



CLEFT-PALATE POST-SURGERY RECIPES



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IN THE UNITED STATES:



*1 in every **2,800 babies** is born with a cleft lip without a cleft palate.*



*1 in every **1,500 babies** is born with a cleft palate without a cleft lip.*



*1 in every **700 babies** is born with cleft lip and cleft palate.*

FUNDING AND SUPPORT:

The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) funds and supports 3 of the 4 regional Maxillofacial Review Boards in Washington. These boards coordinate and provide the multidisciplinary critical care infants with cleft lip and cleft palate need. They make sure that providers plan and carry out treatment in a step-by-step manner as the child grows.



OVERVIEW

FOLLOWING A SOFT, NO CHEW DIET

After palate repair surgery (around 12 months of age), children must follow a soft, no-chew diet for about 3 weeks or until their post-op surgical appointment. This helps the palate heal correctly. This means:



Food is runny and can be poured from a cup

An open cup or a sippy cup free-flowing without a high profile or 'neck' is preferred. An extra-large syringe with a soft tip and flexible tube may also work.



No use of straws, bottles, food pouches or any utensils or objects in their mouth that could damage the surgical area

Nothing should be put past their gumline.



Avoid hot or high-temperature foods



No hard or raw food until surgical area is healed

Pain may also affect feeding, which is normal. After a lip repair, it may take 2-3 days, and for a palate repair, about 7-10 days to get back to their typical feeding pattern.¹ This just means they might need to eat more often if they are able to consume only a small amount at a time.

* Whole milk is an important part of a toddler's diet, about 2-3 cups per day.

Whole milk has fewer calories per ounce than infant formula. If a family thinks transitioning off baby formula will be difficult, they should consider waiting until after palate repair surgery, especially if the surgery is around the 1-year mark. If a toddler formula or concentrated formula is medically necessary, this can be a good option for extra calories, protein, and vitamins.

EASY WAYS TO ADD MORE CALORIES:²

- Add heavy whipping cream, sour cream, cheese sauces in pureed vegetables or potatoes
- Add gravy or sauces to blended meat dishes and potatoes
- Add cooking oils into purees and soups, onto soft overcooked pasta
- Use extra butter or margarine
- Add whole milk, half & half or cream to hot cereal, or blended with other foods
- Melt and blend cheese into soups, casseroles, eggs, or other hot dishes
- Blend whole milk, whole fat yogurt into smoothies, soups, and more
- Blend in age-appropriate milk powder to foods like milk, ice cream, yogurt, cottage cheese, pudding, soup, hot cereal, eggs, mashed potatoes, gravies, sauces
- Blend your favorite casserole or stew. Add enough milk or cream for extra calories and to achieve the desired consistency.
- Add nut butters, blended hemp seeds, or both to oatmeal, cereal
- Add avocado to soups or purees



GENERAL FOOD GUIDELINES²⁻⁴

Food Group	Foods Allowed or Okay to Eat Can be thinned with additional liquid if needed	Foods to Avoid
Meats & Protein	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pureed meats or eggs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Thinned with broth, milk, or strained cream soups • Pureed lentils or beans • Blended tofu • Blended cottage cheese • Smooth nut butters <p>*Cashew butter or almond can replace peanut butter if allergy to peanuts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole pieces of meat, fish, poultry • Cold cuts, sausage, hot dogs • Hard cooked eggs or fried egg • Crunchy peanut butter
Fruits & Vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baby food, fruits, & vegetables • Cooked vegetables blended with broth or sauce • Cooked or mashed fruits, blended with fruit juice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole fruits or vegetables • Citrus fruits (might cause discomfort for the first 36 hours post-surgery) • Thick or gummy mashed vegetables • Pickles, coleslaw, leafy lettuce • Fried vegetables

