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Liver reduction diet for surgery



Patient information

What is a liver reduction diet?

A liver reduction diet is a diet low in calories and carbohydrates. You must only drink liquids for two weeks and not eat any food. It is enough nutrition to keep you well. It is likely you will lose weight but it is not a diet for weight loss.

Why do I need to follow this diet?

Your surgeon has advised you to follow this diet to shrink your liver. This means the surgeon will have safer access to your stomach and reduce the risk of damage to your liver during the operation.

Are there any side effects?

- You might feel tired as you are eating less than 1000kcal/day.
- If you are constipated, take a laxative like lactulose, milk of magnesia or movicol.
- If you have diarrhoea, take immodium and switch to lactofree or soya milk. If the diarrhoea continues, ring your doctor for further advice.

What is the risk of not following the diet?

Your surgery will be stopped if your liver is too large and it is not safe to continue with the surgery.

Do you have diabetes?

Please speak to your diabetes team before starting this diet. Your diabetes team will advise you on any changes to your medications for diabetes as you will only be having **120g** of carbohydrate per day. If you take insulin or tablets that can cause hypos, you need to check your blood sugar levels at least 4 times per day.

Do you have kidney problems?

This diet is often not suitable if you have problems with your kidneys. Speak to your kidney doctor before starting this diet.

How long do I need to follow the diet?

You must follow the diet for two weeks before your operation.

Liver reduction diet

You cannot eat solid food. You must have the following every day:

- 4 pints (2 litres) of semi-skimmed cow's milk, lactose free milk or soya original. Please note that alternative milks such as oat, almond or rice milk are not suitable
- 2 pints (1 litre) of calorie free drinks
- 1 salty drink e.g. marmite, Bovril, stock cube or 1 tsp salt in squash
- 1 multivitamin and mineral tablet.

Allowed calorie free drinks:

- Tea, coffee and herbal tea (no sugar)
- Water
- No added sugar squash
- No added sugar crusha or 0 kcal syrups can be added to milk.

Allowed extras:

- Sugar free jelly. You can have 1 sachet which makes 1 pint of jelly or 5 x 115g pots every day
- Chewing gum (maximum 3 pieces per day).

Tips

- Keep your milk separate from anyone else's at home
- Use sweeteners instead of sugar in tea and coffee
- Plan ahead – try and spread your drinks evenly though the day
- Consider how the diet may affect your family and what support you will need e.g. who will do the cooking
- Think about how you are going to cope in different situations e.g. at work or at special occasions
- Remove all tempting foods from the house.

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