
Stage III/Soft Foods Diet

MEAL IDEAS & RECIPES





Stage 3: Soft Foods

Gastric Bypass or Sleeve Gastrectomy:

Starts: 14 days post surgery Duration: 21-30 days

Tips for Tolerating Foods

- Keep meats tender and moist.
- Use a slow cooker.
- Poach meat in broth.
- Marinate meats in lemon juice or vinegar to tenderize.
- Flavors are fine! You can use seasonings and spices.
- Use low-fat, condiments for flavor and to moisten food -- salsa, mustard, plain fat-free Greek yogurt (Try it mixed w/ dill or parsley, lemon juice, salt & pepper), 1 tsp light mayo (1 fat), 1-2 tbsp avocado (1 fat), or 2 tbsp hummus (1 fat).
- Slow down when you eat. Take at least 20 min minimum to eat your meal.
- Take tiny bites the size of a dime.
- Chew, chew, chew. Count for at least 20 chews; 30 is even better when trying new foods.
- Pause after each bite; wait for the food to reach your stomach to see how you feel.

Eggs

(1 whole egg or 2 egg whites or ¼ cup egg beaters = 1 Protein)

• **Scrambled or poached**--don't overcook!

• **Fried** - Fry over easy or sunny side up using cooking spray.

• **Frittata (2 Protein, 1 Dairy)**

○ Mix eggs and seasoning (i.e. salt, pepper, onion powder, paprika, etc) in a bowl. Add 1 oz reduced fat cheese per serving of eggs. Pour mixture into muffin pan which has been greased with Pam cooking spray. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 min (or until toothpick comes out clean). Store in fridge. Reheat in microwave.

• **See the HungryGirl.com Egg Mug Recipe!**

Oatmeal, Cream of Wheat or Farina

(1/2 cup cooked cereal = 1 Starch)

- Cook oatmeal with ½ cup milk or vanilla soy milk onto oatmeal. Add cinnamon, nutmeg, and/or Splenda for flavor **(1 Starch, 0.5 Dairy)** - **Do not eat unless mixed with protein or unless you have eaten your protein and still have extra room in your sleeve or pouch**

- Add 1 scoop of protein powder into oatmeal or cook your cereal using a ready to drink protein shake instead of milk.

Protein Salads

(2oz Tuna, 2 oz Chicken, or Egg Salad made with 2 eggs= **2 Protein**)

- 1 T light mayo (**add 1 Fat**)
- 1 tsp oil and lemon (**add 1 Fat**)
- Salsa (chunks of veggies strained or puree)
- Mustard and/or Fat-Free Greek Yogurt
- 1/8 medium avocado, onion powder, garlic powder, salt, pepper, lime juice and smooth salsa

Meal Ideas with Meat/Fish

(1 oz cooked meat = 7 grams of Protein)

- **Roll up** 1-2 oz ham, turkey, or chicken deli meat with 1 slice cheese (14-22 g of protein)
 - Heat on stove top for a couple minutes for a melted roll-up or dip into mustard
- **Turkey Chili** (To estimate protein, after chili is cooked zero out empty cup on food scale, then add chili to cup. Take out 1-2 oz for fluid/veggies)
 - Add 2oz of sautéed 93% lean ground turkey to ½ cup tomato sauce. Season w/garlic, chili powder and salt (to taste) Cook 20-30 min.
- **Baked Cod**
 - Place 2-3 oz of Cod (14-21 grams of protein) on aluminum foil-lined baking sheet sprayed with Pam. Drizzle cod with 1 tsp olive oil, juice from 1 squeezed lemon wedge and ½ tsp old bay seasoning. Bake at 350 degrees for about 8 minutes (or until baked through).
- Make **meatballs** or **meatloaf** using lean ground turkey or ground chicken-pair with a low-sugar, low-fat condiment. See our recipe for low-sugar BBQ sauce

