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COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK

IN AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS

U. of N. Agr. College & U. S. Dept. of Agr. Cooperating
W. H. Brokaw, Director, Lincoln

Extension
Circular
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FOOD FOR THE SICK AND CONVALESCENT IN THE HOME

The person who is sick is seeking recovery from his illness; the convalescent is seeking to regain his health. An adequate intake of all food nutrients will help to maintain resistance and shorten the convalescent period. Food is important but it alone is not enough. Sufficient rest, regularity of essential routine nursing care, fresh air, and sunshine will whet the appetite and aid in the utilization of the food. Our concern now is with the food to be used in cases of minor illnesses and convalescence. If a special diet is needed, directions should be provided by the physician.

The homemaker has a full time job. Cases of illness create an emergency to be met. Meeting the emergency should be done as simply as possible. Extra fussing, whether it be the care of the patient or the food, does not hasten recovery, and may become a worry to the patient. A few simple foods, properly cooked, served neatly and simply when at their best, at regular intervals will please a patient and lessen the work of the homemaker. If the homemaker knows the likes of the patient, instead of asking just before a meal what he wants, a little catering will make him happy. The family meals may be planned to include some of the food needed by the patient, - as cooked cereal for breakfast, cream soup for lunch and simple desserts. Even the family meals may be simplified to lessen the work for the one who plans and prepares them.

Types of Diets

The nutritional needs and the physical condition of the patient must be considered. The diet should be adequate in all food nutrients - providing enough protein and emphasizing the vitamins. Ascorbic acid (vitamin C) is especially important in cases of infectious diseases. In fever the need for calories, ascorbic acid, and thiamin is increased. The form of the food, whether liquid, or soft, or closely resembling a regular diet, will be determined by the nature of the illness, the stage of the convalescence, or the ability of the person to take the food.

There are four types of diets that may be used: liquid, soft, light, and full. The liquid diet is the most temporary one, giving the food in the most easily digested and assimilated form. A clear liquid diet provides the fewest calories, and is used only for short periods in cases of severe illness. Milk, cream, or egg yolks are not used in the clear liquid diet, but are used in a regular liquid diet. All food should be in liquid form, strained before serving, or should be foods that liquify readily in the mouth such as plain sherbets, ice cream, or gelatin desserts. Six to eight ounces (3/4 - 1 cup) at a time may be provided at two to three hour intervals.

The soft diet serves as an intermediate step from liquid to light and full diets. In this diet the food is made as soft and easily digested as possible. It should be free of tough particles and coarse fibers. It may be advisable to provide supplements to this diet through use of between-meal feedings.

The light diet, sometimes called the convalescent diet, is a closer step to the full or regular diet, and is commonly used in minor illnesses. More solid food is included, but with some limitations as to type of food selected and the method of preparing it. It is still best to select foods which are readily digested and to have them plainly cooked. Coarse fibered vegetables, such as celery and corn, meats with much connective tissue as veal, and nuts should not be used.

A full diet contains those foods which would be provided in simple well-balanced meals. Omit those foods which are digested slowly under normal conditions, such as fried foods, pastries, steamed puddings and foods rich in fat. Also, omit the gas-forming vegetables such as cabbage, cauliflower, turnips, rutabagas, dried beans, and onions, and any specific food that distresses the convalescent person who is being served.

Let Us Remember

PALATABILITY OF FOOD - In the case of possible delay in serving, plan to prepare those foods which do not deteriorate on holding.

Taste the food before serving to see that it is pleasantly seasoned.

Have those foods hot which are supposed to be served hot; the cold foods cold, and the crisp ones crisp. Individual casseroles or ramekins make an attractive service and aid in keeping hot food hot. Dishes for cold foods may be chilled in the refrigerator before using.

ESTHETIC FACTORS - Have the food "Just right!" Let the maxim be to make the food create the desire to eat.

Simplicity of preparation and service are more pleasing than overdone arrangements. A variation in serving dishes to change the setting, a garnish of parsley, mint leaf, jelly or whipped cream, or a single fresh flower on a tray add a note of color and make a more attractive service.

Neatness and avoidance of too many dishes on a tray are important. The tray cloth and napkin should be simple and spotless.

Consider the manner of serving and the ease of eating. Toast may be cut in strips, small squares or triangles. Cut meat in suitable size pieces. Open the baked potato and put some butter on top. Paper straws aid in the sipping of beverages.

Adjust the variety of foods and size servings to suit the appetite of the patient. It would be better to serve a second helping than to have a large one overwhelm the appetite.

Do not leave food or soiled dishes standing in a sick room.