Food Group	Foods Allowed or Okay to Eat Can be thinned with additional liquid if needed	Foods to Avoid
Milk & Dairy Products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infant formula • Milk or milk products (half & half, heavy cream, condensed milk) • Cream soups – strained • Ice cream/sherbet • Pudding, custard • Yogurt • Cream cheese 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any products with seeds, nuts, granola, or fruit pieces • Ice cream with bits of candy • Hard cheeses • Low-fat dairy
Milk alternatives such as oatmilk, soymilk, or Ripple milk have similar nutrition as whole milk. Avoid rice and almond milk due to lower calories and nutrients. Consider soy or cashew-based cheese as alternatives.		
Breads & Starchy Foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooked cereals: cream of wheat, cream of rice, oatmeal (thinned as needed) • Soft-cooked noodles, pureed, blended or well to overcooked and cut into small pieces • Mashed potatoes (thinned as needed) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breads, toast, buns, bagels • Muffins, sweet rolls • Dry cereal • Crackers (unless blended into soup), cookies, popcorn, pretzels, chips • Rice
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soups: thinned or blended • Casseroles: blended or thinned • Butter, oil, plain dressings, mayonnaise, whipped cream, ghee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lollipops, hard candy • Spicy items

BLENDER ALTERNATIVES

A few alternatives that can help achieve similar results:

- **Fork or potato masher:** can help mash soft ingredients like avocados, bananas, or cooked vegetables into a paste
- **Whisk:** can mix and incorporate air into softer ingredients to create smoother textures
- **Mortar and pestle:** an excellent tool for grinding and mixing for smaller batches
- **Grater:** for foods like apples or zucchini, a grater can help break down ingredients into smaller pieces and then combine by hand
- **Hand mixer, electric beater, or immersion blender:** can work well for some blending tasks
- **Rolling pin and plastic bag:** place ingredients in a plastic bag and use a rolling pin to crush or mash them



OTHER HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS:



IMPORTANT NUTRIENTS FOR WOUND HEALING

Overall, the nutritional needs are the same for your child post-surgery as for all infants their age. Increasing certain nutrients can help with the wound healing process, including:

- Energy (calories)
- Protein
- Vitamin A
- Vitamin C
- Zinc
- Fluids & Fiber – to help avoid dehydration & constipation

NUTRITIONAL VALUES

nutritional values are provided for each recipe. The units used are:

mg = milligrams (1,000 mg = 1 g)

µg = micrograms (1,000 µg = 1 mg)

g = grams

These measurements help you understand the nutrient content of each dish, making it easier to identify your intake of vitamins, minerals, and other key nutrients.

SIGNS OF DEHYDRATION

It is important that your child gets enough fluids to stay hydrated. Signs of dehydration include constipation, fewer wet diapers, fewer tears when crying, increased fussiness and sleepiness, dry mouth, sunken soft spot on an infant's head, sunken eyes, and/or cold-discolored hands and feet.⁴⁻⁶

ADDED SUGARS & CAVITIES

Children with cleft lip and palate (CLP) are more likely to have cavities. Added sugars, such as cane sugar (NOT fruit or other natural sugars), should be monitored.⁷ Using fluoridated water when making infant formula or any other consumption can also help protect against cavities.⁷

NUTRIENT-RICH RECIPES

We used cronometer.com to calculate the nutrients in each recipe.



For the list of WIC- approved products, please visit:

<https://doh.wa.gov/you-and-your-family/wic>

ALLERGY SUBSTITUTE OPTIONS:

[Substitutions - FoodAllergy.org](https://www.foodallergy.org)





BANANA PROTEIN SMOOTHIE

INGREDIENTS:

1/2 ripe banana, peeled and sliced
1/2 cup whole milk/formula
2 tablespoons plain Greek yogurt
1/2 tablespoon peanut butter
1 teaspoon maple syrup (optional, for
sweetness) - *If over 12 months, can use
honey instead*
Dash of cinnamon (optional, for flavor)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. In a blender, combine the sliced banana, milk, Greek yogurt, almond or peanut butter, maple syrup (if using), and cinnamon (if using).
2. Blend until smooth and creamy, adjusting the consistency with more milk if needed.
3. Pour the smoothie into a cup without a spout.
4. Serve immediately or refrigerate for a cool, soothing treat.

Nutrition Facts – 1 Serving **If made with whole milk & peanut butter **

Calories	Protein	Vitamin A:	Vitamin C	Zinc
217	9g	64µg	5mg	0.9mg



SILKEN TOFU SMOOTHIE⁸

INGREDIENTS:

1 banana, peeled and sliced
2 cups frozen fruit
8 ounces silken tofu

Makes 3 Servings (8 ounces each)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. In a blender, combine the sliced banana, heavy cream, frozen fruit, and tofu.
2. Blend until smooth and creamy, adjusting the consistency with more milk/cream if needed.
3. Pour the smoothie into a cup without a spout.
4. Serve immediately or refrigerate for a cool, soothing treat.