Vegetarian Meals

- **Trader Joe's Meatless Meatballs (14 grams of protein)**
 - Microwave 3 meatballs with ½ cup tomato sauce until heated through. Sprinkle with 1 oz parmesan or reduced-fat mozzarella cheese.
- **Baked Ricotta (10 g protein per serving)**
 - Mix 8 oz low-fat or fat-free ricotta cheese, 1 oz grated parmesan, 1 beaten egg, 1 tsp Italian seasoning, and salt and pepper to taste. Place in oven proof dish. Pour ½ cup low-fat marinara sauce on and top with 2 oz shredded mozzarella. Bake in the oven at 450 for about 20-25 minutes or microwave in oven until hot and bubbly. Can also heat in the microwave. Recipe makes 8 servings.
- **Refried Beans (14-16 g of protein)**
 - Heat ½ c refried beans (7 grams of protein) in the microwave. Season with salsa and 1 oz reduced-fat cheese (7 grams of protein) , add a Tbsp of non-fat Greek yogurt instead of sour cream for 2 grams of extra protein if desired.
- **Morning Star Mediterranean burger (10 g protein for 1 patty)** , Cook according to package. Pair w/ Greek Yogurt Dill Sauce for more protein and to make moist (see recipe in Stage 3 Recipes).

Cream of Zucchini Soup

Adapted from Skinnytaste.com

Ingredients:

1/2 small onion, quartered
2 cloves garlic
3 medium zucchini, skin on cut in large chunks
32 oz reduced sodium/low-fat Swanson chicken broth (or vegetable)
24 oz fat-free plain greek yogurt (or silken tofu-1/2 cup per serving)
kosher salt and black pepper to taste
fresh grated low-fat parmesan cheese if desired for topping (optional)

Directions:

Combine chicken broth, onion, garlic and zucchini in a large pot over medium heat and bring to a boil. Lower heat, cover, and simmer until tender, about 20 minutes. Remove from heat and purée with an immersion blender, add the Greek yogurt (or tofu) and purée again until smooth. Taste for salt and pepper to adjust. (May want to avoid pepper during your pureed/soft foods diet phase- okay to use if tolerated). Serve hot or cold!

Servings: 4 • Size: 1 cup

Nutrition Information:

Total Calories = 135 calories, Protein = 14-17 g, Carbs: 13.5 g, Fiber = 5.5 g,
Fat: 1.75 g, Sodium: 724 mg (without added salt)

Slow-Cookin' BBQ Chicken

Ingredients:

1 cup canned tomato sauce

1/2 cup ketchup

2 1/2 tbsp. brown sugar (not packed)

2 1/2 tbsp. cider vinegar

2 tsp. garlic powder

1 1/2 lbs. raw boneless chicken thigh or drum sticks (dark meat only)

Optional seasoning: red pepper flakes

Directions:

In a slow cooker, mix all ingredients except chicken. Add chicken and stir to coat.

Cover and cook on high for 3 to 4 hours or on low for 7 to 8 hours, until chicken is fully cooked.

Transfer chicken to a large bowl. Shred with two forks--one to hold the chicken in place and the other to scrape across and shred it. Return shredded chicken to the slow cooker and mix well. Eat up!

MAKES 7 SERVINGS

Nutrition Information:

Serving Size-1/7th of recipe (about 1/2 cup) = 149 calories, 1g fat, 462mg sodium, 10g carbs, <0.5g fiber, 9g sugars, 22.5g protein

Embarrassingly Easy Crock Pot Salsa Chicken Thighs

Skinnytaste.com

Ingredients:

1-1/2 lbs lean skinless chicken thigh filets (Perdue Fit and Easy)
1 cup chunks salsa
Adobo seasoning (or salt) to taste
1/4 tsp garlic powder
3/4 tsp ground cumin
salt, to taste

Directions:

Season the chicken with adobo (or salt), then place in the crock pot and top with salsa, garlic powder and 1/2 tsp cumin.
Cover and cook LOW for 4 hours. When cooked, remove the chicken and set on a large plate; shred with two forks. Pour the liquid into a bowl and reserve, then place the shredded chicken back into the crock pot, adjust salt to taste and add remaining 1/4 tsp cumin.
Pour 3/4 cup of the reserved liquid back into the crock pot and cover until ready to serve.
Makes about 2 3/4 cups chicken.

