Patient Information

University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust

Dietetics

How to eat well on a pureed diet

Your dietitian is:

Telephone number: 024 7696 6161

Speech and Language Therapy inpatient team: 024 7696 5709

Speech and Language Therapy outpatient team: 024 7632 7027

Why you need a puree diet

Your Speech and Language Therapist has suggested a puree diet because you have problems with your chewing or swallowing.

You can find more information about a puree diet at iddsi.org/resources/.

If you have questions about a puree diet, call the Speech and Language Therapy team.

Risks of swallowing difficulty

If your swallow isn't working as usual, there is a risk that food or liquids can pass into your lungs instead of your stomach. This is called aspiration. Aspiration can lead to a chest infection or pneumonia.

A dietitian can check you are having enough to eat and drink and have a healthy diet. This is so you don't lose weight or become more unwell.

What is a pureed texture

A puree texture can be eaten with a spoon.

- You don’t have to cut it up.
- It doesn’t need to be chewed.
- It’s smooth and has no lumps.
- It stays in the same shape on a spoon. If it falls off a spoon, it is in a single dollop.
- It is not sticky.
- It doesn’t have bits.

Most foods can be pureed in a food processor or with a hand blender. Use a sieve to take out any lumps.

When making puree meals, try adding milk, cream, gravy, or sauce to get the thickness right. This will also add more taste to the food.

Keep each type of food separate on the plate. This looks better and means that you can taste each foods’ flavour.

Do not choose foods that are:

× hard

× dry

× tough

× chewy

× crispy

× crunchy

× sharp or spiky

× crumbly

× sticky

× round or long-shaped

× a mixed texture of food and fluid - soup with lumps, food with lots of sauce or gravy, cereal in milk.

Do not choose foods that have:

× visible lumps
× stringy textures
× skins or outer shells
× husks
× pips or seeds
× bones or gristle
× hard crusts from cooking

Food groups you need to eat

Have a mixture of foods from different food groups each day.

If you are advised to have thickened fluids, make sure any drinks, soups and sauces are thick enough. Check soups to make sure they are like the foods the Speech and Language Therapy team asked you to have.

Meat, fish and other protein foods

- For protein, the building blocks of the body
- Try to include 2-3 portions per day
- For cooked food, before it's blended, a portion looks like a deck of cards, 2 eggs, or the size and thickness of the palm of your hand

Foods to avoid

- Avoid any foods which do not blend and become smooth.

Suitable foods

- Pureed cooked meat or fish in sauce
- Pureed beans, lentils or pulses
- Smooth Pate
- Hummus
- Pureed Quorn or soya mince
- Eggs
- Cheese

Starchy foods/carbohydrates

- For energy, mineral, vitamins and fibre
- A portion is about the size of your fist
- Aim to have at least one portion with each meal

Foods to avoid

× Avoid cereals that won't blend, such as cornflakes

Suitable foods

- '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. Use a liquidiser, hand blender or potato ricer to make it smoother.
- Instant mashed potato can be used without being liquidised. Make it with milk and butter to add more energy

Fat and sugar-containing foods

- Foods that are very high in energy
- Fats help repair the body
- Some fats have vitamins in them
- A small amount of fat is usually enough
- Try to eat less animal fats and more fish oil and vegetable fats

Foods to avoid

× Avoid any food that can't be pureed e.g. whole sweets

× Avoid foods that separate, like ice-cream

×

Suitable foods

- Butter
- Oil
- Cream
- Margarine
- Grated cheese
- Sugar
- Honey or syrup

Milk and dairy foods and plant-based choices

- For protein, energy and calcium.
- Aim for 3 portions a day.
- A portion of milk is 200ml or 1/3 of a pint. A portion of cheese is about a tablespoon, or a matchbox size of hard cheese before it is cooked. A portion of yogurt is one standard 125 to 150g pot.

Avoid

× Avoid yoghurts with bits

× Avoid solid pieces e.g. chunks of cheese

Suitable foods

- Milk (thickened if required) – plant-based varieties should have added calcium and vitamins
- Milk puddings or custard
- Soft cheese
- Hard cheese that is melted in a sauce
- Yoghurt smooth only
- Fromage Frais

Fruits and vegetables

- For vitamins, minerals, and fibre.
- Cook until soft and then blend. Sieve off any juice from cooking foods and make sure no skins or lumps are left.
- You can use fresh, frozen or tinned.
- A portion is about the size of your cupped hand. Aim for 5 portions a day.

Foods to avoid

× Avoid raw fruits or vegetables.

× Avoid husks, seeds, skins, or stringy bits.

Suitable foods

Cooked and pureed:

- root vegetables like carrots, turnips, swede, parsnip
- cauliflower, broccoli or chard
- greens like spinach, kale or collards
- squash like butternut, pumpkin, marrow
- peeled apple
- tinned peaches or pears

You can add fruit (cooked and blended) to drinks like banana milkshake - thickener can be added and there should be no lumps.

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 cooked fruit like apple, apricots or prunes. Serve alone or with a full fat yoghurt, or thick cream

Main meals

- Pureed meat 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

If you don’t eat much

There may be times where you don’t eat well and you lose weight. If you are underweight or losing weight, try to eat more fatty and high energy food to boost the energy in your diet.

Boosting food and drinks

Make sure any liquid is the right texture and matches what your Speech and Language Therapist asked you to have.

Fortified milk

Use fortified milk instead of milk or water to make coffee, hot chocolate, packet soups, milk puddings, custard, cereals, and sauces.

To make fortified milk, whisk together **1 pint of full cream milk** with **4 tablespoons of skimmed milk powder**. **Refrigerate for up to 24 hours**.

Other food/drink boosters:

- Use cream or evaporated milk in sauces, soups, mashed potato, cereals, custard, puddings.
- Use full fat cheese to add to food/drinks.
- Add cream cheese or grated cheese to mashed potato. Make sure the grated cheese has melted and is stirred in . Add cheese after cooking potato so it doesn't have a crust or go stringy.
- Add sugar, syrup, honey, seedless jam or shredless marmalade to 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 before liquidising.

Meal delivery services that provide puree meals

Here are some meal delivery companies that sell puree meals:

- 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://simplyfoodsolutions.co.uk/

Nutritional supplement drinks

If you are still losing weight, even after adding more to your food, your dietitian might ask you to try a booster drink/dessert. These can help you keep up your weight or help you put on weight.

Nutritional supplement drinks do not replace meals, drinks or snacks. You should continue to eat and drink as usual.

Your dietitian can:

- help you to find these at a supermarket
- give you homemade recipes
- write to your GP to ask for a prescription

Caring for your mouth when you are trying to eat and drink more

You may have been asked to eat and drink more. This might mean eating more sweet or sticky foods and drinks.

Take care of your teeth and mouth. Keeping your mouth healthy can prevent you from getting unwell with things like a chest infection.

To help with a healthy mouth and teeth:

- Go to the dentist at least once a year, tell them about your diet, and ask them for help.
- Brush your teeth, gums, and tongue twice a day, especially last thing at night. Brush using fluoride toothpaste.

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