

Stage 3A: Smooth Textures

Protein Foods

Egg White/Beaters

Soft, scrambled egg whites or egg beaters are allowed on this stage. Please refrain from hard boiled, fried, or regular eggs with yolk.

- **Scramble** – cook egg whites to a soft scramble and add seasonings of choices (salt, pepper, hot sauce, mustard, lemon pepper, garlic, plain yogurt) Note: Mayonnaise and ketchup are not generally tolerated at this stage.
- **Pureed Classic Egg Salad**- start with scrambled egg whites. Add plain yogurt, and salt and pepper and mix together.
- **Scrambled Egg White with Ricotta**- cook scrambled egg white until almost done. Remove from heat, but continuing cooking in the hot pan until the egg is set. Add 1 tablespoon of ricotta cheese and allow the heat to soften the ricotta cheese.

Vegetarian Refried Beans

Canned refried beans are a great option for Stage 3A because they are soft in texture and packed with protein and fiber.

- **Heat and Eat**- open a can of refried beans, heat up in a pan, and enjoy! Try adding in some hot sauce or other seasonings for extra flavor (lime juice, cumin, chili powder, pepper, etc.) or add a scoop of Greek yogurt for some extra protein.
- **Homemade refried beans**- drain liquid from 15oz can of pinto beans and rinse beans under water. Spray a sauté pan with cooking spray and add pinto beans to the pan. Cook for 1-2 minutes. Pour 1 cup of vegetable broth into sauté pan along with spices of your choosing (garlic powder, cumin, chili powder and/or onion powder). Bring the pinto beans to a slow boil and continue to boil until broth is reduced by half (about 3-5 minutes). Using a potato masher, mash the pinto beans until very smooth. You may also use a blender.

Cottage Cheese

Look for low-fat plain cottage cheese or flavored varieties with less than 5g sugar per serving.

- **Tangy Dill** – Mix ½ teaspoon of dried dill, ½ teaspoon of cumin, a very small pinch of salt, and ½ teaspoon of lemon juice into ½ cup cottage cheese.
- **Fiesta Lime** – Mix ½ teaspoon of lime juice and ½ teaspoon of chili powder into ½ cup cottage cheese.
- **Chives and Onions** – Mix ½ teaspoon of dried chives (or finely minced fresh chives) and ½ teaspoon of dried onion flakes into ½ cup cottage cheese or ½ cup ricotta cheese. Let sit for at least an hour to allow flavors to blend.

Ricotta Cheese

Choose part-skim ricotta to eat on its own or mix with sweet or savory flavors.

- **Peach ricotta** – Mix ½ cup ricotta with a few teaspoons of canned peaches and a pinch of nutmeg.
- **Ricotta sweet treat** - Mix 1/4 to 1/2 scoop Salted Caramel/Chocolate/Vanilla Protein Powder + 1/4 cup part skim ricotta. Mix two ingredients together and let sit in refrigerator 10 minutes.
- **Savory ricotta** – Combine ½ cup ricotta with ‘everything but the bagel’ seasoning and a splash of lemon juice.

Greek Yogurt

Choose non-fat Greek yogurt without fruit chunks. Look for varieties with less than 5g added sugar.

- **Chocolate Almond Bliss** – Mix 1 teaspoon of almond extract, pinch of unsweetened cocoa powder, and SF sweetener into ½ cup Greek yogurt.
- **Peanut Butter Banana Split** – Combine ½ cup plain Greek yogurt with 1 tbsp PB-2 powder and 2 tbsp mashed banana.

Tofu:

Tofu can be found in the refrigerated section of your local grocery store in a square package. Some popular brands include Nasoya, Soy Boy, and Wildwood.

- It comes in different textures:
 - **Extra Firm:** best for stir-fry, marinating, pan-frying, and baking
 - **Firm:** best for making tofu scramble
 - **Silken:** blended for sauces, dips, and smoothies
- Tofu needs flavor: add spices, a light sauce or dressing, or a marinade! It does not have much flavor on its own, but it acts as a sponge to absorb other flavors around it.