Nutrition Information:

Servings: 6 , Serving Size: scant 1/2 cup -Calories: 187, Fat: 8 g, Carb: 3 g, Fiber: 1 g, Protein: 30 g, Sodium: 315 mg

Tuna-bean "Salad"

- *Adapted from multiple sources*

Ingredients:

- 5 oz tuna canned in water, drained
- 16 oz canned white beans or cannellini beans, drained and
- Rinsed
- 1 Tbsp lemon juice
- ¼ cup flat-leaf parsley, chopped
- Garlic and salt to taste
- Non-fat Greek Yogurt (optional)—adds an additional 2 grams of protein per TBSP

Directions:

1. In a blender or food processor chop the tuna, beans, olive oil, lemon juice and parsley until smooth.
2. Add garlic and salt to taste.

Makes 8 Servings.

Nutrition Information (w/ 1 TBSP Greek Yogurt):

Serving Size: ¼ cup Calories: 90, Fat: 2.5 g, Protein: 10 g, Carb: 9 g, Fiber: 3 g

Turkey Taco Meat

Skinnytaste.com

Ingredients:

- 1.5 lbs lean ground turkey (99% LEAN) OR lean ground Chicken
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp onion powder
- 2 -3Tbsp cumin (depends on your taste for it!)
- 1 tsp salt
- 1-2 Tbsp chili powder (depending how hot you like it)
- 1 tsp- 2 tsp paprika
- 1 tsp oregano
- 1/2 small onion, minced (use food processor or grate your onion)
- ½ bell pepper, minced (use food processor)
- 3/4 cup water or chicken broth (low sodium)
- 4 oz can tomato sauce (you can combine w/ a little salsa too or I have used a can of tomato paste)
- TOPPINGS: 1 tbsp Non-fat greek yogurt (additional 2 g of protein), low-fat shredded cheese(1 oz = 7 grams of protein) and extra salsa

Directions:

Use cooking spray or 1-2 tsp olive oil and heat in pan. Add onions and sauté for about 5 min. Add turkey and brown turkey until no longer pink. Add dry seasoning and mix well. Add pepper, water or broth , tomato sauce and salsa and cover. Simmer on low for about 20 minutes.

Nutrition Information:

Servings: 4 • Serving Size: 3 oz

Calories: 134 • **Fat:** 2 g • **Carb:** 10 g • **Fiber:** 2.4 g • **Protein:** 21 g

Two-Ingredient Banana Pancakes

Adapted from multiple sources

Ingredients:

- 1/2 large, ripe banana
- 2 eggs (Try 1 egg and 2 egg whites)
- 1/4 teaspoon baking powder (optional)
- ½ tsp cinnamon (optional)
- 1 splenda (optional)

Directions:

1. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl.
2. Mix very well (make sure you really mush the banana), or pulse with blender or in food processor.
3. Spray pan or griddle with non-stick cooking spray, and heat over medium-high heat.
4. Cook pancakes in batches- wait until they begin to bubble and hold their shape. Flip pancakes, and cook for 30 seconds more.
5. Serve with 1 tbsp of PB2 (powdered peanut butter_ mixed w/ water for a peanut butter topping (extra 5 grams of protein for 2 tbsp), 2 tablespoons sugar-free maple syrup or sugar-free jelly, 1 tbsp of "Brummel and Brown" butter spread or use spray butter
6. You can also add ½ scoop of vanilla or unflavored protein powder to "batter"

Serves 1

Nutrition Information (w/o any toppings or additional protein powder): 155 calories, 5 g fat, 13 g carbs, 14 g protein, 1 g fiber, 180 mg sodium

