

## Department of Nutrition and Dietetics

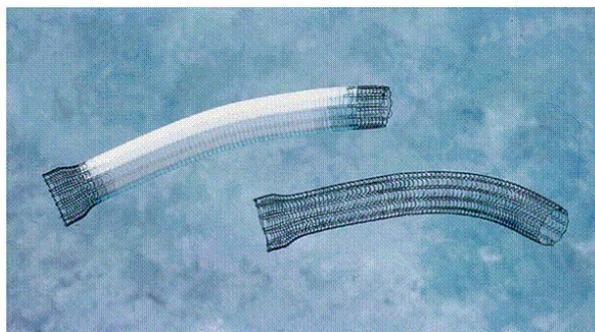
# What can I eat now I have an oesophageal stent?

This leaflet aims to give you, your family and your friends, dietary information and helpful tips on foods to eat now you have an oesophageal stent.

## What is an Oesophageal Stent?

An oesophageal stent is a flexible wire tube, approximately 2cm ( $\frac{3}{4}$  inch) wide, which has been placed through the narrowing in your oesophagus (food pipe) to make it easier for you to eat.

This is an example of what your stent may look like:



## What can I eat?

Once the stent has been placed you will start with fluids and build up gradually to a soft diet:

Stage 1 – Fluids only - sips at first, building up the quantity as you feel able

Stage 2 – Smooth or pureed foods i.e. Soup, custard, yogurt, jelly, ice-cream

Stage 3 – If you are swallowing smooth foods with ease, you can now increase the texture of your food, moving on to a soft moist diet



## Patient Information

With your stent in place you should be able to eat soft foods and manage a more varied diet without feeling that food is getting stuck.

### Here are some tips:

- Meals should be small and frequent
- Sit upright at mealtimes and for half an hour afterwards
- Relax and eat your meals slowly
- Cut your food up into small pieces and chew each mouthful thoroughly. It is important that you do not swallow any hard lumps of food that may block the tube. Don't be afraid to spit out lumps that can't be chewed
- Have plenty of sauces, gravy, custard or cream with your meals. It will make your food moist and easier to swallow
- Take drinks during and after each meal, they help to keep your tube clear. Warm drinks may help the most but all fluids are beneficial
- If you wear dentures make sure they fit correctly

**Remember it is important to include a wide variety of foods of suitable texture to give you all the nourishment you need.**

## Meal Ideas

### Breakfast:

Porridge, Ready Brek®, Weetabix®, Rice Krispies® with milk and sugar

Soft fruit, such as banana, stewed apple, soft pear

Thick and creamy yoghurt

Scrambled eggs

### Main meal:

Tender or minced meat or meat substitute in gravy, such as shepherd's pie, corned beef hash, chicken stew

Fish in sauce, such as parsley or butter, fisherman's pie

Tender meat or vegetable curry with rice

## Patient Information

Dahl

Pasta dishes, such as macaroni cheese or spaghetti bolognaise

Mashed potato with added butter, cream or cheese

Soft well cooked vegetables, such as carrots, cauliflower, swede

### **Snack meal:**

Jacket potato (no skin) with butter and soft filling, such as tuna or salmon with mayonnaise, tinned spaghetti, grated cheese, cream cheese

Soup with added cream, cheese, skimmed milk powder or tender meat.

### **Desserts:**

Milk pudding, such as rice pudding, custard

Sponge pudding and cream, ice cream or custard

Thick and creamy yoghurt

Ice cream

Trifle, Angel Delight®, mousse

### **Between meal snacks:**

Milky drinks, such as milky coffee, hot chocolate, Horlicks®

Biscuits

Plain, soft cake, such as sponge cake

Suggested desserts (as above)

## **Additional comments:**

**The stent will not be as wide or as flexible as a normal oesophagus so you will need to take care with certain foods:**

Foods such as bread, toast, egg, fish with bones, pithy fruit (orange, grapefruit, pineapple), stringy vegetables (green beans, celery), salad items, raw vegetables and chips may cause your stent to block. This is why they have not been included in the suggested meal plan.

## Patient Information

To minimize the risk of blocking the stent, it is important to think about the foods that you are eating. Some foods, when chewed well, will be easier to swallow than others. For example, bread sticks will crumble when chewed but bread will form a sticky lump. However, you may be able to eat some foods that are not listed, it is best to ask your dietitian about these foods.

### **What can I do if I don't feel hungry?**

If you have a poor appetite or have lost some weight try the following:

- Eat little and often, including small snacks.
- Choose full cream milk and full fat foods instead of low fat products.
- Add sugar to cereals, puddings and drinks.
- Grated cheese, cream and/or butter can be added to mashed potatoes, soups, sauces and puddings.
- Fortify milk by adding 2 to 4 tablespoons dried milk powder to 1 pint milk. Use this for drinks, soups, puddings and sauces.
- Try a nourishing drink such as Complan®, Build Up® or supermarket own brand or make your own fruit smoothie or milkshake with ice cream and full fat milk.
- There are nutritional products which can be prescribed by your doctor if you continue to lose weight. These are available in a variety of flavours and consistencies. Your Dietitian can offer more information and advice.

### **What if my stent blocks?**

If you feel that your stent is blocked follow these basic guidelines:

- Try not to panic – the blockage only affects the tube into your stomach, it will not affect your ability to breathe
- Stop eating
- Take a few sips of a drink
- Walk around

If it has not cleared after 1 to 2 hours contact your GP or specialist nurse. If it is out of working hours you may access advice from the NHS 111 service or your local A&E department.

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### **Further contacts & support**

#### **Cancer Information**

Macmillan Cancer Information Centre  
Main Entrance- University Hospital  
Clifford Bridge Road  
Coventry  
CV2 2DX

Phone: 024 7696 6052

Open Monday - Friday (9.00am – 4.00pm)

**Macmillan Cancer Support:** Free phone 0808 808 0000  
[www.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk)

**Oesophageal Patients Association:** 0121 704 9860

## Patient Information

### Your dietitian is:

Contact number:.....**024 7696 6161**

### Your specialist nurse is:

Contact number:..... **024 7696 6475**

**Endoscopy Unit:.....024 7696 7509**

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact 024 7696 6161 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy

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#### **Document History**

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