

C L E A R L I Q U I D D I E T

PATIENT/FAMILY INFORMATION SHEET

What is a clear liquid diet?

When your doctor orders a clear liquid diet for you, it means that you must consume only foods or beverages that are liquid, or that become liquid at room temperature. In addition, these foods and beverages must be clear enough to “see through”. Some examples of “clear liquids” include apple or cranberry juice, Jell-O, popsicles, fruit ice, broth, tea, and some types of soda (ginger ale, 7-up, seltzer).

Why do I need to follow a clear liquid diet?

A clear liquid diet is often prescribed in preparation for surgery or for recovery shortly after surgery. A clear liquid diet helps to maintain vital fluids, salts, and minerals, while providing some energy when your normal food intake must be interrupted. Clear liquids are easily absorbed by the body and leave no residue in the stomach or bowels.

How long can I follow a clear liquid diet?

A clear liquid diet does not meet the Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA) for nutrients and calories. It consists of approximately 1000 –1200 calories per day and very little protein. It should not be used as your only source of nutrition for more than three days. A clear liquid diet should not be used unless prescribed by your doctor.

Is a clear liquid diet safe for diabetics?

A clear liquid diet may be safely prescribed for diabetics when their normal food intake is interrupted for a short period of time. Clear liquids provide a source of carbohydrates for those on medications to treat diabetes, such as insulin or oral hypoglycemic agents.

How can I get more information?

It is often difficult to plan a meal by yourself, especially if your diet has recently been changed. If you have questions about your diet, please call to contact a Greenwich Hospital Registered Dietitian or one of the following resources:

Organization	Phone
Greenwich Hospital Food and Nutrition Services	203.863.5211
American Dietetic Association	800.877.1600
Web Resources	
<input type="checkbox"/> American Dietetic Association www.eatright.org	
<input type="checkbox"/> United States Food and Drug Administration: http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/foodlab.html .	