

CODDLING THE CONVALESCENT

AT this time of the year, and right on till spring time, there are always many people recovering from bad colds and influenza and the like, whose appetites need tempting with nourishing, yet tasty dishes. Fried food is not advisable, even though the male patient may show considerable impatience with steamed morsels, and cry out loudly for steak and eggs! Don't serve anything that looks "fatty" and greasy, and see that hot food is not lukewarm. Stir everything with a silver spoon or fork, as cooking spoons sometimes make the food taste brassy. Try to introduce a little colour into the food, such as a sprinkling of paprika (Mexican red pepper), and finely-chopped parsley (or sprigs). Remember that a half-sick person can't help being fussy, and try to tempt the appetite with attractive sight and smell, as well as taste.

Try some of these suggestions—and please send in any others which you have found to be successful.

Baked Eggs

Butter an enamel plate. Carefully break one or two eggs, and slip on to the plate. Sprinkle with pepper and salt, cover each yolk with a spoonful of cream, and bake slowly until the eggs are set. If cream is scarce, the eggs may be covered with grated cheese. Decorate with parsley, and serve on toast. It is best to stand the plate in a dish of water.

Oyster Omelette

Three or four oysters, 1 teacup white sauce, 2 eggs, 1 tablespoon butter, a little milk and 1 teaspoon cornflour. Chop the oysters, and heat in the white sauce. Keep warm till the omelette is ready. To make the omelette, separate the egg whites and yolks. Beat the yolks well, add the cornflour moistened with milk. Season well. Beat egg whites stiff, and fold into the yolks. Heat the butter smoking hot in a small pan, and pour in the omelette. Cook over steady heat until under side is slightly browned—two or three minutes. Put pan under griller—or in oven—to brown the top. Do not overcook. Slip on to a hot dish. Pour the hot oyster mixture over half the omelette, fold over, and serve at once.

Breast of Chicken

Roll the breast of a chicken, saved from broth, in wholemeal, slightly seasoned with salt, place it in a casserole and just cover with boiling milk, or chicken broth. Cook slowly in a very moderate oven with the lid on till tender, depending on the age of the chicken. Cut the meat neatly off the bone before serving, and add a little finely chopped parsley to the gravy.

Apple Souffle

One large apple, 1 egg white, 1 dessertspoon sugar, a little grated lemon

rind or 1 teaspoon juice. Deep saucer or small pie dish. Bake apple and scrape out pulp, add 1 dessertspoon sugar, lemon rind, then stir in the egg white beaten stiff. Butter the dish, place the mixture in, and bake about 20 minutes. Dredge the sugar over, and serve at once. Moderate oven.

Scalloped Brains

One set of brains, ½ pint milk, ½ oz. butter, ½ oz. flour, 1 tablespoon cream, salt and pepper. Soak the brains for half an hour in salt and water, then put them into fresh cold salted water, and bring to the boil, strain off the water (to whiten them), cover again with cold water and bring to the boil. Cook slowly for 10 minutes. Make a sauce by melting the butter in a saucepan, add the flour and the milk gradually, making a very smooth mixture. When cooked, add the brains, which have been cut up. Butter a pie dish, put the mixture in, cover with bread-crumbs. Cook in a very hot oven till brown.

Steamed Chop

Trim a good, middle-cut chop, put into a basin (or the top half of a double saucepan), add a dessertspoonful of washed rice, pinch of salt, a teacup of cold water, a shake of pepper, and a small piece of celery cut into fine shreds. Cover with a piece of greased paper (or the lid of the saucepan), and stand in an outer saucepan of water. Steam slowly for an hour. Serve hot, with a little mashed potato if liked. Alternatively, this may be cooked in the oven.

Flounder (Or any nice fillet of fish)

Skin the fish on both sides, put it into a buttered pie dish, or casserole, cover with milk, add a little pepper and salt, and some small knobs of butter. Put on lid and simmer slowly in oven about 20 minutes, or till cooked. Lift out carefully with fish-slice on to a hot plate—do not break the fish, or it will be unsightly. Thicken the milk with a little cornflour, and add finely-chopped parsley. Another digestive way of cooking this is simply to rub the fish over with a little seasoned flour, place it in a well-buttered deep plate, put some knobs of butter on top, and cover over with another plate, place this on a saucepan of boiling water, and cook about 20 minutes or till done.

FROM THE MAIL BAG

Storing Pumpkins

Dear Aunt Daisy,

I think I can help the listener who wants to know how to keep her pumpkins. My husband grows them every

year, so I am sure the following method will be of use. After the pumpkins have matured, cut them off the vine with a stalk about three or four inches long, and stack them up on their sides. The secret of keeping pumpkins is not to allow any moisture to lodge in the stalk cavity or the crown. We piled ours on the outside roof of a shed, and they survived the sun and rain for a whole season; when pumpkins were at their dearest price in the markets, we were able to eat ours in comfort, without feeling we were eating money.—M.S. (Auckland).

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