

Tolerance of a Patient Choice Diet versus Standard Clear Liquid Diet Following Gastrointestinal Surgery

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Objective: To assess tolerance of a patient choice diet versus the standard clear liquid diet as the initial oral intake following GI surgery.

Research Methods and Procedures: GI surgery patients were given the option to receive a patient choice diet when the team advanced them from *nil per os* to an oral diet. The patient choice diet consisted of ordering anything the patient felt best able to tolerate, with no diet restrictions. The patient population studied included post operative patients from gastric, small bowel, colonic, and pancreatic surgery, but excluded whipple, puestow, necrosectomy, gastric bypass and nissen fundoplication surgeries. The patients were then followed up for three days post diet initiation or until discharge for assessment of GI tolerance.

Results: A total of twelve patients participated in this study. Patients were excluded from the study if the physicians automatically ordered the standard clear liquid diet regimen. Seven patients chose to be restricted to the traditional clear liquid diet regimen while five patients agreed to try the patient choice diet. Five of the seven patients from the clear liquid group reported experiencing nausea, vomiting, or abdominal bloating after eating meals. All participants in the patient choice diet group reported no GI side effects or diet intolerance.

Discussion: This study suggests that the use of the standard clear liquid diet post-operatively may cause patients more GI intolerance than a patient choice diet.