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At Home After TIF Procedure – Diet

Eating After a TIF procedure

After your TIF procedure, you will have swelling where the esophagus connects to the stomach, which will make it hard for you to swallow or burp because the opening swells down to about the size of a straw. The feeling of tightness and trouble swallowing will go away over the next 3 to 12 weeks.

You will be asked to follow diet guidelines to prevent problems after surgery and to promote healing. The guidelines will include a diet of soft, easy to swallow and easily chewed foods for at least 4 to 6 weeks after surgery, and also help to control nausea, extra gas, diarrhea or problems swallowing.

Advancing Your Diet: The Post Anti-Reflux Diet Progression

For the first week, you may be asked to stay on a clear liquid or soft diet. The peak of swelling occurs after 48-72 hours. Imagine having what you eat having to pass through a funnel or hourglass. The more liquid the easier, the thicker the slower. Even if liquid, if you take in too fast it will still back up. Usually your diet will progress as follows:

Day 1-2

Clear liquid diet. Start with small sips and limit amounts (2-4 ounces to prevent feeling over full). Larger portions may be tolerated as you progress. NO carbonated beverages. Avoid alcohol. Make sure you stay hydrated.

Day 3-14:

Slowly start on a full liquid diet/soft “mushy” diet which includes everything on the clear liquid diet and other beverages or foods with a very smooth texture. Tip: Consistency of foods and beverages should be no thicker than cream of wheat hot cereal or a milkshake. Examples would include:

- Milk
- Cream-of-wheat or cream-of-rice cereal
- Strained cream soups

- Ice cream, without nuts, candy, chocolate, fruits or seeds
- Sherbet
- Yogurt - smooth, without fruit or seeds
- Carnation Instant Breakfast or other nutritional beverage (Ensure, Boost)
- Dairy products may cause diarrhea in some people after surgery.
- Using lactose-free products may help avoid these problems.
- Try dairy products in small amounts at first to see how well they are tolerated.
- Smoothies (without chunks)
- Protein shakes
- Applesauce
- Baby food (if desperate)

Week 3 and Onwards:

If you are doing well on the full liquid diet, you will be slowly advanced to the soft diet, “mushy” diet, which include:

- Foods should still be easy to chew and swallow: “bite-size” (1/2” or smaller), pureed or soft
- Eat 6 to 8 small meals per day to prevent your stomach from stretching, which may cause discomfort.
- Choose foods that are soft and moist, as they will be easier to swallow and digest.
- Avoid carbonated beverages for the first 6 to 8 weeks after surgery, and try to avoid going forward if possible
- Avoid foods that form masses when swallowed or are hard to digest
- Limit liquids with meals to 1/2 cup
- Drink 6 to 8 cups of liquid daily to meet your fluid needs but not all at once
- Sip all liquids slowly to avoid nausea and vomiting.
- Limit sweets or high-sugar items as these may cause cramping and abdominal pain.
- Avoid any foods that you know will cause gas and bloating, such as broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, and dried beans, peas or lentils.
- Avoid high-fat foods.
- Avoid foods that are crusty, edged, hard, sharp, sticky or thick (like breads, bagels, tough meats, raw vegetables, nuts/seeds crackers, bread, chips)
- Avoid Citrus fruits/juices and tomato products - these may cause stomach discomfort.
- Avoid drinking through a straw, or chewing gum or tobacco as these actions may cause you to swallow air and increase gas in your stomach

You can gradually add things into your diet as your swallowing and digestion improves, with the caveat of small bites, chewing food well, eating slowly, and not eating too much at a time.

General Rules

Advancing your diet slowly will help prevent uncomfortable side effects from eating. Your healthcare team will likely give you guidelines like:

- Eat small, frequent meals (five to six per day) and snacks. Stop eating when you feel full
- If you feel full quickly, try to drink fluids between meals instead of with meals.
- Limit fluids to ½ cup (4 fluid ounces) or 1 cup (8 fluid ounces) with snacks.
- Avoid very hot and cold liquids.
- Warm tends to work better than cold if having swallowing problems

- Sit upright while eating and for 30 minutes after eating. Sit upright for 2 hours after your last meal of the day. Avoid lying down after eating.
- Eat slowly. Take small bites, and chew your food well.
- Think of any meal plans you already have, and continue them also, such as low carbohydrate, low sodium restrictions, etc.

Avoiding / Reducing Gas

Expect to have some gas. It should gradually decrease. Avoid drinking through a straw. Avoid chewing gum. Chew with your mouth closed. These actions help avoid swallowing air.

- Avoid foods that cause gas; these are different from person to person. Examples include beans, broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, cucumber, onions, radishes and sauerkraut.
- Avoid carbonated drinks
- Can try GasX or Beano if gas remains bothersome
- Keep a stool softener/laxative to use as needed for constipation (Miralax, etc)