



North Thames Cleft Centre at Great Ormond Street Hospital: Information for Families

# Food suggestions following cleft surgery

**This information sheet about suggested foods accompanies the information sheet *Cleft palate repair* produced by Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH). It contains suggestions for all age groups but please note that some foods may not be appropriate for children under one year old.**

**After cleft surgery, it is advisable to have a sloppy or soft diet for the first two weeks. Your child will find this more comfortable and it will reduce the risk of damage to the repair. Your child should be able to build up to his or her normal diet by the third week.**

**Please note that any specific brand names mentioned are given as examples and own-label foods can be substituted. Remember that your child should rinse well with water after all meals or milky drinks.**

## General tips

- Feed your child small amounts more frequently – this can be more manageable than larger meals three times a day
- Try using sauces, gravy, butter, cream or custard to soften foods
- Soften foods by chopping, mincing or mashing
- Avoid foods that are hard, sharp or require a lot of chewing

## Cereals

- Porridge or Ready-Brek® made with milk
- Weetabix®, cornflakes or Rice Krispies® well soaked in milk
- Bread – cut off the crusts and do not toast

## Meat and poultry

- Well cooked and tender minced meat (Shepherd's pie or cottage pie)
- Corned beef hash or meat loaf
- Chilli con carne
- Skinless sausages
- Tender meat in stews, hotpots or casseroles – do not use large chunks of meat
- Avoid meat or poultry in breadcrumbs



Great Ormond Street and St Andrew's  
**North Thames Cleft Centre**  
North London - Essex - South and West Hertfordshire



## **Fish**

- Flaked fish in white, cheese or parsley sauce
- Fisherman's pie, fish cakes, fish and potato nests
- Fish mousse or light pate
- Tinned fish such as salmon or sardines
- Tuna mixed with mayonnaise
- Avoid fish in batter or breadcrumbs

## **Eggs and cheese**

- Scrambled, poached, boiled or as an omelette
- Egg mayonnaise
- Egg dishes such as sweet or savoury egg custard or soufflés
- Quiche
- Cauliflower cheese
- Cottage cheese
- Grated cheese
- Dairylea® triangles, cheese spread or cream cheese

## **Pulses and nuts**

- Baked beans with grated cheese
- Mushy peas
- Lentils made into dahl
- Smooth peanut butter
- Avoid whole nuts due to the risk of choking

## **Pasta and rice dishes**

- Lasagne
- Moussaka
- Bolognese sauce with pasta
- Macaroni cheese

- Ravioli

- Pasta with different sauces such as goats' cheese, mushroom, carbonara or creamy tomato
- Tinned spaghetti
- Noodles
- Rice

## **Potatoes and vegetables**

- Soft carrot, parsnip, turnip, swede, cauliflower, broccoli and courgettes are all easy to mash
- Avoid raw vegetables
- Try adding grated cheese, extra butter or margarine and serve with white sauce, cheese sauce or gravy
- Ratatouille
- Instant mashed potato as a quick alternative to fresh
- Mash the inside of a jacket potato with butter and add a suitable filling
- Dips such as hummus, guacamole or taramasalata

## **Fruits**

- Tinned or stewed fruit such as apples, pears and peaches
- Fresh fruit such as banana, melon, strawberries, soft plums

## **Desserts and snacks**

- Milk puddings such as rice pudding or semolina
- Yoghurt, fromage frais or milk jelly
- Ice cream or sorbet
- Jelly or trifle
- Mousses and whips



- Ready made chocolate desserts
- Egg custard
- Crème caramel
- Blancmange
- Home made, powdered, ready made cartons or tins of custard
- Fruit fools and purees
- Cheesecake
- Bread and butter pudding
- Sponge pudding with custard or cream
- Lemon meringue pudding
- Fruit crumble
- Savoury or sweet pancakes
- Biscuits dipped in a hot drink to soften
- Soft cake

## Drinks

- Milk shakes
- Hot milky drinks –avoid anything too hot for the first day or two
- Fruit juices
- Complan® or Build Up®

## Sample menu

### Breakfast

- Diluted fruit juice if desired
- Cereal or porridge with milk
- Bread (crusts removed) with margarine/ butter and jelly-type jam
- Egg/fish if desired
- Milk or tea/coffee with milk

### Lunch

- Meat/fish/eggs/cheese/baked beans
- Potato/rice/pasta/bread (crusts removed)
- Soft cooked vegetables
- Soft fruit or suitable pudding from suggestions above

### Evening meal

- Meat/fish/eggs/cheese
- Potato/rice/pasta/bread (crusts removed)

Milk, milk shakes, warm milky drinks and squash along with snacks of soft fruit, yoghurt, fromage frais and cake can be taken in between meals throughout the day if desired.

### If you have any questions, please call:

**Great Ormond Street  
Children's Hospital**

**Peter Pan Ward  
020 7829 8825**

**Clinical Nurse Specialist  
020 7813 8439**

**St Andrew's Centre,  
Broomfield Hospital**

**Moonbeam Ward  
01245 516 094 or 01245 516 095**

**Clinical Nurse Specialist  
01245 516 029**

Compiled by the North Thames Cleft Centre at Great Ormond Street Hospital and St Andrew's Centre, Broomfield Hospital in collaboration with the Child and Family Information Group at GOSH

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[www.goshfamilies.nhs.uk](http://www.goshfamilies.nhs.uk)

[www.childrenfirst.nhs.uk](http://www.childrenfirst.nhs.uk)