Crock Pot Italian Turkey Meatballs

Skinnytaste.com

Ingredients:

20 oz (1.3 lb) ground turkey breast 93% lean
1/4 cup whole wheat seasoned breadcrumbs
1/4 cup Reggiano Parmigiano cheese, grated
1/4 cup parsley, finely chopped
1 egg
1 large clove garlic, crushed
1 tsp kosher salt + fresh pepper

For the sauce:

1 tsp olive oil
4 cloves garlic, smashed
28 oz can crushed tomatoes (I like Tuttorosso)
1 bay leaf
salt and fresh pepper to taste
1/4 cup fresh chopped basil or parsley

Directions:

1. In a large bowl, combine ground turkey, breadcrumbs, egg, parsley, garlic and cheese. Using clean hands, mix all the ingredients and form small meatballs, about 1/8th cup each.
2. In a small sauté pan, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add garlic and sauté until golden, being careful not to burn.
3. Pour crushed tomatoes into the crock pot with bay leaf. Add garlic and oil.
4. Drop meatballs into the sauce, cover and set crock pot to low, 4 to 6 hours.
5. When meatballs are ready, adjust salt and pepper to taste
6. Optional: Serve with low-fat or fat-free ricotta cheese for additional protein (1 tbsp = 2 grams protein)

Makes about 24 meatballs, 2 tbsp each.

Servings: 6 • **Size:** 4 meatballs with sauce **Calories:** 200.4 • **Fat:** 8.1 g • **Carbs:** 12.6 • **Fiber:** 0.6 • **Protein:** 17.3 g • **Sodium:** 427.5 mg

Greek Yogurt Sauces and Dips

Try these Greek Yogurt Sauces to add to Chicken thighs, Fish, Lean meat, Eggs and more to moisten your protein and to increase the protein of your meal! Make sure to measure how much Greek Yogurt and other ingredients you are using and how much you use to know how much extra protein you are getting! **Every 1 tbsp of non-fat plain Greek yogurt = 2 grams of protein.**

- **Pesto w/ Protein**-- Use the Skinny taste "Skinny Pesto" recipe BELOW and add Plain non-fat Greek yogurt to it for additional protein!
- **Buffalo Sauce**-- Blend non-fat plain Greek Yogurt w/ Buffalo Sauce and 2 Wedges of light Laughing Cow Blue Cheese. Put on top of chicken thigh.
- **Greek Salsa**-- Mix salsa w/ non-fat Greek Yogurt and put on top of chicken thighs , eggs or fish including tuna
- **Alfredo** --Take ¼ cup of non-fat plain Greek Yogurt, 1 light swiss Laughing Cow cheese Wedge, broken up and put into microwave-safe bowl. Add parm cheese and a little garlic powder—microwave until warm and can combine—Put on top of Chicken thigh for a very light version of Chicken Alfredo!
- **Dill Sauce**-- Add Fresh dill (we like the one you can purchase in a tube in the produce section), a 2 tsp of Dijon mustard, salt and pepper into ½ cup of Greek yogurt—Makes a great dip for tilapia or chicken
- **Avocado cream sauce** --Blend 1/2 avocado w/ 1 cup non-fat plain Greek yogurt, fresh lime juice, minced garlic, salt, and pepper—Great to put on top of a chicken , eggs or fish! Makes 4-6 servings. (2 TBSP of Avocado is a serving per person = 5 grams of fat)
- **Tzatziki Sauce**-- Remove seeds and skin of cucumber and then chop. In a food processor, blend w/ non-fat plain Greek yogurt, lemon juice, salt and pepper for Greek Tzatziki sauce—great w/ chicken thigh or fish including tuna!

