to be easily mashed with a fork</li> <li>Soft canned vegetables e.g. peas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hard, fibrous or stringy vegetables e.g. corn, broccoli stalks, celery or green beans</li> <li>All raw vegetables (including chopped and shredded)</li> </ul>
Soup	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All soups except for those listed as 'foods to avoid'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Soups that have large pieces of meat or vegetables</li> <li>Soups with pieces of corn</li> </ul>
Breakfast cereals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cereals well moistened with milk e.g. cornflakes, rice bubbles, wheat flakes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coarse or dry cereals e.g. All-Bran</li> <li>Cereals with nuts or dried fruit</li> </ul>
Other cereals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Day old bread</li> <li>Bread can be softened in stews or soups</li> <li>Soft sandwiches (no crusts) with moist fillings e.g. egg &amp; mayonnaise</li> <li>Rice (well cooked, not fried)</li> <li>Soft pasta and noodles (make sure pasta is not over-cooked and has adequate sauce added to reduce "stickiness")</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fresh bread may block the stent</li> <li>Dry or crusty breads or croutons</li> <li>Sandwiches that are not thoroughly moist</li> <li>Bread with seeds or dried fruit</li> <li>Toast, crackers, pizza</li> </ul>
Fruit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All stewed or canned fruit in small pieces</li> <li>Soft, peeled, ripe fresh fruit e.g. banana</li> <li>Berries with small seeds e.g. strawberries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dried fruit, fruit leather, fruit peel</li> <li>Stringy, fibrous fruit e.g. pineapple</li> <li>Large/ round pieces of fruit e.g. grapes, blueberries</li> <li>Fruit skin, pips or seeds</li> </ul>
Dairy foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All except those in the 'avoid list'</li> <li>Hard cheese can be grated into sauces, soups or onto vegetables</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yoghurt with nuts, seeds or hard pieces</li> <li>Hard cheese or crispy cooked cheese</li> </ul>
Desserts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All except those in the 'avoid list' unless they can be moistened with extra milk, yoghurt, cream, ice-cream</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dry cakes and biscuits</li> <li>Anything with nuts, seeds, dried fruit, coconut or pineapple</li> <li>Chewy lollies e.g. toffee</li> </ul>
Other foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sauces, mustards, jams, smooth peanut butter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Popcorn</li> <li>Crisps</li> </ul>

**For further information, contact your dietitian or nutritionist:** \_\_\_\_\_

This is a consensus document from Dietitian/ Nutritionists from the Nutrition Education Materials Online, "NEMO", team.

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