

Dietary advice following oesophageal stent insertion

Department of Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics [Patient information](#)

Royal Bournemouth Hospital Dietetics Department: **0300 019 4732**

Poole General Hospital Dietetics Department: **0300 019 2687**

The information in this leaflet provides advice on diet for patients who have had an oesophageal stent placed.

What is an oesophageal stent?

An oesophageal stent is a short tube that is placed into your oesophagus (food pipe) to help you swallow. The tube helps food and drink pass from your mouth into your stomach.

When can I start eating after an oesophageal stent?

After a stent insertion, you will likely be nil by mouth (NBM) for two hours. Then you will be allowed to start taking fluids orally (drinking). Stick to fluids for the first 24 hours after you've had your stent inserted. Slowly reintroduce foods into your diet.

What type of food should I eat?

Day 1 (day of the procedure)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water • Diluted juice or squash • Diluted meat or vegetable stock e.g. Oxo, Bovril, Marmite • Smooth soups with no bits e.g. cream of tomato • Milky drinks e.g. Horlicks, hot chocolate, milky tea/coffee, milkshakes, nutritional supplements if you have these
Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sloppy or pureed food • Soup • Yogurt, ice cream, custard, jellies
Day 3	Start to introduce foods with a soft, moist texture into your diet. Slowly build-up the texture of your food. Go at your own pace. See what works for you.

How to eat

- Try to eat little and often. Aim for six small meals instead of three big meals.
- Eat slowly. Take at least 20 minutes to eat a meal.
- Chew your food well before swallowing.
- Don't swallow big chunks of food.

- Take sips of fluid with your meals.
- Have a warm drink after you eat.

How to prepare food

- Cut food into very small pieces.
- Make meals moist with sauces, gravy, cream, or a few spoonfuls of soup.
- Slowly add foods with more texture.

Other tips

- If you have dentures, use them. If they don't feel right, see your dentist.
- Check with your pharmacist or GP if you need help with your tablets.

Choosing foods

It is important to eat a balanced diet according to the UK Eatwell Guide.

Once you start eating solid food, use the table below to help choose foods

	Easy to manage	Be careful with
Vegetables and fruit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soft, well-cooked vegetables • Vegetable mash • Ripe avocado • Soft fruit, peeled • Tinned fruit • Stewed fruit • Smooth fruit juice or smoothie 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raw vegetables e.g. salad • Stringy vegetables e.g. celery, runner beans, okra, aubergine • Vegetables with tough skins e.g. corn • Fruits with skins on • Pithy or stringy fruit e.g. oranges, mango, pineapple • Dried fruit or soften in water
Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta, and other starchy foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bread softened in soups • Thin breads e.g flatbread, chapatti • Mashed or boiled potatoes • Well cooked pasta and rice, serve with a sauce or a few spoonfuls of soup • Porridge/Ready Brek • Other cereals like cornflakes or rice krispies - use plenty of milk to ensure they are soft 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh doughy and crusty breads • Potatoes with skins on • Crispy chips • Roast potatoes • Crackers, crispbreads, rice cakes, hard pastry • Cereals with pieces of nuts and dried fruit e.g. muesli • Coarse cereals e.g. shredded wheat
Dairy and alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milk, yogurt or plant-based alternatives e.g. soy milk • Soft cheeses e.g. cottage cheese, cream cheese, grated cheese 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stringy melted cheese • Cheese with bits of nuts or dried fruit • Chunks of cheese

	Easy to manage	Be careful with
Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other protein rich foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-cooked or tinned beans and pulses of all kinds e.g. baked beans, lentil soup, dahl • Smooth hummus • Quorn, soy mince, or tofu • Smooth nut butters e.g. peanut butter • Ground nuts and seeds added to foods e.g. ground flaxseed to cereal • Eggs: scrambled, poached, omelette, soft-boiled, soufflés, egg custard • Minced cuts of meat with sauce • Poached, boiled, steamed fish with sauce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All pulses and beans should be well cooked or use tinned varieties • Chopped, flaked or whole nuts • Chunky nut butters • Eggs: hard-boiled, fried • Stringy chunks of meat • Fat grisly meat • Fish with bones • Dry fish • Shellfish with shells on
Other foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ice cream, sorbet • Soft desserts e.g. fruit crumble, rice pudding, custard, soft cake, fruit crumble • Crisps that melt in your mouth e.g. Quavers, Wotsits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any cakes, biscuits or yogurts with dried fruit or nuts. • Soak hard biscuits in warm drinks • Sticky sweets and toffees • Hard crisps

What if food gets stuck?

- Do not panic.
- Stop eating. Take sips of a warm or fizzy drink. Walk until you feel it clear.
- If food stays stuck, contact your GP or the UHD Endoscopy Department: **0300 019 4667**

What can I do to reduce heartburn?

- Keep a regular eating pattern. Eat little and often.
- Sit upright when eating. This helps food go down.
- Do not bend or lie down for one hour after eating.
- Eat slowly. Chew food well.
- Avoid tight fitting belts or clothing.
- Sleep in a semi-upright position using extra pillows.
- Sleeping on your left side can be helpful.
- Don't eat late at night. Leave at least an hour before going to bed.
- Reduce alcohol intake, smoking and vaping.
- Reduce caffeine.
- Avoid very hot and spicy food.
- Reduce junk food and fried food e.g. crisps, chips, rich desserts.
- Be as physically active as you can.

Sample meal ideas

Breakfast

- Cereal, well soaked in milk/plant-based milk e.g. Weetabix, cornflakes, Rice Krispies
- Porridge/Ready Brek
- Scrambled eggs or scrambled tofu
- Yogurt/plant-based yogurt with soft peeled fruit or stewed fruit e.g. stewed apple, plums, peaches
- Fruit smoothie made with milk/plant-based milk, add smooth peanut butter for extra calories and protein if required

Main meals

- Jacket potato (no skin) with a soft filling e.g. baked beans, grated cheese, tuna
- Dahl (lentil stew)
- Tender meat or chicken in a gravy or sauce
- Shepherd's pie or cottage pie made with beef or soy mince
- Fish pie or fish in sauce (no bones)
- Curry dishes made with tender meat, tofu or beans

Serve main meals with:

- Mashed potato or inside of baked potato (no skin)
- Soft well-cooked or mashed vegetables e.g. carrots, cauliflower, broccoli, swede, parsnips

Light meals

- Soups or stews with no big chunks e.g. cream of tomato or lentil soup
- Omelette with cheese

Snacks

- Yogurt or plant-based yogurt with tinned fruit
- Houmous or guacamole (avocado dip) with thin bread/flatbread
- Apple sauce
- Piece of soft fruit e.g. banana
- Rice pudding or custard
- Hot milky drinks

This advice is for general guidance only. Please follow any specific advice you may have been given. If you have any concerns or are losing weight, please contact your doctor and ask to see a dietitian.

To read this leaflet in a different language,
please visit our website: www.uhd.nhs.uk/visit/patient-information-leaflets
and use the language and accessibility function available along the top of the site.

To ask for this leaflet in larger print, please contact the patient experience team on **0300 019 8499**
or email uhd.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net.

The Royal Bournemouth Hospital, Castle Lane East, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH7 7DW

Author: **Munire Didem Varol** Date: **November 2025** Version: **Four** Review date: **November 2028** Ref: **093/25**

t: 01202 303626 w: www.uhd.nhs.uk f: @UHDTrust i: @uhd_nhs

Some of our hospital services are moving.
Visit www.uhd.nhs.uk/future to find out more.