

Post-Surgical Food Do's and Don'ts

1. If an implant moves 0.1mm in the bone during the healing phase it may fail to integrate. That is about the width of a single strand of hair.
2. Eating harder foods is one of the top causes of implant and bone graft failure after surgery.
3. Please follow these Do's and Don'ts of foods you can and can't eat while waiting for your dental implant or bone graft to integrate.

Food "Do's":

- **Dairy:** Eat eggs, yogurt, smoothies, soft cheeses, and small bites of medium density cheeses, such as Swiss and cheddar.
- **Fruits:** Most fruits are fine, but use caution with fruits such as apples. Don't bite into them whole. Cut them into small pieces first. Berries are fine.
- **Vegetables:** Any form of soft raw vegetables are fine, such as peppers, cut cucumbers, onions, and tomatoes (ok, we know that they're really a fruit), but avoid fibrous softer vegetables. Frozen vegetables are fine. Any steamed or boiled vegetables are fine. Make sure that roasted vegetables are soft.
- **Breads and Starches:** Sandwich breads, buns, pancakes, waffles, flour tortillas, soft corn tortillas, and pita breads are fine. Oatmeal is fine. Pastas are fine. Almost all forms of potatoes are fine, but use caution with French fries that are crunchy.
- **Meats and Fish:** Hamburgers, hot dogs, and sausages are fine, but use caution with crunchy toppings, such as bacon. Tender steak, such as filet mignon or smaller bites of top sirloin are fine. Roasts and stewed meats are fine too. Turkey is good. Most chicken is fine, but avoid fried chicken due to the risk of biting a crunchy part. All fish is fine, except use extreme caution with fried fish.
- **Snacks and Desserts:** Any soft snack/dessert is fine, such as Jello, pudding, mousse, cakes, soft pastries, ice cream, and shakes. Chocolate is fine. Use caution with pie crusts.

Food “Don’ts”:

- **Dairy:** Avoid hard cheeses, crunchy cheese sticks, and larger bites of medium density cheeses, such as Swiss and cheddar.
- **Fruits:** Avoid biting into uncut firmer fruits, such as apples. Cut them into small pieces first.
- **Vegetables:** Avoid crunchy raw vegetables, such as carrots, and fibrous raw vegetables, such as broccoli. Avoid eating salads for 3-4 months after surgery due to the milling (grinding motion) that is required to chew them. This puts a lot of stress on the integrating implants.
- **Breads and Starches:** Any bread with a crunchy or tough crust should be avoided. Use caution when eating toast, and avoid crunchy toast. Avoid bread sticks. Do not eat cereals other than oatmeal. Avoid granola. Avoid crunchy French fries.
- **Meats and Fish:** Avoid firm or tough steaks/meats and larger bites of meats. Use extreme caution with meat on the bone. Avoid bacon and use extreme caution with fried meats.
- **Snacks and Desserts:** Avoid crunchy snacks and desserts, such as chips, pretzels, nuts, crackers, hard candy, chewy candy, crunchy pastries, and crunchy toppings. Use extreme caution if you decide to eat popcorn. Ideally you should avoid it.

It’s never fun to avoid foods that you like to eat, but your healing period is a very short time in the scheme of things. Plus damaging your implants or graft during healing with likely result in additional surgeries being needed and additional healing time. Hang in there!