

## Purée Diet

### Introduction

You have been given this leaflet because you, or the person you are caring for, has been having problems swallowing food or drinks. This is called 'dysphagia'. This leaflet will help you to choose foods that can make your swallowing easier and safer.

### What is dysphagia?

Dysphagia can be one or more of the following:

- Finding it hard to swallow food or drinks
- Finding it hard to keep food and drinks in the mouth
- Finding it hard to chew food
- Food remaining in your mouth after swallowing
- Food or drink 'going down the wrong way' making you cough or choke
- Food or drink that 'goes down the wrong way' may cause a chest infection which can be very serious.

Some people who have dysphagia do not cough or choke on food or drink when it 'goes down the wrong way'. This is not always a good sign because it means that food or drink can 'go down the wrong way' without the person even being aware of it. It is therefore very important to follow the advice that you have been given in this leaflet and by your Speech Therapist (SLT) or Dietitian.

The following are all signs of dysphagia, and if you notice any of these please contact your Speech and Language Therapist (SLT) or doctor.

- Coughing or choking when eating or drinking
- Gurgly, wet voice after eating or drinking
- Food staying in your mouth after swallowing
- Regular chest infections, for example, every 6 -10 weeks throughout the year

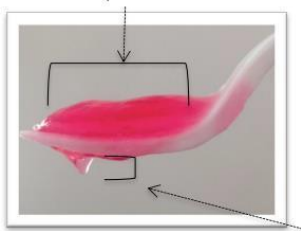
### What is a Purée Diet?

- Food that is usually eaten with a spoon.
- Chewing **is not** required.
- Has a smooth texture with **no lumps**.
- Holds its 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

### How do I test my food to make sure it is Purée?

- IDDSI Fork Drip test – Use a fork to lift up some puréed food. The food should **not** dollop or drip continuously through the fork prongs.
- IDDSI Spoon Tilt Test – Food holds its shape on the spoon and falls off fairly easily if the spoon is tilted or lightly flicked.
- Puréed food must pass both these tests.

Extremely thick liquids sit in a mound or pile above the fork



A small amount may flow through and form a tail below the fork



### IDDSI Spoon Tilt Test

Sample holds its shape on the spoon and falls off fairly easily if the spoon is tilted or lightly flicked.

Sample should *not* be firm or sticky

### IDDSI Fork Drip Test

Liquid does *not* dollop or drip continuously through the fork prongs

### How do I make Puréed food?

- To obtain the right consistency you will need either a liquidiser or hand blender. You may need to add more fluid to get the consistency right. Use milk, sauces, stock or fruit juice instead of water to add more calories.
- Meats, vegetables and potatoes should be well cooked and tender before pureeing - try stewing or casseroles and remove skins, large seeds & bones.
- Sieve if necessary, to remove small seeds/ skins.

## High Risk Foods to Avoid

These can be a choking hazard

Food Characteristics to AVOID	Examples of foods to AVOID
Mixed thin and thick textures	Soup with pieces of food, cereal with milk, yoghurt with lumps/bits
Hard or dry	Nuts, raw vegetables (eg carrot, cauliflower, broccoli); dry cakes, bread, dry cereal, pastry e.g. pies, sausage rolls, Rice
Tough or fibrous	Steak, pineapple, oranges, apple, grapefruit
Chewy	Lollies/candies/sweets, cheese chunks, marshmallows, chewing gum, sticky mashed potato, dried fruits, sticky foods
Crispy	Crackling, crisp bacon, cornflakes
Crunchy	Popcorn, food with crusts
Sharp or spiky	Corn chips and crisps
Crumbly bits	Bread, dry cake crumble, dry biscuits
Pips, seeds	All pips/seed e.g. Apple seeds, pumpkin seeds
Food with skins or outer shell	Peas, chicken skin, salmon skin, sausage skin, pulses, chickpeas/butterbeans etc.

	sweetcorn, grapes, berries/currants, cucumber with skin
Food with husks	Corn, shredded wheat bran
Bone or gristle	Chicken bones, fish bones, other bones, meat with gristle
Sticky or gummy	Nut butter, overcooked oatmeal/porridge, edible gelatin, konjac containing jelly, sticky rice cakes
Stringy/fibrous	Beans, rhubarb, celery, lettuce, uncooked spinach leaves
Crust formed during cooking or heating	Crust or skin that forms on food during cooking or after heating, for example, cheese topping, mashed potato – this should be removed before eating
Juicy food	Where juice separates from the food piece in the mouth, for example watermelon
Visible lumps	Lumps in puréed food or yoghurt

## Which foods are suitable for Purée?

Not all foods can be puréed to produce a safe texture – please use these tables as a guide

