

Speech and Language Therapy

Thickened fluids

A speech and language therapist has assessed your swallow. You may be at risk of normal fluids going down the wrong way into your airway. This is called aspiration.

A speech and language therapist can assess your swallow with different levels of thickened fluid. This is to see if having thickened fluids may reduce the risk of aspiration or make drinking more comfortable.

The brand of thickener provided at UHCW is 'Nutilus Clear'. Other hospitals or communities may recommend other brands.

How to make thickened fluids

We will explain to you how to thicken your drink to the right level of thickness recommended by your speech and language therapist. This to ensure your safety when drinking.

1. Put your preferred choice of drink into a cup.
2. Add the required amount of thickener to the drink and stir straight away.
3. Leave the to stand for 1 minute, until it reaches the required level of thickness.



Patient Information

Levels of thickened fluid

Level 1

Use one green scoop of Nutilis Clear in a 200ml drink

- Your aim is for the drink to be slightly thick
- Thicker than water
- Requires a little more effort to drink than thin liquids
- Can be drunk through a straw

Level 2

Use two green scoops of Nutilis Clear in a 200ml drink

- Your aim is for the drink to be mildly thick
- It's sippable
- Pours quickly from a spoon
- Effort is required to drink through standard straw

Level 3

Use 3 green scoops of Nutilis Clear in a 200ml drink

- Your aim is for the drink to be moderately thick
- Can be drunk from a cup

Level 4

Use 7 green scoops of Nutilis Clear in a 200ml drink

- Your aim is for the drink to be extremely thick
- Can't be drunk from a cup
- Usually eaten with a spoon
- Can't be sucked through a straw
- Falls off a spoon in a single spoonful when tilted and continues to hold shape on a plate

Things to remember

- A yellow sign from the Speech and Language Therapist will be placed above your bed if you are on thickened fluids. This gives guidance to yourself, your family and staff members.
- Two tubs of thickener will be sent home with you when you are discharged. A prescription for thickener is sent to your GP.
- **All drinks must be thickened, including hot drinks.**
- If you are on thickened fluids, you should not be offered ice cream, cereal with milk, thin soup or gravy unless thickener is added.
- An incorrectly thickened drink is putting you at risk of aspiration.
- If using more or less than 200ml, adjust the amount of thickening powder used.
- Drinks can thicken differently depending on temperature, baseline consistency and fizziness.
- If you have been prescribed nutritional supplement drinks, these must be the correct thickness. Your dietitian will advise further.

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact us on 024 7696 5709 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy.

Did we get it right?

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Patient Information

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