

# Fundoplication recovery and diet guide

After your surgery, your stomach and oesophagus need time to heal. A puréed diet helps reduce discomfort, protect the repair, and support a smooth recovery.

In the first few weeks, swelling around the repair site can make swallowing feel tighter. If solid food is eaten too early, it can get stuck, causing pain or vomiting — and may risk damaging the repair.

## At a glance

Day 1	Fluids only
Day 2 to week 6	Puréed or soft foods
After 6 weeks	Slowly return to your normal diet



# Detailed diet, from day 1 to after 6 weeks

## Day 1: Start with liquids only. Sip slowly and stop as soon as you feel full.

### What you can drink:

- Water or diluted fruit juice
- Tea, herbal tea, or coffee
- Milk or hot chocolate (not too hot)
- Clear soups (e.g. consommé, strained broth)
- Nutritional drinks (e.g. Up & Go, Complan, Vitaplan)
- Flat electrolyte drinks or cordial
- Smooth fruit smoothies (milk/yoghurt blended with banana and tinned fruit)

### Avoid:

- Fizzy drinks (Coke, soda water, beer, kombucha)
- Acidic drinks (undiluted juice, lemon drinks, tomato soup)
- Very hot, icy cold, or spicy fluids
- Straws or chewing gum

## Day 2 to week 6: Begin puréed foods.

### Guidelines:

Food should be blended to a baby food texture. It shouldn't contain any lumps and should be swallowed without needing to chew. Take small bites, eat slowly, and stop when you feel full. Try to eat soft, protein-rich food like eggs, yoghurt, fish, and cottage cheese.

### Avoid (until after 6 weeks):

- Bread, scones, muffins, pizza, cakes
- Tough or dry meats
- Raw vegetables and fruit with skins, seeds, or fibres
- Popcorn, nuts, seeds, dried fruit, muesli
- Cooked fibrous vegetables (e.g. cabbage, corn, beans)

As you approach 6 weeks and are tolerating purée well, you can slowly try foods that chew down easily — like soft casseroles, omelettes.

## After 6 weeks: Gradually reintroduce foods with normal textures into your diet.

### You can try:

- Soft breads, pasta, and rice
- Moist meats (slow-cooked beef, chicken thighs, meatballs)
- Lightly cooked vegetables
- Peeled fruits
- Toast with soft toppings

It's normal to still feel some residual tightness, especially when swallowing certain foods. This tightness can persist for up to 12 weeks, as swelling continues to settle and scar tissue around the repair remodels. Start with smaller portions and avoid very dry or fibrous foods initially.

If you experience discomfort or food impaction at this stage, return to softer foods for a few days and try again.

Recovery can vary between individuals. Ongoing pain, frequent food impaction, or vomiting after this point should be reviewed by your surgical team.

# Fundoplication recovery

## If food feels stuck

It's normal to feel tightness where the surgery was done, especially when swallowing. But if food feels stuck:

- Stop eating immediately — do not try to force food down.
- Sit upright, stand up, or walk gently — gravity helps food move.
- Sip small amounts of room-temperature water.
- Try a few sips of fizzy drink (e.g. cola).  
The carbonic acid may help break down the food. Drink no more than 200 mL, and sip slowly.

If the food passes down or is vomited back up and the pain resolves, the emergency has passed. Stick to fluids only for 2 days, then slowly return to puréed foods.

If pain continues even after food has cleared, seek medical advice.

## Bloating

Bloating is very common in the first few weeks after surgery because the stomach no longer refluxes, so gas doesn't escape as easily.

Gas-producing foods (beans, cabbage, onions, fizzy drinks) can worsen symptoms.

### Tips to reduce bloating

- Eat slowly and chew well
- Avoid fizzy drinks, straws, and chewing gum
- Eat small, frequent meals
- Stay upright for 30–60 minutes after eating
- Gentle walking helps move gas

## When to seek medical advice

Most blockages settle within 30 minutes.

Seek urgent medical attention if symptoms last more than 2 hours and you:

- Have food stuck in your lower oesophagus with pain and vomiting
- Cannot swallow saliva or even small sips of water
- Have already tried sitting upright, sipping water, a small amount of fizzy drink, and walking — with no improvement

Contact me or go directly to your nearest emergency department. You may need the food bolus to be removed with a gastroscope.

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