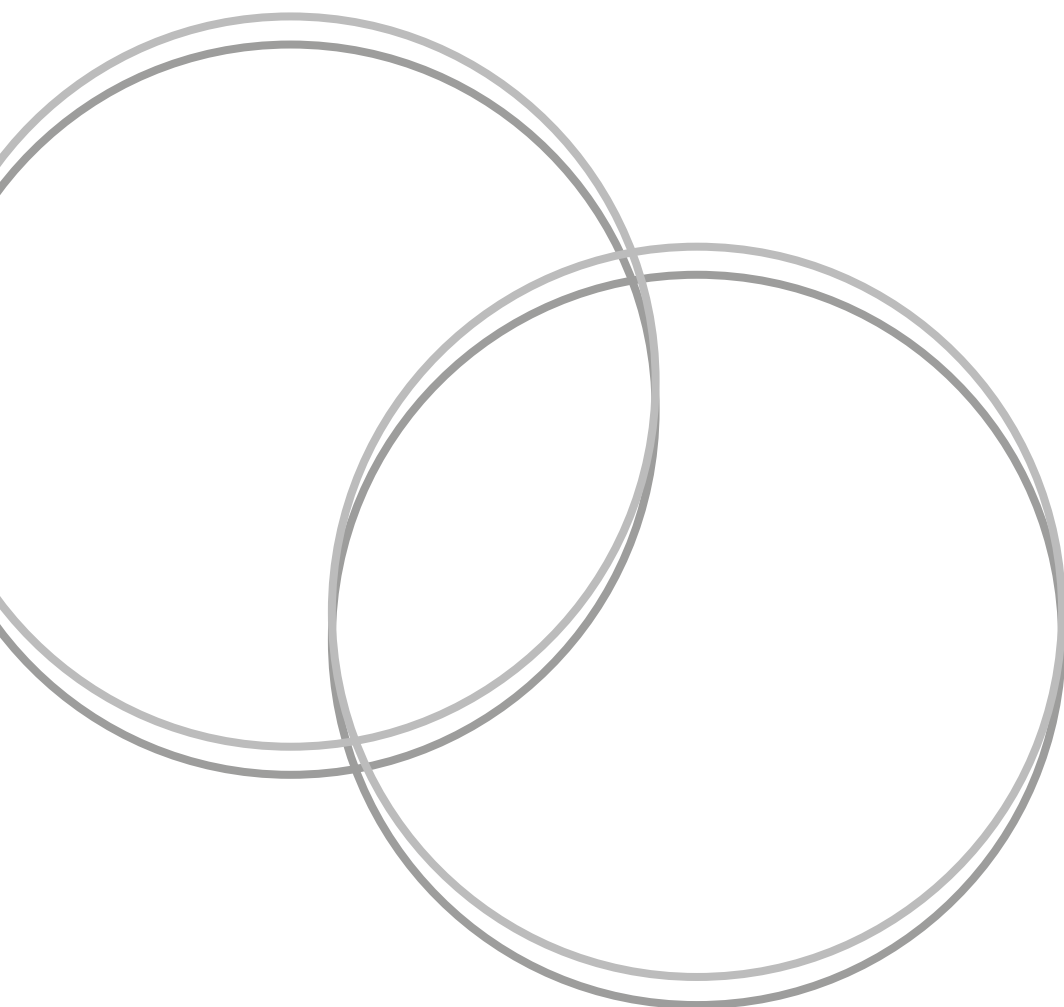


Modified Texture: Level 6 Soft and Bite Sized Foods



Introduction

You may need to change the texture of your food and drink if you:

- have problems chewing or swallowing your food
- have a dry or sore mouth
- have a sore throat
- feel that food is getting stuck in your food pipe (oesophagus)
- cough during or after eating or drinking
- have a gurgly voice after eating
- have recurrent chest infections
- choke on certain food or drinks more than others.

The texture that you need will depend upon the problems that you are having when eating. This may change over time and your Speech and Language Therapist will be able to let you know if this is the case.

If you have been given specific advice about food textures or thickening fluids from a Speech and Language Therapist you must follow these guidelines for safety reasons.

Whatever texture you have been advised to have, it is important that you receive the nourishment that your body needs. This leaflet is designed to help you choose suitable foods that will keep you healthy and help your body to cope with any treatment that you need.

A balanced diet

It is very important that your meals are well balanced to give you all the nutrients that your body needs. There are five different food groups that provide you with different nutrients as follows:

1. Bread, other cereals, potatoes, pasta and rice

These starchy foods provide your body with energy. They are also an excellent source of fibre and B vitamins and are cheap and easy to prepare.

2. Fruit and vegetables

Fruit and vegetables provide many vitamins including vitamins A, C and E. Fruit and vegetables also provide important minerals and fibre.

