



PATIENT GUIDES - NUTRITION

Recipes for Recovery

A soft-food guide for the weeks after implant surgery



by Gretchen Targee

Written by one of our own full-arch patients, after living every day of the journey herself.

Published with her permission, in her voice, with our gratitude.

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Gretchen's guide is personal wisdom, not medical advice. It complements - never replaces - your post-surgery instructions; for anything medical, those instructions and Dr. Charles' guidance come first.



ACT I

Before surgery - stock your kitchen

There are a few things that are helpful done prior to surgery:

- ◆ Pre- and probiotic capsules - these will help whilst taking the inevitable antibiotics.
- ◆ Although a blender is all right, I suggest a NutriBullet: multiple blades, containers, lids and handles, perfect for single servings, easy to clean up!
- ◆ An immersion blender.
- ◆ Liquid B12.
- ◆ Powdered vitamin C - the body absorbs up to 500 mg easily; take 500 mg at a time added to water. Drink lots of water (suggested: half your body weight in ounces daily).
- ◆ Portable water containers.
- ◆ Frozen dairy or dairy-free 'ice cream' (more on this later).
- ◆ Cartons of soup stock.
- ◆ Rice and/or oats to grind (in your NutriBullet!).
- ◆ Milk - nut, soy or cow, whichever you prefer.
- ◆ Smooth nut butter.
- ◆ In summer: frozen and fresh fruit and vegetables. In winter: canned pumpkin or frozen veggies.
- ◆ Protein powder - protein is what promotes healing.
- ◆ Walnuts, or any nut you prefer.

Other things will become clear as time passes, but the first week one feels crappy, so you may not care too much about cooking! Also consider prepackaged Indian foods - dahls and curries are convenient, nutritious, and easy (Everyday Dahl by Maya Kaimal is in almost every store, in the international section).

The recipes herein are not always exact - add or subtract according to your taste. Remember, this way of eating is TEMPORARY, so don't cheat and jeopardize the outcome of the dental work. Be creative! At the end will be a beautiful smile, better overall health, and all the chewing your heart may desire.



ACT II

Some facts (as Gretchen sees them)



Our immune system attends to the mouth's needs first, before all else. So when the mouth is repaired, and diseased teeth, bones, and gums are healed, our entire body will benefit. Remember this and be patient with your recovery.

Protein is the most potent promoter of healing.

Sugar is no friend of teeth - be moderate, now and in the future.

Medications work the kidneys and liver hard, so learn ways to strengthen them - many foods, teas, and herbs help. In other healing traditions, the kidneys are associated with the teeth and with courage; the liver with contentment and the smooth flow of energy. Sour tastes are said to support the liver, bitters the heart - moderation is the key.



ACT III

The first week - be gentle with yourself



The first week or ten days is not pleasant. After a couple of days normal activities are feasible, but in truth, one will still feel crappy. Let friends help if they offer. Or ask. Pride has no place in the first days after oral surgery - and besides, our friends and relatives WANT to help. If you must return to work, be patient with yourself; don't bend over too much or pick up heavy things. When you come home: rest. Binge-watch a show. Listen to or read a book. And sleep... a lot. Rest is the best!

In the early days, make a protein shake daily and add a little frozen ice cream (dairy or non-dairy) and/or frozen fruit like blueberries or peaches. Cool and slightly numbing, it feels like a well-deserved treat - which lifts the spirit. In warmer months, freeze citrus juice in ice trays with popsicle sticks for a refreshing vitamin-C treat.

As time passes, begin to lessen the sweets - because, you know, sugar contributed to the poor dental situation in the first place! But spoil yourself a little in the beginning. It's okay. Dental surgery is traumatic; our bodies have been through something and our nervous systems stretched.

IV

ACT IV

The shakes

The workhorses of recovery eating. Liquid in first, then powder - it blends better. More dry ingredients = thicker; drink it on the go, or eat it like pudding with a spoon. ('Ice cream' in this guide always includes the non-dairy kind.)

THE CLASSIC

The protein shake

- ◆ Nut or cow milk
- ◆ Protein powder of your choice
- ◆ Frozen ice cream or sorbet
- ◆ Frozen fruit, or frozen sweeter squash (butternut works best)
- ◆ Raw unsalted nuts (almonds, walnuts, cashews)
- ◆ Non-citrus fruit juice, or fresh fruit
- ◆ Ground flax, nut and seed butters
- ◆ Coconut cream (a tablespoon will do) or coconut milk

Fresh apples, blueberries, and flax make the shake gel - it's fine, just eat it with a spoon. Keep portions reasonable (an 8-oz glassful); protein and fruit together can be a musical combination, so portioning is learned individually!

SHAKE... OR PUDDING?

Sweet potato & squash shake

- ◆ Baked squash or sweet potato (375-400 deg until a knife pierces easily; sweet-potato pieces baked covered with butter, cinnamon, a little clove and nutmeg, and some water, ~40 min) - or canned pumpkin / microwaved frozen squash
- ◆ Frozen ice cream of choice (not chocolate)
- ◆ Milk of choice
- ◆ A handful of walnuts, or some almond butter
- ◆ One egg (optional)
- ◆ Spice: cinnamon or garam masala
- ◆ Sweetener: maple, honey, or agave (optional)

Blend until creamy like pudding. A note: excessive sweet potato is a lot of potassium - be mindful.

THE FRUITY ONE

Fruit shake

- ◆ Fruit juice of choice - especially a thicker one like apricot or pear
- ◆

Sorbet or frozen fruit: mango, peach, strawberry

- ◆ Cashew butter (optional - the sweeter nut; lovely flavor and texture)

More juice = thinner, less = thicker. Can be as simple as juice + fruit, frozen or fresh.