Nutrition Facts – 1 Serving (1/3 of the recipe) **If made with heavy cream**

Calories	Protein	Vitamin A:	Vitamin C	Zinc
307	7g	90.5µg	59mg	0.6mg



CARROT CAKE SHAKE⁹

INGREDIENTS:

3 medium carrots peeled, diced
1 cup whole milk or heavy cream
Cinnamon, nutmeg and maple syrup to taste
1/4 cup vanilla yogurt

Makes 2 servings (about 8 ounces each)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Boil the carrots in water until they are completely soft.
2. Puree cooked carrots with 1/4 cup of milk. This mixture will be quite thick.
3. Add cinnamon, nutmeg, and maple syrup as preferred.
4. Mix in yogurt, then thin with more milk.
5. Blend until smooth and creamy. Adjust the thickness with more milk if needed.
6. Pour the smoothie into a cup without a spout.
7. Serve immediately or refrigerate for a cool, soothing treat.

Nutrition Facts – 1 Serving (Half of recipe)

If made with whole milk & Greek vanilla yogurt made with whole milk

Calories	Protein	Vitamin A:	Vitamin C	Zinc
156	7g	831µg	5.4mg	0.86mg



YUMMY PORRIDGE¹⁰

INGREDIENTS:

1 cup oats
2 apples, peeled and cored
1/4 cup coconut milk
1/8 tablespoon Cinnamon
1 banana
1 tablespoon maple syrup

****If over 12 months, can use honey instead**

Makes about 3 servings (7 ounces each)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Boil oats and apples until really soft.
2. Add oats and apples to blender with the remaining ingredients.
3. Blend until smooth and creamy, adjusting the consistency with more milk if needed.

Nutrition Facts – 1 Serving (1/3 of the recipe) **Made with coconut milk*

Calories	Protein	Vitamin A:	Vitamin C	Zinc
210	4g	15µg	8mg	1.26mg
<i>*If made with whole milk instead of coconut milk:</i>				
219	5g	13µg	8mg	1.27mg



SCRAMBLED EGGS⁹

INGREDIENTS:

1 medium egg
1 tablespoon of butter
Whole milk

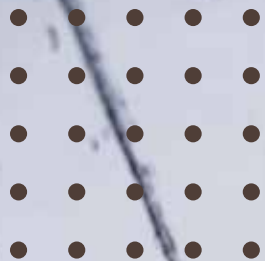
Makes 1 servings

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Melt butter in a saucepan and remove from heat. Add eggs and milk (or cream) and stir briskly to combine white and yolk.
2. Place back on low heat, stirring all the time, until the eggs are cooked, and the mixture is smooth. Make sure the mixture stays soft and doesn't brown or dry out.
3. Blend the scrambled egg and milk mixture with a stick blender a little at a time to reach your preferred consistency.

Nutrition Facts – 1 Serving **If made with 1 tablespoon of whole milk*

Calories	Protein	Vitamin A:	Vitamin C	Zinc
179	6g	170µg	0mg	0.5mg



SOFT BLACK BEAN SOUP¹¹

INGREDIENTS:

1 can black beans, drained and rinsed
1 cup vegetable broth
1 onion, chopped
1 bell pepper, diced
2 cloves garlic, minced
For added calories, mix in oil or butter

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Sauté the onions, garlic, and bell pepper in a pot until softened.
2. Add black beans and vegetable broth.
3. Simmer until flavors meld, then blend until smooth and creamy.
Adjust the consistency with more vegetable broth if needed.

Makes about 4 servings (6-7 ounces each)

Nutrition Facts – 1 Serving (1/4 of the recipe)

Calories	Protein	Vitamin A:	Vitamin C	Zinc
175	10g	58µg	42mg	1.3mg



SPLIT PEA SOUP¹²

INGREDIENTS:

3 cups chicken broth
8 ounces dried split green peas
1/2 diced onion
1 ½ large, diced carrots
1/2 cup cooked diced ham
For more calories, add oil or butter

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Put all ingredients into a large crock pot. Cook on high for 4 hours.
2. Test the peas to make sure they are soft, then transfer in batches to a blender and blend until smooth.