### Protein foods

Type of Food	Suitable texture - no need to purée	Suitable to Purée	May be suitable to purée *use suitable vegetables only	<b><u>NOT</u></b> suitable to purée
Meat  Meat products	Smooth meat paste  Smooth paté	Tender, well cooked beef, lamb, pork, chicken, turkey, mutton, offal (skin removed from chicken and turkey)  Tender well cooked tofu, soya products that meet the IDDSI fork drip/spoon tilt test.	Sausage meat  Sausages including meat free varieties (skins removed)  Meat/meat free pies (must be tender meat in gravy and soft pastry*)  Tender stews or casseroles* Curries *  Faggots  Shepherds/ cottage pie	Tough meats  Sausage skins  Bacon  Breadcrumbs/ battered meats  Burgers  Chilli con carne  Meat pasties  Sausage rolls

Fish	Smooth fish paste Smooth fish paté  Taramasalata	Fish in sauce without bones  Tinned tuna/ salmon - bones removed  Tinned fish in tomato sauce - bones removed, crab		Fish with bones <i>eg. Sardines whitebait</i>  Battered/ breadcrumb fish  Shellfish  Squid
Eggs		Egg mayonnaise Scrambled egg		Quiche / Omelets  Fried, poached and boiled eggs
Cheese	Plain soft cheese and plain cheese spread (e.g. cream cheese)		Grated cheese - very well mixed into hot food only	Cheese toppings/bits  Hard cheeses  Paneer

### Starchy carbohydrate foods

Type of food	Suitable texture no need to purée	Suitable to purée	May be suitable to purée	<b><u>NOT</u></b> suitable to purée
Potatoes	Instant mashed potato	Mashed potato Boiled potatoes (no skins) Inside of jacket potato	Potato salad (skinless potato and mayonnaise only)	Potatoes in their skins Roast potatoes Chips Potato croquettes Other fried potatoes
Pasta		Tinned macaroni cheese Tinned pasta in tomato sauce Tinned ravioli Well cooked pasta with smooth sauce	Homemade pasta dishes eg. spaghetti Bolognese (well-cooked pasta with smooth sauce)	Pasta salad Al denté pasta Filled pasta Pasta 'ready meals' Chinese style noodles

Rice				Boiled rice Rice salad Fried rice Savoury rice
Cereals		Porridge Ready Brek Well-soaked Weetabix		All other breakfast cereals
Bread			Soft breadcrumbs added to soup	All other bread Sandwiches

## Fruit and Vegetables

Type of food	Suitable texture - no need to purée	Suitable to purée	May be suitable to purée	<b><u>NOT</u></b> suitable to purée
Vegetables		<p>Peeled and well-cooked root vegetables such as: carrot swede turnip parsnip sweet potato yam</p> <p>Well-cooked broccoli and cauliflower</p> <p>Peeled and well-cooked pumpkin and squash</p> <p>Avocado</p>	<p>The following must be sieved to remove skins, seeds and 'strings': peas beans sweetcorn asparagus courgettes marrow leafy veg such as cabbage, greens, spinach or sprouts.</p> <p>Well-cooked plantain (not fried) Dhal/lentils Baked beans</p>	<p>Salad vegetables e.g: tomatoes cucumber radishes lettuce celery</p> <p>Raw vegetables Lightly cooked vegetables Mushrooms Onion Leeks Peppers Prepared salads eg. coleslaw Ratatouille</p>
Fruit		<p>Banana</p> <p>Peeled and stewed - apple, pear, peach</p>	<p>Strawberries, kiwi fruit, mango, watermelon (must be</p>	<p>Dried fruit All other fruit</p>

		Tinned pears, peaches, mango	sieved and may need thickening)  All the following must be sieved: stewed or tinned - rhubarb, plums, blackcurrants, raspberries, cherries, apricots, prunes, gooseberries, strawberries	
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## Other Foods

Type of food	Suitable texture - no need to purée	Suitable to purée	May be suitable to purée	<b><u>NOT</u></b> suitable to purée
Soups	Smooth soups			'Bitty'/ chunky soups
Pastry			Soft pastry as part of suitable meat/ fruit pie	Crisp pastry
Nuts			Smooth nut butters  Creamed coconut	Crunchy nut butters  Other coconut & nuts
Crisps/Savoury snacks				All crisps/ savoury snacks
Biscuits			Plain biscuits (no nuts, dried fruit, grains, jam, cream fillings etc.) soaked in thick liquid	All other biscuits and crackers
Cakes/Puddings/Desserts including Yoghurt and Ice Cream	Semolina Ground rice pudding Thick custard Blancmange Angel Delight/ Instant Whip Smooth mousse Smooth yoghurt/ fromage frais	Tapioca Sago Egg custard (without pastry) Tiramisu Junket Pannacotta	Plain rice pudding (without dried fruit, skin etc).  Plain sponge/ sponge pudding with syrup, lemon curd, seedless jam, chocolate sauce puréed with custard, cream  Custard tart (soft pastry)	Jelly Ice cream  All other cakes, puddings and desserts  Fruit crumble/ fruit pie

