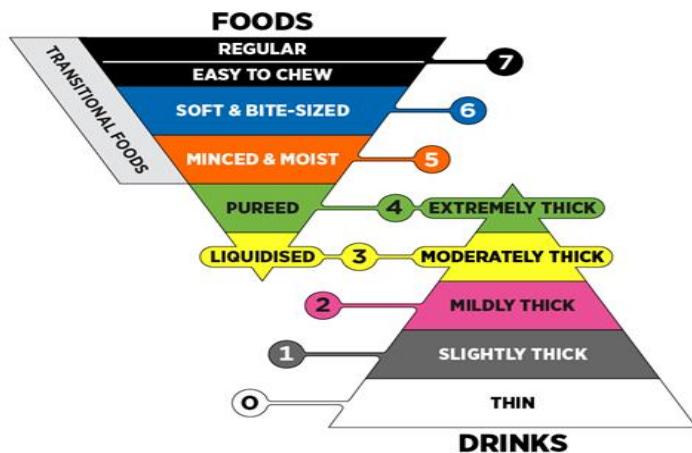


Getting the most from your food if you have a swallowing difficulty and a poor appetite or have lost weight without trying



If you are having difficulty with eating, drinking and swallowing or have questions about the texture of your food and fluids, speak to your Speech and Language Therapist (SLT). **Always make sure anything you eat and drink matches the IDDSI Level recommended by your SLT.**

www.iddsi.org has information on how to check the consistency of your foods and drinks. If you have followed the advice on this sheet but are still losing weight speak to your GP, District Nurse or SLT who may refer you to a Dietitian.

Eat Little and Often

- ✓ Try not to miss or skip meals. Eat small, frequent meals and snacks every 2-3 hours. Snacks in between meals can help to boost your energy and protein intake.
- ✓ Have drinks separately from meals, as they can fill you up too quickly.
- ✓ Have a pudding once or twice a day.
- ✓ Some people find they are hungriest at different times of the day. It is important to make the most of this mealtime and fortify softer foods as much as possible by adding cream, butter or skimmed milk powder.

Enriching Your Food

- ✓ When you have an eating, drinking or swallowing difficulty you can still add nutrient dense ingredients to your foods and drinks to make every mouthful count, e.g. grated cheese, egg, dried skimmed milk powder, Greek yoghurt, smooth nut butters, ground almonds, pea or soy protein powder.
- ✓ Avoid low fat versions of foods and drinks (e.g. skimmed milk, low fat yoghurts).
- ✓ Add milk, yoghurt, butter, crème fraiche, meat juices or fruit juices to add moisture and help prevent lumps in blended foods. Avoid using water to blend foods as it will dilute the nourishment. Add these enriching items before mashing/ pureeing/ blending and ensure they are fully mixed
- ✓ After adding any liquid or food to enrich your meal, make sure it is still the correct IDDSI Level.

Nourishing Drinks * *Make to IDDSI level recommended by your SLT*

- ✓ Milk is full of nutrients. Try to have 1 pint of milk each day – ideally whole milk.
Fortified Milk: Add 4 tablespoons of milk powder to 1 pint of full cream milk. Mix well to prevent lumps. This can be used on cereals, in sauces, to make custard or porridge and in drinks e.g. hot chocolate or cocoa, milky coffee, malted drinks, milkshakes or smoothies.
- ✓ If you need to add thickening powder to your drinks, remember - **milky drinks can take 10-15 minutes to thicken! Fortified milk should be refrigerated and used within 24 hours.** Some homemade or shop bought milkshakes and smoothies may be naturally thick (may not need thickening powder added). However, you should make sure they are the correct thickness for you

- ✓ It is important to have a clean mouth and teeth. Brush your teeth twice a day to reduce harmful bacteria in your mouth. This can help reduce the risk of chest infections.

How to prepare texture modified foods (i.e. puree, minced & mashed, soft & bite-sized)

- ✓ The best way to check if a food or liquid is the correct IDDSI level is to use all the recommended testing methods - you can find more information on the website www.iddsi.org or speak to your SLT.
- ✓ Some ready meals and convenience snacks are handy to have and can be IDDSI tested.
- ✓ Food texture can be changed by using a food processor, blender or liquidiser or by using simple utensils such as a fork, masher and sieve.
- ✓ Cut tougher foods into smaller pieces before blending.
- ✓ Check before eating that no hard pieces, crusts or skins have formed during cooking. There should be no separate thin liquid (gravy or sauces should be mixed into foods).
- ✓ Packet soups can be a more nutritious alternative to stock cubes when making sauces or adding to blended foods. They can also add more flavour.
- ✓ Blend each part of the meal separately and serve together on the plate-this looks more appealing.
- ✓ Piping can be a simple way of making a meal look more appetising by separating out the different foods.

- ✓ Many favourite meals can be cut up (Level 6 soft & bite sized), minced (Level 5 minced & moist), pureed (Level 4 pureed), or liquidised (Level 3 liquidised) e.g. casseroles, hot pots or stew, Shepherds' pie, cottage pie, roast meats, corned beef, and savoury mince or macaroni cheese.
- ✓ Choose starchy, nutrient-dense vegetables: potato, sweet potato, pumpkin, carrot, or butternut squash.
- ✓ Corn and peas can be difficult to puree. Sieve afterwards to ensure a smooth consistency.
- ✓ Use a range of sauces and stocks to vary the flavours of your meals.
- ✓ Try different flavour combinations e.g. tomato with basil; pumpkin with cinnamon/ nutmeg; courgette with chives; carrots with mint/ honey.
- ✓ Add mashed/ ready prepared pureed garlic, ginger or chilli for flavour variety.
- ✓ Baby foods are **not** nutritious options for adults.

Savoury Snack Ideas

These can be cut up for Level 6 soft & bite-sized, mashed with a fork for Level 5 minced-moist or blended until smooth for a Level 4 puree option:

- ✓ Tinned spaghetti
- ✓ Hummus, guacamole (or other smooth dips), cottage cheese or cream cheese - mix with sweet chilli sauce or avocado
- ✓ Flavoured cream cheese spreads
- ✓ Soft silken tofu (fridge section) – use in dips, sauces and smoothies

Tip: try a smaller portion of breakfast or main meals as a snack.

Sweet Snack Ideas for level 5, 6 and 7:

- ✓ Melt in the middle pudding (remove any dry pieces/hard edges and moisten with cream/ custard/ yoghurt).
- ✓ Milk puddings e.g. rice pudding, tapioca or semolina.

Liquidise (Level 3), or puree (Level 4) the below with cream/ yoghurt/ custard/ milk/ fruit juice

- ✓ Smooth yoghurt, mousse, lemon posset, panna cotta, soft tinned fruit, stewed apples, Angel Delight® or supermarket brand instant whip

***ALERT: Make sure all liquids, including soup, are the thickness recommended by your SLT**