3. Meat, fish and alternatives

These foods provide protein that is essential for growth and repair. They are excellent sources of B vitamins, iron and zinc which are also important for wound healing.

4. Milk and dairy foods

These protein and energy rich foods are good sources of calcium that is needed for strong bones and teeth. Choose full-fat alternatives if your appetite is poor.

5. Foods containing fat or sugar

Fat is a very rich energy source and can be used to add extra calories to your food. This is particularly useful if you are eating less than normal. Sugar is also a rich energy source and can be added to food to increase calories. Remember to brush your teeth after meals and sugary snacks to prevent tooth decay.

Soft and bite sized foods

These are in line with the International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative (IDDSI). To check textures please visit: www.iddsi.org/standards/testing-methods

Soft and bite sized foods:

- Soft, tender and moist, but with no thin liquid leaking/dripping from the food
- Ability to 'bite off' a piece of food is **not** required
- Ability to chew 'bite-sized' pieces so that they are safe to swallow **is required**
- 'Bite-sized' pieces no bigger than 1.5cm x 1.5cm in size
- Food can be mashed/broken down with pressure from fork
- A knife is **not** required

To prepare food:

- Cook meat, fish and vegetables until tender
- Food that can be mashed with a fork is soft enough
- Lumps should be no bigger than 1.5cm x 1.5cm
- You may need to drain excess liquid after preparation
- You may need to avoid dry bread and cereal and large lumps
- Consult your specialist about this

Meals prepared to this food texture can also be purchased as ready meals from specialist companies. Please speak to your Dietitian or Speech and Language Therapist for more advice if needed.

The following pages contain some examples of easy to chew foods that you may like to try and foods which are not suitable.

If you have any questions regarding these items, please seek professional advice from your Dietitian or Speech and Language Therapist.

Food group

BREAD, OTHER CEREALS AND POTATOES

Suitable

Porridge, Ready Brek™ or other porridge mixes without 'bits'

Any plain cereal such as Weetabix™, All-Bran™, cornflakes, Rice Krispies™ – add milk, allow to soften and drain off any excess fluid

Cooked pasta – boil until soft, cut into small pieces and serve with lots of sauce e.g. cheese or Bolognese

Tinned spaghetti/hoops in sauce, ravioli in sauce

Well cooked noodles in sauce

Well-cooked white rice served with plenty of sauce

White or sweet potatoes, boiled until soft and mashed or cut into small pieces

Flesh only of baked potato – mash inside of potato and discard skin

Chunky chip shop style chips – add sauce or gravy to soften and chop into bite sized pieces

Not suitable

Dry cereal

Muesli of any variety

Potatoes skins

Crispy chips such as French fries

Bread with hard crusts, newly baked bread

Dry toast

Rolls with grains on top, newly baked rolls

Naan or pitta bread

Crackers, oatcakes

Pizza

Food group

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Suitable

Tomatoes – mash tinned varieties, remove skin and mash fresh tomatoes

Well cooked vegetables – check these are soft, not stringy and have no stalks, such as mashed swede, turnip, carrots, butternut squash, beetroot cauliflower, broccoli, sprouts and onions

Chopped mushrooms, peppers, courgettes – well cooked and served in sauce

Mushy peas, tinned peas – mashed well

Mashed ripe avocado.

Soft fresh or tinned fruit, mashed e.g. pears, peaches, kiwi fruit, banana, strawberries, raspberries

Apples or pears – stewed with skins removed. Drain any excess juice

Fruit juice thickened to your appropriate drink level if required

Not suitable

Salads and salad vegetables – lettuce, cucumber, raw carrot, onions, pepper, celery, coleslaw

Raw vegetables

Firm undercooked vegetables with stalks including stir fried vegetables

Cabbage

Green/runner beans.

Sweetcorn

Hard fresh fruit such as apples

Fibrous fruits such as citrus fruit or pineapple

Dried fruit – figs, dates, prunes, raisins

Food group

MEAT, FISH AND ALTERNATIVES

Suitable

Chopped, well cooked, lean tender meat, fish and vegetarian alternatives served in sauce or gravy, e.g. hot pot, casserole, curry, stew, roast beef, pork, lamb

Shepherds or cottage pie

Sliced cold meat – cut up small and mashed in sauce, baked beans or tinned spaghetti to moisten

Potted meat

Meat, fish or vegetarian pate mixed with chopped pasta or cooked vegetables

Tuna mashed with mayonnaise/sauce

Eggs – scrambled, baked, poached or boiled and mashed with butter or mayonnaise.