PROVIDE PLENTY OF WATER - Water is essential for the sick and the well. If the patient is well enough to help himself, fresh water may be kept at the bedside. If he is not able to help himself offer water to him frequently.

IN CASE OF CONTAGION - Destroy left over food from the tray.

Boil the dishes used by the patient. Use as few dishes as possible and continue to use the same ones. Attractive paper cups may be purchased and burned after using.

Food Selection and Preparation Suggestions

LIQUID DIET

- Milk in all forms: sweet, sour, malted; milk and cream mixtures; milk shakes.
- Eggs - whole egg or white beaten into beverages or chicken broth.
- Desserts - simple desserts, plain sherbets and ice creams, junket, and gelatins.
- Fruit juices and lemonade.
- Vegetables - cream soups, broth soups, juices - such as tomato, cooking water off of vegetables.
- Cereal - gruels.
- *Beverages - milk, tea, coffee, cocoa or chocolate, gingerale.
- Sweets - sugar or honey.

SOFT DIET

- Select any of the foods listed under liquid diet and from the following foods:
- Eggs - any way but fried. Poached, coddled, shirred, scrambled, omelet, souffle, and soft cooked in the shell.
 - Cheese - cottage or soft cream cheese.
 - Meats - broiled, roasted, or simmered. Tender fowl, fish, scraped beef, sweetbreads, and tender liver.
 - Fruits - fruit juices, strained, pureed cooked fruit. Canned pears, peaches, and peeled apricots may be used without being pureed. Avocado.
 - Vegetables - potatoes, baked, riced, mashed, souffle. Any mild flavored pureed vegetable - squash, peas, asparagus, carrots.
 - Cereals - refined or finely ground, and enriched preferred. Cooked. White bread or toast, soda crackers, rice, macaroni, noodles, spaghetti.
 - Desserts - Simple - custards, gelatin, fruit whips, sponge or angel food cake, milk puddings - rice, bread, cornstarch, tapioca, souffle.

LIGHT DIET

- Select any of the foods listed under liquid and soft diets and from the following:
- Cheese - Cottage or other mild cheese.
 - Meats - fine in texture and low in fat. They may be roasted, broiled, braised or simmered. Lamb, fowl, fish, liver, sweetbreads, scraped beef, and occasionally steak.
 - Fruits - those soft in texture. Any cooked fruit. Raw ripe fruits - citrus, bananas, pears, peaches, strawberries.
 - **Vegetables - mostly those soft in texture. Cooked asparagus, beets, carrots, green beans, peas, spinach, beets. Raw tomatoes and lettuce.
 - Salads - fruit or vegetable as allowed above; gelatin; cheese.
 - Cereals - preferably whole grain or enriched. No bran products.
 - Milk - at least a pint a day.

FULL DIET

- Select any of the foods listed under liquid, soft, and light diets and from the following:
- Meat - fish and eggs - any way but fried.
 - Fruits - raw, dried, or cooked. Aim to have one or more servings of citrus fruit or tomatoes daily.
 - **Vegetables - cooked or raw
 - Milk - at least a pint a day.

* Depending on age of patient and discretion of physician

** See suggestions given for types of diets on page 1.

Sample Diets

Liquid Diet

Breakfast

Strained Orange Juice
Strained Oatmeal Gruel*, Milk, Cream, Sugar
Milk

10:00 A.M.

Albuminized Fruit Juice*

Dinner

Cream of Asparagus Soup*
Fruit Juice Gelatin Cream
Milk

3:00 P.M.

Egg Nog*

Supper

Strained Vegetable Soup
Junket
Grape Juice

8:00 P.M.

Hot Cocoa *

Soft Diet

Breakfast

Grapefruit and Orange Juice
Farina cooked in Milk
Cream - Sugar
Poached egg* on Toast
Milk or Cocoa*

10:00 A.M.

Fruit Juice

Dinner

Hot Vegetable Juice Cocktail* Crackers
Spinach Souffle* Baked Potato
Toast - Butter
Applesauce
Milk

3:00 P.M.

Milk

Supper

Cream of Pea Soup* Crackers
Cottage Cheese
Puree of Carrot
Toast Butter Jelly
Baked Custard with Apricot Puree

8:00 P.M.

Chocolate Malted Milk*

Light Diet

Breakfast

Sliced Oranges
Oatmeal Cream Sugar
Scrambled Egg*
Toast Butter Jelly
Milk
Coffee if desired

Dinner

Vegetable soup Croutons
Baked Chicken Mashed Potatoes
Buttered String Beans
Whole Wheat Bread Butter
Peach and Pineapple Salad
Fruit Salad Dressing
Milk

Supper

Tomato Juice
Cheese Fondue*
Shredded Lettuce French Dressing
Whole Wheat Bread Butter
Plum Sauce
Milk or Cocoa

* Recipe given on pages 5 - 8

Recipes for the Sick and Convalescent Diet

Albuminized Fruit Juice

1/3 c. orange, lemon,
or grape juice

1 egg white
sugar or honey to taste

Beat egg white to a froth, add juice and strain. Sweeten to taste, and serve cold.

