



Clear Liquid Diet

A clear liquid diet limits you to water, broth, and plain gelatin options. These are easy to digest and don't leave food bits in your digestive tract. Your health care provider may prescribe a clear liquid diet before or after some medical procedures or if you have digestive problems such as vomiting or diarrhea. A clear liquid diet can't give you all the necessary calories and nutrients. So, it generally shouldn't be continued for more than a few days.

If prepping for a colonoscopy procedure, avoid red or purple clear liquids. Otherwise, clear liquids may have some color. Liquids with some color are allowed if you can see through them. Foods can be considered liquid if they partly or completely melt to clear fluid at room temperature. You can't eat solid food while on a clear liquid diet.

Purpose

A clear liquid diet is often used before tests or procedures that require an empty stomach or clear intestines. For example, you may need a clear liquid diet before a colon exam, also called a colonoscopy. Or you may need to be on a clear liquid diet before and after certain types of surgery. A clear liquid diet may be recommended for a short time if you have certain digestive problems, such as nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.



Diet details

A clear liquid diet helps give you enough fluids to stay hydrated. It also provides electrolytes such as sodium and potassium. This diet gives your body some energy at a time when you can't eat a complete diet.

The following items are often part of a clear liquid diet:

- Water, plain, carbonated or flavored.
- Fruit juices without pulp, such as apple or white grape juice.
- Fruit-flavored beverages, such as fruit punch or lemonade.
- Carbonated drinks, including dark sodas, such as cola and root beer.

- Gelatin without fruit.
- Tea or coffee without milk, cream, or nondairy creamer.
- Sports drinks.
- Clear, fat-free broth such as bouillon or consommé.
- Honey or sugar.
- Hard candy, such as lemon drops or peppermint rounds.
- Ice pops *without* milk, bits of fruit, seeds, or nuts.
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Depending on your medical condition, your healthcare provider may make changes to the list of allowed liquids. Your provider may ask you to avoid liquids or gelatin with red or purple coloring for specific tests, such as colon exams. Avoid beverages or foods not on the list you get from your provider.

To keep from feeling hungry and stay hydrated, drink various clear liquids throughout the day.

Results

The clear liquid diet is not very exciting. But it's designed to keep your stomach and intestines clear. It also limits strain on your digestive system while giving your body enough fluid.



Center For Digestive Health & Nutrition

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