Sweet Tofu Recipes

- **Chocolate Pudding** – Use food processor or blender to combine 16 oz silken tofu (drained), 2 Tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder, ¼ cup zero-calorie sweetener, ¼ tsp salt, and 2 tsp vanilla extract. Puree until smooth. Store in refrigerator.
- **Banana Pudding** – Use food processor or blender to combine 16 oz silken tofu (drained), 2 bananas, and 1 tsp vanilla. Puree until smooth. Add zero-calorie sweetener to taste. Store in refrigerator.

Savory Tofu Recipes

- **Tofu Scramble** – Crumble firm tofu in a bowl and stir in favorite seasonings (e.g., salt, pepper, garlic powder, seasoned salt, etc.). Pour mixture into a heated non-stick skillet (can use non-stick spray too) and stir. Continue stirring every minute or so until tofu is cooked to preferred level.
- **Pan-Fried or Baked Tofu Cubes** - Slice a block of extra firm tofu in half to make two ½-inch thick squares. Place between 2-3 layers of paper towels and lightly press out excess water. Cut into cubes.
 - **If pan-frying:** Preheat pan on medium heat and spray generously with non-stick cooking spray. Pan-fry tofu for 15-20 minutes until browned and crispy; stir every few minutes to avoid sticking. When tofu has been cooked to preferred level, splash with 1 tablespoon soy sauce. Add additional seasonings if desired or serve with dipping sauce (e.g., hot sauce, BBQ sauce, sriracha sauce, etc.).
 - **If baking:** Marinate tofu cubes in your preferred low-fat, low-sugar marinade for at least 30 minutes or as long as overnight. Marinade ideas include salad dressings, teriyaki, thinned-out BBQ sauce, and soy sauce. There are also tons of healthy marinade recipes on-line. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Prepare baking sheet with parchment paper, non-stick cooking spray, or use non-stick pan. Place single layer of cubes on a non-stick baking dish and bake for 20-25 minutes or until lightly brown. Turn cubes about halfway through cooking time.

★ In a pinch? Grab some **pre-marinated tofu** that is ready-to-eat. Microwave or heat up in a skillet if you prefer it warm or enjoy it cold right from the package.

- Nasoya “TofuBaked” Marinated Baked Tofu: Chipotle, Sesame Ginger, Teriyaki
- Trader Joe’s Marinated and Ready to Eat Organic Baked Tofu: Savory or Teriyaki
- Wildwood Organic Baked Tofu: 11 different varieties

Non-Protein Foods *Remember: Always get in your protein foods and shakes first! *

Pureed Vegetables: Try with butternut squash, carrots, cauliflower or parsnips

How to prepare:

1. Peel and chop vegetables if needed; pre-chopped or frozen vegetables can also be used.
2. Steam or boil chopped vegetables until tender (easily pierced with a fork).
3. Add vegetables to a blender or small food processor.
4. Puree until smooth - adding liquid, a little at a time, to help reach smooth consistency. Broths work well to thin out the puree and add flavor.
5. Season to taste with spices if desired (salt, pepper, cinnamon, Italian seasoning, chili, cumin etc).
6. Consider adding protein powders such as unflavored or chicken soup flavor for a protein boost!

Smooth Fruits

Unsweetened applesauce, soft banana and canned pears/peaches in juice or water are options on stage 3A.

- ***Banana "Ice Cream"***- blend 1-2 frozen bananas (adding a splash of milk to help blend) and mix in any of the following options:
 - ¼ tsp vanilla extract, 3 T cocoa powder, and a pinch of salt
 - 1-2 T of PB2
 - 1/8 tsp mint extract
 - ½ -1 scoop protein powder** limit banana "ice cream" to ½ cup per day

Oatmeal, Cream of Wheat and Farina

Prepare according to the instructions, cooking with water, low fat milk or milk alternative. Avoid honey, sugar or maple syrup at this time and instead try adding spices like cinnamon, nutmeg or vanilla or almond extracts. Mashed banana, canned peaches or sugar alternatives can also be added for sweetness. Look for instant varieties with <5g added sugar.

- ***Egg Oatmeal Protein Bowl:*** Adding an egg to your oatmeal provides a hearty breakfast full of protein.

Directions:

1. Combine 1/3 cup rolled oats, ½ cup low fat milk or milk alternative and egg white in a microwave-safe bowl and mix well.
2. Microwave for 1 minute and stir.
3. Microwave another 60-90 seconds, depending on desired consistency
4. Top as desired (try cinnamon, nutmeg, PB2 or vanilla extract) and serve warm.