Cheese soufflé

Note: Ensure all bones are removed from fish

Not suitable

Hard, tough, fatty or gristly meat

Sliced cold and sausage meats – roast beef, pork, chopped pork, luncheon meat, pepperoni, salami, chorizo

Fried/breaded/battered food such as fish fingers, chicken kiev, breaded turkey escalopes, fritter

Dry, hard or crusty pastry such as oven cooked pies, scotch pies, pork or game pies

Scotch eggs

Fried eggs

Food group

MILK AND DAIRY	
Suitable Cottage cheese, soft cream cheese such as mascarpone, ricotta, soft goats' cheese, full fat Philadelphia or cheese spread Yoghurt /fromage frais – smooth or with large pieces of fruit removed Silken tofu can be used in sauces, soups and desserts as a substitute for cream	Not suitable Solid pieces of cheese Cheese with rind Stringy cheese such as mozzarella or gruyere Chewy cheese such as halloumi or paneer

Food group

FOODS CONTAINING FAT AND SUGAR

Suitable

Milk puddings such as custard and rice puddings

Mousse, whips

Sponges, plain cakes, steamed puddings and drop scones – add custard, thick cream yoghurt, chocolate sauce and break up into bite sized pieces

Plain biscuits softened in soaking solutions, prepared following the packet instructions on the thickener prescribed by your health professional

Choc rolls broken into bite sized pieces

Ripe avocado mashed with banana

Corn snacks – Quavers™, Wotsits™, Skips™ – with care

Not suitable

Ice cream

Dry sponge

Cakes with royal icing

Fruit cake – may contain nuts

Crumble, tarts, flans

Dry biscuits with coatings, fillings, chocolate chips, nuts or fruit

Doughnuts

Pieces or bars of chocolate

Sweets – mints, boiled, gums

Breakfast bars with grains or a crumbly texture

All forms of crisps, nuts, Bombay mix, Twiglets™ etc

Suggested meal ideas

Breakfast:

- Egg (scrambled, poached, boiled, fried)
- Baked beans or tinned tomatoes with soft white bread (no crusts)
- Fruits for example chopped banana, ripe peaches, melon, nectarines and strawberries
- Porridge such as Ready Brek or instant oat cereal
- Cereal wheat biscuits for example Weetabix soaked well in milk

Main meals:

- Well-cooked soft pasta and sauce
- Boiled white rice (well-cooked with plenty of thick sauce)
- Steamed, poached or baked fish for example cod, haddock in sauce
- Plain, soft omelette with soft filling
- Minced meat in thick gravy
- Paneer curry
- Tender meat casserole with plenty of thick sauce or gravy
- Lean tender pieces of meat for example for example chicken, turkey with plenty of thick gravy
- Thick creamy soup
- Fish pie

Desserts / puddings / snacks:

- Plain sponge cake, cake bars or sponge fingers with custard or cream – no fruit cake
- Steamed plain pudding with custard or cream, for example sticky toffee pudding, vanilla sponge
- Farali khichadi potato and sagu seeds. NO NUTS, as usually made with peanuts
- Soft fruit - tinned or fresh, for example strawberries
- Stewed fruit with yoghurt, ice cream, cream or evaporated milk
- Thick and creamy yoghurt or fromage frais
- Crème caramel
- Egg custard

If you are losing weight or want to increase your weight

1. Fortify your meals as below:

- Milk - Add four tablespoons of powdered milk to one pint of full cream milk. Use in drinks, cereal, puddings, sauces and custard
- Fats - Add butter, rapeseed or Extra Virgin Olive Oil to vegetables, potatoes or pastas. Add mayonnaise or salad cream to potatoes, eggs, cheese and fish
- Soft cheese - add to soups, scrambled eggs and mashed potatoes
- Jam / honey / sugar - Add to porridge, puddings, yoghurts etc

2. Try to have two nourishing snacks a day, in between mealtimes.

3. Try to have two nourishing drinks a day, e.g., a milky hot chocolate / Malted drink/ milkshake. Ensure their level of consistency is in line with your Speech and Language Therapist's advice.

How can I tell if I am losing weight?

Weigh yourself once a week to monitor if you're losing weight. If you're unable to weigh yourself, you may notice weight loss if your clothes or jewellery start to feel looser. A modified diet should not lead to weight loss. If you're concerned that you're not meeting your nutritional requirements or are losing weight, please reach out to your GP or dietitian for further guidance.

Other safer swallowing recommendations:

Your Speech and Language Therapist is:

Name:

Telephone:

Your Dietitian is:

Name:

Telephone:

Further information

If you would like an interpreter, please speak to the department where you are being seen.

Please also tell them if you would like this information in another format, such as:

- Easy Read
- large print
- braille
- audio
- electronic
- another language.

We have tried to make the information in this leaflet meet your needs. If it does not meet your individual needs or situation, please speak to your healthcare team. They are happy to help.

Author: Produced by registered Dietitians and Speech and Language Therapists.

March 2025

Review: March 2028

Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

www.ouh.nhs.uk/information



Making a difference across our hospitals

charity@ouh.nhs.uk | 01865 743 444 | hospitalcharity.co.uk

OXFORD HOSPITALS CHARITY (REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 1175809)