Skinny Basil Pesto
 Skinnytaste.com

Servings: 5 **Serving Size:** 1 tbsp • **Old Points:** 2 pts • **Points+:** 2 pts
Calories: 86 • **Fat:** 8.3 g • **Protein:** 2.3 g • **Carb:** 0.8 g • **Fiber:** 0.3 g • **Sugar:** 0 g
Sodium: 94 mg (without salt)

Ingredients:

- 1 cup basil
- 1 clove garlic
- 1/4 cup grated parmesan
- salt & pepper to taste
- 2 1/2 tbsp olive oil

Directions:

In a food processor **pulse** basil, garlic, parmesan cheese, salt and pepper until smooth. Slowly **add** the olive oil while pulsing. **Store** in a sealed container and **refrigerate** until ready to use or you can freeze this in ziplocks bags to use at a later date.

Makes 5 tablespoons.

Baked Tofu

Ingredients:

14 oz firm tofu

Cooking spray

Optional- low-fat mozzarella & tomato sauce OR low-sugar teriyaki sauce or low sodium soy sauce

Directions:

Wrap 14 oz firm tofu block in 4 or 5 layers of paper towels and arrange on a plate. Cover with a second plate and balance a heavy can or two on top to weigh down the plate and press down on the tofu; set aside to let drain for 30 minutes. Remove and discard paper towels, then replace with dry paper towels and repeat process a second time if necessary.

Preheat oven to 400°F. Cut tofu into (1-inch) cubes and arrange them in a single layer on a large parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Lightly spray tofu all over with cooking spray and bake, flipping halfway through, until golden brown and just crisp, about 40 minutes total.

- Top w/ 1 oz low-fat mozzarella cheese and bake again until melted; Dip into marinara sauce OR dip into low-sugar/sodium teriyaki sauce or low sodium soy sauce.

Nutrition Info: Serves 4. Per serving (w/o toppings or sauces)= 60 calories, 2.5g total fat, 35mg sodium, 2g carbohydrates, 7g protein.

"Protein Cake" Mug

(100 calories, 12.5 g protein)

Ingredients

1 scoop of Lean Shake birthday cake flavored protein powder (or any other shake flavor of your choice!)

¼ tsp baking powder

½ tablespoon flour

Calorie-free sweetener (add to your desired sweetness- we used about 5 drops of liquid stevia)

¼ cup unsweetened almond milk (or water, low-fat lactaid milk)

¼ tsp vanilla extract

Directions:

Mix all ingredients together in a mug. Microwave for 30-35 seconds or until the center is a cake-like consistency and the outside is tender

(For the chocolate protein mug cake, use 1 scoop of chocolate protein powder and 1 tbsp of unsweetened cocoa powder- or try with PB2 (powdered peanut butter) instead of cocoa)

Other Meal & Snack Ideas

The Egg Mug

Ingredients:

3/4 cup fat-free liquid eggs substitute (like Egg Beaters Original)

1 wedge The Laughing Cow Light Creamy Swiss cheese

Directions: In a large microwave-safe mug sprayed with nonstick spray, microwave egg substitute for 1 1/2 minutes. Mix in cheese wedge, breaking it into pieces. Microwave for 1 minute, or until set. Stir and enjoy! Optional: Add extra lean ham , deli turkey or low-fat cheese (MEAT MUST BE FINELY CHOPPED)

125 calories 8 g protein, 0 g carbs

Sweet Ricotta

1/2 cup light/low fat ricotta cheese, 1 Splenda or Stevia packet, 1 drop vanilla extract and cinnamon. *Optional*-Eat with unsweetened apple sauce or 1/2 very ripe pear without the skin on it. ***12 grams of protein and 100 calories***

Savory Cottage Cheese or Sweet

Sweet- puree approved fruit or canned fruit, add into low -fat cottage cheese OR follow the "Sweet Ricotta " Recipe

Savory- Add salt pepper to low-fat fcottage cheese. Add pureed canned tomatoes , tomato sauce or eat just as is.

Use low-fat lactaid cottage cheese if you are not tolerating lactose well