

## Departments of Nutrition and Dietetics

# Swallowing Difficulties: How to Eat Well on a Pureed Diet

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This leaflet provides information for people who have swallowing difficulties and have been advised to adapt the texture of their food and follow a Pureed Diet. Please use this in conjunction with the Pureed Diet Information Sheet. You can find more information about this diet on the following website: <https://iddsi.org/resources/>

### **Potential problems arising from swallowing difficulty**

If there is a breakdown in the normal swallowing process there is a risk that food or liquids can pass into your lungs instead of your stomach. This is called aspiration, which can lead to the development of a chest infection or pneumonia.

The advice given to you by the Speech and Language Therapist will help avoid this, so it is very important that you follow the advice. If you feel you are still having problems or you feel your swallowing difficulties are making you unwell, please contact your Speech and Language Therapist or GP as soon as possible.

Your Dietitian will ensure you are eating and drinking sufficient calories, nutrients and liquids. A nutritious diet is essential to health and weight maintenance especially when you are or have been unwell.



# Patient Information

## Which foods do I need to eat?

Try to have a variety of different foods each day as no one food group has all the nutrients necessary to maintain health.

## Meat, fish and alternatives

Try to include 2-3 portions per day. These are foods which are high in protein and are the building blocks of the body, we need them to maintain and repair body tissues.

They include the following foods:

- Meat
- Poultry
- Pate
- Fish - fresh, frozen or tinned
- Yoghurt
- Milk
- Cheese
- Lentils
- Beans and Lentils (sieved to remove skins)
- Hummus

## Energy containing foods

These foods provide fuel for the body. While you are ill, your body needs more energy than normal.

- If you are underweight or losing weight try to eat more of these foods.
- If you are overweight and eating well you should try to limit how much and how often you have these foods.
- Foods which are underlined are high in sugar and are not recommended for people with diabetes or those trying to lose weight. Try to have no added sugar alternatives where possible.

Energy containing foods include:

### Starchy foods such as

- Ready brek, wheat biscuits - soaked well with milk (75ml milk per biscuit) and well-mixed to make a smooth texture, creamed potato
- Pureed puddings
- Bananas (frozen and fresh) - blended with milk/cream

### Fat and sugar containing foods such as

- Butter, ghee, margarine, vegetable oils, double cream
- Fruit juice, squash, fizzy drinks
- Sugar, glucose, honey, seedless jam or shredless marmalade

## Fruit and vegetables

These provide the body with a good source of vitamins, minerals and fibre. You can use fresh, frozen or tinned varieties or alternatively use fruit or vegetable juices. Make sure you remove hard skin and seeds before you puree and drain off any excess juice post pureeing. Avoid stringy fruits and vegetables.

## Milk and dairy foods

These are an important source of protein, energy and calcium

### Good sources include

- Milk (Try to aim for 1 pint of milk per day)
- Milk puddings or custard
- Cheese (soft or hard that has been melted in a sauce)

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- Yoghurt (smooth without pieces of fruit)
- Fromage frais.

### What if I have a small appetite?

There may be times when your appetite is not so good and you lose weight. Here are some ideas, which may help you increase the calories and protein in your diet.

### Enriching your food and drinks

Please ensure any liquids are at the correct consistency which will be advised by your Speech and Language Therapist.

Fortified milk can be used in place of milk or water to make coffee, hot chocolate, packet soups, milk puddings, custard, cereals and sauces.

To make fortified milk, whisk together **one pint full cream milk** with **four tablespoons of skimmed milk powder** and **refrigerate for up to 24 hours**

Other ideas to increase your intake:

- Use cream or evaporated milk in suitable sauces, soups, mashed potato, cereals, custard, puddings
- Try to use the full fat varieties of cheese when adding to foods
- Add cream cheese or grated cheese to mashed potato. Ensure that the grated cheese has melted and has been stirred through before serving. Add cheese after cooking potato, so to avoid it forming a crust and becoming stringy.
- Add sugar, syrup, honey, seedless jam or shred less marmalade to suitable cereals, puddings
- Use full fat smooth or thick and creamy varieties of yoghurt. Add to pureed fruit or use to make yoghurt drinks
- Add thick custard or cream to pureed fruit.
- Add butter, margarine, oil, salad cream or mayonnaise to mashed potato
- Use butter or oil to fry foods initially before liquidising.

### Meal delivery services that provide puree meals:

If you are interested in using a meal delivery service, please ask your dietitian for more information.

- Wiltshire Farm Foods - <https://www.wiltshirefarmfoods.com/>
- Oakhouse Foods - <https://www.oakhousefoods.co.uk/specialist-nutrition.html>
- Mr Gills - <https://mrgills.co.uk/>
- Simply Puree - <https://simplypuree.co.uk/>

### Nutritional supplement drinks

If you are still unable to eat sufficient food to maintain your body weight your dietitian may suggest you try a prescribed nutritional supplement drink. These are high in calories and protein to prevent further weight loss or help you gain weight. However, they should not replace meals or snacks, unless your appetite is extremely poor. Your dietitian will advise your GP to prescribe these if needed.

# Patient Information

## **Oral care for people on a high calorie diet**

You may have been advised to increase the calorie content of your diet. This might mean eating more sweet or sticky foods and drinks which are not usually recommended for a healthy mouth and teeth. Keeping your mouth healthy can reduce the risk of other infections, such as a chest infection, from occurring.

The following tips can help you balance the benefits of a high calorie diet and a healthy mouth and teeth:

- Visit the dentist regularly and tell them about the diet and ask about protective treatments for teeth
- Brush teeth, gums and tongue twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, especially last thing at night
- If possible drink sweet drinks through a straw and don't swish them around your teeth and if possible keep them to meal times
- Don't forget medicines can be sugary as well. Try to take them at mealtimes if possible.

## **Additional information**

Please do not hesitate to contact us for further advice and information.

Produced by the Dietetic Department, University Hospitals Coventry & Warwickshire NHS Trust.

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please contact 024 7696 6161 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

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## **Document History**

Author	Acute Dietitian Team
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Contact Tel	26161
Published	March 2006
Reviewed	April 2019
Review	April 2021
Version	7
Reference	HIC/LFT/277/06