

Dietetics

Swallowing Difficulties: How to Eat Well on a Pureed Diet

Your Dietitian is: Telephone number: 024 7696 6161

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Why do I need a puree diet?

Your Speech and Language Therapist has recommended that you have a puree diet due to difficulties with your chewing and/or swallowing. If you wish to discuss this in more detail please contact your Speech and Language Therapy team.

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.**



Patient Information

You may have a Dietitian who will make sure you are eating and drinking enough calories, nutrients and liquids. A nutritious diet is important to health and weight maintenance especially when you are or have been unwell.

What is a pureed texture?

- It is usually eaten with a spoon
- It does not require chewing
- Has a smooth texture and no lumps
- Holds shape on a spoon
- Falls off a spoon in a single spoonful when tilted
- Is not sticky
- Liquids (like sauces) must not separate from solids

Do not choose foods that are: hard, visible lumps, dry, tough, chewy, crispy, crunchy, sharp or spiky, crumbly, sticky, have stringy textures, have skins or outer shells, husks, pips/seeds, bones or gristle, round/long shaped food, crusts that have formed during cooking and have a mixed consistency of food and fluid e.g. soup with lumps, food with lots of sauce/gravy, cereal.

Most foods can be made into a pureed texture by using a food processor or blender; a sieve can be used to remove any remaining lumps. When preparing pureed meals try adding milk, cream, gravy or sauce to get the correct consistency and make sure that the nutrition value and taste is maintained. If possible try and keep each blended food item separate on the plate, as this can be more appetising.

If having soups these must be to the correct thickness if you are on thickened fluids.

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. By having a variety of foods you will also find your meals more appealing and enjoyable hence may find it a good way to make sure you are meeting your nutritional needs.

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If you have been recommended to have thickened fluids then please make sure any fluids are thickened to the correct consistency per you Speech and Language Therapists advice.

Food group	Suitable foods	Foods to avoid
<p>Meat, fish and alternatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - These foods provide us with protein and are building blocks of the body - Try to include 2-3 portions per day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pureed cooked meat or fish in sauce • Pureed beans, lentils or pulses • Smooth Pate • Hummus • Pureed Quorn or soya mince 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any foods which do not blend down to a smooth consistency
<p>Starchy foods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - These foods provide us with energy - Includes carbohydrates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Ready Brek’, instant porridge or Weetabix (sieve if necessary) • Well-cooked and pureed pasta or rice dishes • Potato - peel then boil until soft and mash with milk and butter. Using a liquidiser, hand blender or potato ricer will help to make it smoother. • Instant mashed potato is useful and can be used without being liquidised. Make this up with milk and butter to improve the nutritional content. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cereals not suitable for pureeing e.g. cornflakes
<p>Fat and sugar containing foods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - These foods provide us with energy and should be eaten in small amounts - These foods can be added to foods to fortify foods if you are concerned about your weight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Butter • Oil • Cream • Margarine • Grated cheese • Sugar • Honey or syrup 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any solid foods that cannot be pureed e.g. whole sweets

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<p>Fruits and vegetables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - These foods provide our bodies with a good source of vitamins, minerals and fibre - Cook until soft and tender and then puree in a blender - Sieve foods prior to serving to ensure no skins or lumps remain - Fruit will need to be stewed and pureed 	<p>Cooked and pureed fruit and vegetables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carrots • Turnips • Cauliflower • Broccoli • Parsnip • Swede • Apple without the skin • Tinned peaches or pears • Fruit which can be pureed and sieved if necessary or put in a drink e.g. banana milkshake. Thickener may be needed if on thickened fluids and care must be taken to ensure no lumps remain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raw fruits or vegetables • Any foods with husks, seeds, skins or stringy elements that have not been removed prior to cooking • Discard any juices that have drained during the cooking process
<p>Milk and dairy foods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - These foods are an important source of protein, energy and calcium 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milk (thickened if required) - ensure plant-based varieties are fortified with calcium and additional vitamins • Milk puddings or custard • Cheese (soft or hard that has been melted in a sauce) • Yoghurt smooth only • Fromage Frais 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yoghurts with any fruit or mixed consistencies • Any solid pieces e.g. chunks of cheese

Meal ideas

Breakfasts

- Ready Brek or other instant oat cereal. Wheat biscuits - soaked well with milk (75ml milk per biscuit) and well-mixed to make a smooth texture.
- Pureed scrambled eggs with extra milk and cheese
- Smooth thick yoghurt or Fromage Frais
- Pureed stewed fruit such as apple, apricots, prunes. Serve alone or with a full fat yoghurt

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Main meals

- Pureed meat/poultry with gravy/sauce and creamed potato
- Pureed and sieved curry or dhal served with pureed rice
- Pureed fish and potato pie, or pureed fish in white/cheese sauce with creamed potato
- Pureed vegetables such as cauliflower, broccoli and carrot (try adding cooked potato and stirring through some cream cheese or melted hard cheese)
- Creamed potato or the inside of a jacket potato with smooth pate/cream cheese

Snacks/ Puddings

- Mousse, Angel Delight or other instant whips
- Crème caramel without sauce
- Blancmange
- Liquidise sponge pudding or cake with thick sauce or custard

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.

If you are underweight or losing weight try to eat more energy containing foods

Enriching your food and drinks

Please make sure 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**

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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. Make sure 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 enough 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 can support you with finding suitable products to buy over the counter, suggest homemade recipes or recommend a GP prescription.

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

Additional information

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

Produced by the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics.

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	
Department:	Dietetics
Contact:	26161
Updated:	November 2021
Review:	November 2023
Version:	7.2
Reference:	HIC/LFT/277/06