THE HEARTY ONE

Granola shake

- ◆ Granola of your choice
- ◆ Nut, coconut, or cow milk
- ◆ Nut butter of choice
- ◆ Any nuts; seeds if desired (pumpkin, sunflower)
- ◆ Dried (soaked) or fresh fruit
- ◆ Sweetener (so very optional)

Blend thoroughly - it has nuts and oats. And of course there's the traditional milkshake: milk + vanilla ice cream + any extract you like. Moderation on the sugary stuff!



FIRST INTERMISSION

A word on protein, from a long-time vegetarian cook

Of the 20 amino acids in nature, 9 are essential - and all 9 are found in animal protein. But pureed meat is, frankly, a challenge. The good news: by combining vegetables, legumes, nuts, and seeds, we get all 9 without animal flesh. Tofu is bland, which means it flavors beautifully and purees well. Lentils are a great source too - which is why those packaged Indian dahls earn their place. Pureed legumes are genuinely tasty: hummus, refried black beans, creamy soups. And yes - 'beans, beans, the musical fruit' - but gas can be minimized by how beans are cooked and with what. (The lentil recipe shows the trick.)





ACT V - THE MAIN EVENT

Marinades & soups



C = cup - T = tablespoon - t = teaspoon. Whisk marinade ingredients together and store in a jar - they keep a week to 10 days in the fridge. Use them in soups, on vegetables, with tofu, beans and lentils - and later on everything, when pureeing is no longer required!

MARINADE

Spring / Summer

- ◆ 1/3 C oil (olive, canola, sunflower or avocado)
- ◆ 1 1/4 T sea salt or Himalayan pink salt
- ◆ 1 1/4 C rice wine vinegar
- ◆ 1 3/4 C tamari (a kind of soy sauce)
- ◆ 1 1/2 C tahini (sesame-seed butter)
- ◆ 1 C honey, agave, or rice yinny
- ◆ 2 T dried dill or 1/4 C finely chopped fresh dill

MARINADE

Autumn / Winter

- ◆ 1/3 C toasted sesame oil
- ◆ 1 1/4 T sea salt or pink Himalayan salt
- ◆ 1 1/4 C rice wine vinegar
- ◆ 1 3/4 C tamari
- ◆ 1 1/2 C tahini
- ◆ 1 C honey, agave, or rice yinny
- ◆ 2 1/2 T cumin
- ◆ 1/2 T chili powder (optional)

MARINADE

Another Marinade

- ◆ 1/3 C toasted sesame oil
- ◆ 1 1/4 T sea salt
- ◆ 1/2 C lemon juice
- ◆ 1/2 C apple cider or rice wine vinegar
- ◆ 1 C tamari
- ◆ 3/4 C sun butter
- ◆ 3/4 C tahini
- ◆

1/3 C brown sugar (oh so optional)

- ◆ 2 T ginger powder
- ◆ 2 T cumin or 1 t clove powder

SOUP - SWEET

Sweet Squash Soup

- ◆ One medium pumpkin + one medium butternut squash, cooked (or 2 large cans pumpkin; the butternut still gets baked or microwaved)
- ◆ 1 stick unsalted butter (or 8 T alternative)
- ◆ 1 carton cashew milk
- ◆ Maple syrup to taste
- ◆ 2 T cinnamon - 1 T cardamom - 2 T ginger - 1 level t clove - 1 t garam masala

Warm the cashew milk (not boiling!), add squash, then butter; stir until melted, add spices, adjust to taste. Eat hot, warm, or cold. Freezes beautifully - yummy for the whole family too.

SOUP - SAVORY

Savory Squash Soup

- ◆ Same amounts of pumpkin and butternut squash
- ◆ 1 stick unsalted butter (or 8 T alternative)
- ◆ 1 carton vegetable stock
- ◆ 1 large red onion - 4 stalks celery
- ◆ 2 T garam masala - 1 T ground ginger (or 1/4 C fresh) - 1 level T cinnamon - 1 level T salt - 2 t pepper

Saute onion and celery until nearly clear; add stock, squash, and butter. Loosen with water if desired, add spices, simmer, taste. Then the immersion blender makes it velvet.

SOUP - HEARTY

Mildly Spiced Red Lentil Soup

- ◆ 4 C red lentils (which are actually yellow) - 1 quart water
- ◆ 3 medium red onions - 1 small bunch celery - 4 carrots, thinly sliced
- ◆ Oil of choice (olive is very good)
- ◆ 1 level T salt - 1 level T cumin - 1 T curry - 1 T turmeric (more for a deeper yellow!) - 1 t chili powder (optional)

Rinse the lentils, swishing to release foam, three times; soak until swollen, then cook on medium-low, skimming the foam - that's the cooking hack that minimizes the musical after-effects. Saute onions and celery in oil, add spices and carrots, then combine with the cooked lentils. Serve with a dollop of yogurt - try blending fresh mint into it. A delightful taste treat.

Any soup can be pureed - the immersion blender is essential - and most freeze well. Soups can be thickened with ground rice (best already cooked). Making healthy, satisfying meals can truly lift our spirits and evoke creativity we didn't know we had. So be bold - and know that soon your eating will be back to normal, or maybe even much better.



A guide that keeps growing

Gretchen keeps discovering new recipes - a breakfast chapter is already in the works - so this guide will grow over time, always in her words. Written by Gretchen Targee; published with her permission and our gratitude. She retains ownership of her work.