	Cheesecake (without base or topping)		Fruit fool (no seeds) Stewed fruit (suitable fruit)  Fruit yoghurt/ fromage fraise (sieved)  Trifle with suitable fruits only	
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### Snack Ideas

- Pureed sandwiches - see Dysphagia Meal Prep: Wrap & Sandwich (IDDSI Level 4 Pureed) on YouTube
- Soup\* – ensure no bits/lumps/croutons.
- Pureed porridge/ready brek
- Pureed fruit (ripe soft fruit/frozen fruit will puree best- may need to sieve if pips/seeds) - can add yogurt, evaporated milk, custard etc
- Instant whip pudding (eg Angel Delight)
- Mousse
- Smoothies\* - Ensure removal pips/seeds
- Milky drinks\*
- Yogurt/custard/smooth puddings
- Savoury dips – taramasalata/hummus/pate
- Soft smooth cheese e.g boursin, laughing cow

\* SLT may have advised that you/your family member require thickened fluids. If so, these items may need to have added thickener to ensure appropriate thickness

### Nutrition and Fluid

On a purée diet it is important to eat foods from all of the food groups in line with the **NHS Eat Well Guide** - protein, carbohydrate, fats, fruit and vegetables. This will help to make sure you get all the nutrients you need to promote recovery and stay healthy. You can read more about nutrition by visiting [www.nhs.uk/live-well](http://www.nhs.uk/live-well).

Each day include 6-8 mugs or glasses of **fluid** (including all hot and cold drinks) to help support your skin and kidneys and stay hydrated. Do this even if you don't feel thirsty – thirst is often a poor indicator of nutritional intake.

Also follow the advice of your Speech and Language Therapist if you need to **thicken your drinks** – sometimes this is only for a short period of time.

### Fortifying food

On a Purée diet you may need to increase the nutrient and energy content of your food and drink to get enough calories and protein.

Note: If you need to have **thickened fluids**, you may need to add thickener to drinks/ liquids in addition to ingredients suggested below.

Food	Foods to add to increase calories / protein
To soups (fresh, tinned, powdered)	Grated cheese, dried skimmed milk powder, evaporated milk, cream, crème fraîche
To sauces	Full fat yoghurt, cream, grated cheese, smooth nut butter, butter, ghee, oils (you can use different flavours)
To vegetables	Grated cheese, full fat natural yoghurt or mayonnaise, butter, ghee or margarine, oils eg. olive, rapeseed, flavoured oils
To milk (full fat if possible)	Blend with 3-4 tbsp of skimmed milk powder to make <b>Fortified Milk</b> . Use this to make hot drinks, flavoured milk, milkshakes and in sauces

## FAQs:

### Can I use baby foods?

Baby foods are **not** designed for adults and therefore will not give your body all the nutrients it needs. Baby foods also tend to be quite bland which does not suit adult tastes. They are **not** advised for people with dysphagia.

### What about mouth care?

Chewing helps produce saliva which keeps the mouth healthy. Cleaning your mouth and teeth regularly is very important because you chew less when eating a purée diet, so you produce less saliva.

### How can I make purée meals look attractive?

- Purée foods separately to retain flavours and arrange the purées individually on the plate. You can also pipe food or use food moulds.
- Serve brightly coloured vegetables next to paler foods; for example puréed carrots or broccoli with puréed potato and puréed chicken in a creamy sauce.
- Add flavour by using spices, herbs, soy sauce, Worcester sauce, tomato sauce, barbecue sauce, curry sauce or mint jelly.

### Ready prepared meals:

If preparing **purée** meals is difficult for you or your carer, you could try ready prepared meals delivered to your door. The following offer a variety of meal options:

- Mrs Gills Kitchen (020 8807 6584) [www.mrsgills.co.uk](http://www.mrsgills.co.uk)
- Oakhouse Foods (0333 370 6700) [www.oakhousefoods.co.uk](http://www.oakhousefoods.co.uk)
- Wiltshire Farm Foods (0800 077 3100) [www.wiltshirefarmfoods.com](http://www.wiltshirefarmfoods.com)



## References:

- International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative – <https://iddsi.org>
- NHS Live Well – [www.nhs.uk/live-well](http://www.nhs.uk/live-well)

Please remember that this leaflet is intended as general information only. We aim to make the information as up to date and accurate as possible, but please note that it is subject to change. Please therefore always check specific advice on any concerns you may have with your doctor.

## How can you help reduce healthcare associated infections?

Infection prevention & control is important to the well-being of our patients and for that reason we have infection prevention & control procedures in place. Keeping your hands clean is an effective way of preventing the spread of infections. Please follow our infection prevention and control guidelines when visiting our healthcare sites. Further information is available on our website.

## Patient Advice Sheet

If you would like a copy of this information on audiotape, **in large print** or translated, please call the Patient Advice Liaison Service on 01296 831120 or email [bht.pals@nhs.net](mailto:bht.pals@nhs.net)

