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**A Publication
of Atlanta South
Gastroenterology, P.C.**

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THE LIQUID DIET

Clear Liquids

Clear liquids provide fluids and some calories, but leave no residue in the intestinal tract. This diet is lacking in protein, fat and fiber, and provides minimal stimulation to the intestinal tract. A clear liquid diet is useful before and after certain types of surgery, in preparation for x-ray and endoscopic examinations of the intestinal tract, and when illness prevents the ingestion of solid food (for example, when there has been vomiting or in cases of partial intestinal obstruction). The diet consists of liquids which are clear (rather than cloudy or opaque).

Clear Liquid Foods

Beverages: water, black coffee, tea, water, carbonated beverages, clear strained juices, Gatorade, Kool-Aid, Crystal Light, clear alcoholic beverages

Juices: any clear, strained juice (apple, orange, cranberry, grape)

Soups: broth, bouillon

Desserts: gelatin without fruit, popsicles, ices

Miscellaneous: hard candy, sugar, honey

Dairy, Breads, Fruits, Vegetables, Meats: none

Caution: when preparing for colonoscopy, avoid any red or purple products (for example, raspberry Jell-o or grape popsicles) because the artificial coloring is not digested and will interfere with your exam

Full Liquids

Full liquids provide fluids, calories, and more substance than clear liquids, but with less intestinal residue than a solid diet. Full liquids are used as a transition between clear liquids and solids, and in those who have difficulty chewing and swallowing solids. Unlike the clear liquid diet, a full liquid diet can meet most basic nutritional needs. Dairy products feature prominently in full liquid diets, and modifications must be made in cases of lactose intolerance.

Full Liquid Foods

Dairy: milk, buttermilk, chocolate milk, yogurt, eggnog, milkshakes, melted cheeses, cottage cheese, pudding, cream, butter, tapioca, soft margarine

Cereals: cream of wheat, cream of rice, grits, thin oatmeal

Soups: broth, bouillon, cream soups

Vegetables and Fruit: all juices

Meats: strained meat

Eggs: scrambled, soft cooked, poached

Breads: none

Beverages: coffee, tea, water, carbonated beverages, clear juices, Gatorade, Kool-Aid, Crystal Light, lemonade

Miscellaneous: nutritional supplements (Ensure, Boost, Instant Breakfast, etc.)