Makes about 5 servings (8 ounces each)

Nutrition Facts – 1 Serving (1/5 of the recipe)

Calories	Protein	Vitamin A:	Vitamin C	Zinc
92	8g	181µg	2mg	0.6mg



ZUCCHINI BISQUE¹³

INGREDIENTS:

2 cups chopped zucchini
1 cup water
Half cup tomato juice
1 tablespoon minced onion
1 teaspoon chicken bouillon
1/8 teaspoon dried basil
8 ounces cream cheese (cut into cubes)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Combine the zucchini, water, tomato juice, onion, chicken bouillon, and basil in a medium or large saucepan. Bring it to a boil, then let it simmer for 20 minutes.
2. Pour the cooked soup into a blender and add the cream cheese. Blend until it is as smooth as you prefer. You may have to blend the soup in batches, depending on the size of your blender. Your soup is now ready to serve!

Makes 4 Servings (about 8 ounces each)

Nutrition Facts – 1 Serving (1/4 of the recipe)

Calories	Protein	Vitamin A:	Vitamin C	Zinc
219	6g	189µg	35mg	0.6mg



FISH SOUP⁹

INGREDIENTS:

1 sweet potato, peeled and chopped
1 large carrot
1 boneless cod (or salmon) fillet, remove skin & slice into pieces or substitute for 6oz of canned salmon
1 ½ cups of broccoli
1 onion
2 cups of bone broth or stock
2 tablespoons olive oil

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Heat olive oil in saucepan and add onion, carrots, and sweet potato.
2. Keep on medium heat for 5 minutes.
3. Add the broccoli, salmon, and bone broth.
4. Simmer for 10 minutes and then blend until smooth.

Makes about 5 servings (7-8 ounces each)

Nutrition Facts – 1 Serving (1/5 of the recipe) **If made with cod fillet**

Calories	Protein	Vitamin A:	Vitamin C	Zinc
133	11g	319µg	22mg	0.4mg
<i>*If made with 6oz canned salmon*:</i>				
156	13g	326µg	22mg	0.7mg



PUMPKIN CHICKEN BABY FOOD PUREE¹⁴

INGREDIENTS:

1/4 cup pumpkin puree
1/4 pound boneless skinless chicken breast
1 parsnip peel & roughly chop
1/4 inch ginger finely grated
1-2 cups liquids (ex. whole milk)

Makes about 4 servings (6-7 ounces each)

Recipe Notes: store in an airtight container in the fridge for 3-4 days. You can also freeze it for up to 4 months

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a baking sheet with foil or a silicone mat.
2. Place chicken and parsnips on a large piece of foil. Wrap tightly, sealing seams at the top.
3. Bake the foil packet on the baking sheet for 30 minutes.
4. Remove the packet and let it cool.
5. Cut the chicken into cubes.
6. Combine the chicken, parsnips, pumpkin, and ginger in a blender, adding 1/4 cup whole milk if needed.

Nutrition Facts – 1 Serving (1/4 of the recipe) **If made with whole milk*

Calories	Protein	Vitamin A:	Vitamin C	Zinc
133	11g	177µg	4.4mg	0.8mg



MASHED SWEET POTATOES¹⁵

INGREDIENTS:

2 sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed

1 ounce cream cheese

1/2 whole milk

Makes about 2 Servings (about 8 ounces each)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Boil the sweet potatoes for 20 minutes. Drain them and put them into a food processor or blender. Add the cream cheese, and pulse in the food processor until smooth. Then blend in the milk.
2. Blend everything until smooth and creamy, adjusting the consistency with more milk if needed.

Nutrition Facts – 1 Serving (1/2 of the recipe)

Calories	Protein	Vitamin A:	Vitamin C	Zinc
202	5g	1252µg	19mg	0.6mg



CHEESE FRUIT SALAD¹¹

INGREDIENTS:

1 cup cottage cheese
1/2 cup canned fruit
*Fruits canned in heavy or
“lite” syrup
1/2 cup fruit juice

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Combine all the ingredients in a blender.
2. Blend until smooth and creamy, adjusting the consistency with more juice or milk if needed.

Makes 2 Servings (7-8 ounces each)

Nutrition Facts – 1 Serving (1/2 of the recipe)

Calories	Protein	Vitamin A:	Vitamin C	Zinc
153	12g	47µg	21mg	0.5mg

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