Egg Nog

1 egg
3/4 - 1 c. cold milk
1/16 tsp. salt

2 tsp. sugar
1/4 tsp. vanilla
Nutmeg if desired

Method 1:

Beat whole egg. Add salt, sugar, vanilla, and milk. Blend; pour into glass. Sprinkle nutmeg over top and serve.

Method 2:

Separate yolk and white of egg. Beat egg white with salt. Beat yolk; add sugar, vanilla and milk. Combine mixtures thoroughly and pour into glass. Sprinkle nutmeg over top and serve.

Method 3:

Use 1 1/2 cups milk. Scald. Separate yolk and white of egg. Add half of sugar to yolk. Add scalded milk to yolk and sugar slowly, stirring. Cook in double boiler until mixture coats a silver spoon, stirring constantly. Cool. Add salt to egg white and beat until stiff; add remaining sugar and mix well. Add vanilla and beaten white to custard. Mix thoroughly and chill.

Fruit Egg Nog

Substitute 2 tbsp. pureed or homogenized fruit or 1/4 to 1/2 c. strained fresh or canned fruit juice for vanilla and nutmeg in egg nog. Add to whole egg or yolk, then add to cold milk. Blend and serve.

Lemon Egg Nog:

1 egg
2 tbsp. lemon juice
grated lemon rind

2 tbsp. sugar
3/4 c. milk

Separate yolk and white of egg. Beat egg yolk with 1 tbsp. sugar and lemon juice. Beat white stiff with 1 tbsp. sugar. Fold 3/4 of egg white into the egg yolk mixture. Add to milk and stir well. Pour into glass and top with remainder of egg white. Garnish with grated lemon rind if desired. Serve at once.

Cocoa

1/4 c. sugar
1/4 c. cocoa
1/8 tsp. salt

1 c. water
4 c. milk, scalded
1/2 tsp. vanilla (optional)

Mix dry ingredients in a sauce pan. Add water gradually and cook to a thick syrup (5 - 10 minutes). Add milk and beat in double boiler. Add vanilla and salt. Beat with rotary beater. Serve hot.

Cocoa Syrup

1 c. cocoa	2 c. water
$1\frac{1}{2}$ c. sugar	1 tsp. vanilla
$1\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. salt	

Combine dry ingredients. Add water and stir to a paste. Boil 3 minutes, stirring until smooth. Cool. Add vanilla. Pour into sterilized jar; cover, and store in refrigerator.

Use of Cocoa Syrup

Hot Cocoa: Use 1 tbsp. or more as desired of syrup to 1 c. hot milk. Beat well.

Iced Cocoa: Use 2 or 3 tbsp. syrup with 1 c. cold milk. Shake in shaker or mason jar or beat vigorously. Pour over cracked ice.

Chocolate Malted Milk: Use 2 tbsp. malted milk powder and 2 tbsp. cocoa syrup to 1 c. milk. Beat with rotary beater or shake until frothy. May be poured over chopped ice in glass. Serve at once.

Oatmeal Gruel

$1\frac{1}{4}$ c. oatmeal	$1\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt
3 c. boiling water	Milk or light cream

Add oatmeal to boiling salted water and cook over direct flame five minutes. Then cook in double boiler 2 hours. Strain, add milk or cream as desired and reheat.

Prize Gruel

2 c. milk	$1\frac{1}{2}$ c. cooked oatmeal
Salt	

Scald milk in double boiler. Add cooked oatmeal and cook, covered, about 30 minutes, stirring frequently. Season with salt. Beat with rotary beater or strain.

Rice Gruel

1 tbsp. rice	Salt
1 c. milk	

Cook washed rice in milk in double boiler 2 hours. Strain through a fine strainer. Season with salt and serve hot or cold.

Vegetable Juice Cocktail

Use the cooking water drained from cooked carrots, green peas, wax or green beans, celery, lettuce or other vegetables. Heat, season with salt and serve.

Chicken Broth with Egg

Use half milk and half broth or all broth. Beat egg yolks allowing 1 yolk for each cup of well seasoned broth or broth and milk. Add a portion of hot liquid to eggs, stirring constantly, then add the yolk mixture to remainder of the liquid. Serve hot.

