

Clear Liquid Diet

What is a clear liquid diet?

A clear liquid diet is made up of clear liquids and foods that are liquid at room temperature.

The clear liquid diet does not provide all the nutrients, vitamins, minerals, or calories that your body needs. The goal of this diet is to provide liquids and part of the calories you need until you can eat solid food. Your body digests (breaks down) clear liquids easily. Sticking to a clear liquid diet may help you feel better until you are able to eat solid food. Your healthcare provider will tell you how much liquid you may have each day.

Healthcare providers will tell you when you can start to eat solid foods. You should not stay on the clear liquid diet for more than two or three days, unless your caregiver has told you to. Ask your caregiver, a dietitian, or a nutritionist any questions you may have about your diet plan.

What can I eat and drink while on a clear liquid diet?

Drinks

- Clear juices (such as apple, cranberry, or grape), strained citrus juices or fruit punch
- Mild tea (without cream or milk)
- Mineral, bubbly, or plain water
- Clear soft drinks like ginger ale, lemon-lime soda, or club soda (no cola or root beer)
- Clear sports drinks
- Iced tea
- Lemonade
- Coffee (without cream or milk)
- Clear nutritional drinks like Ensure Clear[®] or Boost Breeze[®]

Soups

- Clear broth or bouillon

Desserts

- Plain popsicles (avoid popsicles with pureed fruit or fiber in them)
- Hard candy
- Flavored gelatin, such as Jell-O[®] without fruit
- Italian ice
- Honey and sugar to sweeten

Sample Menu for a Clear Liquid Diet

- **Breakfast:** One cup of juice, 3/4 cup of clear broth, one popsicle and one cup of herbal tea
- **Morning snack:** One cup of a clear sports drink
- **Lunch:** One-half of a cup of juice, 3/4 cup of clear broth, 3/4 cup of lemon-lime soda, 1/2 cup of flavored gelatin, and one cup of herbal tea
- **Afternoon snack:** One cup of flavored gelatin
- **Evening meal:** One-half of a cup of juice, 3/4 cup of clear broth, 3/4 cup of ginger ale, and 1/2 cup of flavored gelatin
- **Evening snack:** One popsicle

What should I avoid eating and drinking while on a clear liquid diet?

Drinks

- Any drink that you cannot see through
- Drinks with alcohol
- Dairy products such as milk, hot cocoa, buttermilk, and cream
- Fruit smoothies, nectars, fruit juices with pulp and prune juice

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**.

If you are a patient receiving care at UnityPoint – Meriter, Swedish American or a health system outside of UW Health, please use the phone numbers provided in your discharge instructions for any questions or concerns.

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 © 4/2019 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#593