

DIET DEFINITIONS AND GUIDELINES

The Clear Liquid Diet

Initially, the resident may only be able to consume clear liquids. However, based on the length of time post-surgery and the resident's hospital stay, they may be progressed past the clear liquid stage.

Note: If the resident cannot be advanced to full liquids by Day 5, notify the resident's attending physician and consulting dietitian.

A diet of clear liquids is easily absorbed by the body. It reduces stimulation of the digestive system and leaves no residue in the intestinal tract. A good rule of thumb for the clear liquid diet is anything you can see through. For example, apple juice is clear liquid while milk is not. However, the resident recovering from bariatric surgery may not be able to tolerate all clear liquids. Therefore, the following guidelines are established to help the individual transition through their recovery process:

1. May offer sugar-free gelatin, any flavor, as long as there are no solids in the gelatin (no fruit added).
2. May have broth or bouillon, any flavor, as long as it is clear liquid.
3. May have tea or coffee, unsweetened.
4. Omit sugar foods (sweetened beverages, sweetened Jell-O, Gatorade, juice (unless diluted using 1 part juice to 10 parts water), as they may cause "dumping" post-surgery.
5. Omit carbonated beverages to prevent belching and stomach distension.
6. If juices are requested, they are to be diluted using 1 part juice to 10 parts water.

The Full Liquid Diet

The full liquid diet is often used as a transition step between a clear liquid diet and a regular soft food diet. The full liquid diet consists of foods that are liquid or liquefy at room temperature. A variety of foods may be used on this diet, including milk, plain frozen desserts, pasteurized eggs, vegetable juices, custards, puddings, creamed soups, yogurt, and refined cereals.

The bariatric resident may not be able to tolerate all foods allowed on this diet. Based on tolerance, the diet may need to be modified.

Possible Modifications to the Full Liquid Diet

1. As with the clear liquid diet, the resident may not be able to tolerate sugar and may need to continue on sugar-free products.
2. Since many of the foods on the full liquid diet include milk products, monitor for lactose intolerance. These symptoms include nausea, abdominal cramps and rumbling, bloating, rectal gas (flatus), and diarrhea. The symptoms usually occur thirty (30) minutes to two (2) hours after ingesting foods that contain lactose. The severity of symptoms usually depends on the amount of lactose ingested. Lactose-free milk and other products are available if the resident would like to consume milk products.