Vegetable Soup without Stock

1/3 c. diced carrot	4 tbsp. butter
1/3 c. diced turnip	1/2 tbsp. finely chopped
1/2 c. diced celery	parsley
1 1/2 c. diced potato	1 c. tomato
1/2 onion minced	salt
1 quart of water	pepper

Prepare vegetables for cooking by cutting in cubes of uniform size. Cook all vegetables (except potatoes) in butter, stirring constantly until browned. Add potatoes and water and simmer until vegetables are soft. Add tomatoes and parsley. Season and serve hot.

Cream Soups

	Milk	Flour	Fat	Salt	Cooked vegetable juice or juice and pureed pulp
Starchy vegetables	1 c.	1/2 tbsp.	1 tbsp.	1/2 tsp.	1/4 - 1 c. (average 1/2 c.) pea, potato, lima bean
Non- starchy vegetables	1 c.	1 tbsp.	1 tbsp.	1/2 tsp.	1/4 - 1 c. celery, tomato, lettuce, spinach, carrot, asparagus.

Cook and puree vegetable. Heat fat, and blend flour with it carefully. Add milk and pulp. Stir until thickened and smooth. Season just before serving.

Cream of Tomato Soup: Add tomato juice to blended flour and melted fat. Stir until thickened and smooth. Cool slightly. Add slowly to cold milk, stirring during the addition. Heat to serving temperature and serve immediately.

Poached Egg

Bring salted water (1/2 tsp. of salt per pint of water), broth, or milk to boiling point in a shallow pan. Reduce heat to keep water just below simmering. Break egg into cup or sauce dish and slip into water, one by one, tipping slightly at surface of water. Water should cover the top of eggs. Cover, cook to desired doneness or firmness, 5 to 15 minutes. Hold liquid just below simmering.

Scrambled Eggs

1 egg, slightly beaten	Speck of pepper
2 tbsp. milk or cream	1/2 tsp. fat
1/8 tsp. salt.	

Beat all ingredients enough to blend, with a fork preferably. Melt fat in pan or double boiler. Pour in egg mixture. Cook gently, lifting from the bottom and sides as the mixture coagulates. As the cooked mixture is lifted, the thin uncooked part should flow to the bottom. Remove from the fire just before quite done; the heat in the mixture will continue the cooking slightly. Serve hot on warm plate.

Omelet Souffle

1 egg
1/4 c. milk
1/2 tbsp. flour

1/2 tbsp. fat
1/8 tsp. salt
pepper

Prepare a white sauce of the fat, flour, and milk. Separate yolk and white of egg and beat. Combine thickly beaten egg yolk with white sauce. Fold in egg white. Pour into a baking dish. Place in a pan of hot water. Bake uncovered in a moderate oven (350° F.) about 30 minutes or until it is firm.

Souffles

1 c. milk
3 tbsp. flour
2 - 3 tbsp. fat

1/2 - 1 tsp. salt
3 eggs separated
1 c. flavoring material

Prepare a thick white sauce of the fat, flour, and milk. Add flavoring material and salt. Pour over beaten egg yolks and mix. Fold in the beaten whites. Pour into casserole; place in a pan of hot water and bake in a moderate oven (350° F.) until brown and firm, about 30 minutes.

Flavoring Materials:

Main dish souffles:

Cheese
Meat - cooked, and ground chicken, ham, veal. Broth may be substituted for the milk.
Fish - cooked and crumbled
Codfish Salmon
Tuna Fresh fish
Vegetables - cooked and chopped or pureed.
Spinach Squash
Carrots Asparagus
Peas Mushrooms
Tomatoes Broccoli

Dessert Souffles:

Fruit - cooked and chopped or pureed, plus 1/2 c. sugar.
Prune Apricot
Peach Pineapple
Orange

Chocolate - omit other flavoring material and add: 1/3 c. of sugar and 2 sq. melted chocolate.

Fondues

1 c. milk
1 c. soft, stale bread crumbs
1 tbsp. fat
1/2 - 1 tsp. salt
3 eggs separated

Flavoring material: choice of -
1 c. cheese
1 - 1 1/2 c. meat, fish, or vegetable
1/2 - 1 c. fruit pulp, plus 1/2 c. sugar
2 sq. chocolate plus 1/3 c. sugar

Scald milk in double boiler and melt fat in it. Pour over bread crumbs and let stand until milk is absorbed. Add flavoring material, salt, and beaten egg yolks. Fold in egg whites. Pour into a casserole and bake like souffles.

See suggestions for flavoring materials given for main dish and dessert souffles. When chocolate is used, heat with milk and blend carefully before pouring over crumbs

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