



Altered Consistency Diet

Altering the consistency of foods can greatly relieve eating problems related to chewing, managing food in the mouth, and swallowing. These problems may be due to stroke, head or neck injury, cancer, cerebral palsy, dementia, other illness or simply the process of aging. Aspiration (inhaling) of food into the lungs as a result of inadequate chewing and swallowing is recognized as a major contribution to respiratory infections and pneumonia in many individuals.

Difficulties in chewing and swallowing are often diagnosed as Dysphagia and can have several parts for treatment. This includes altering the consistency of the food, but can also include swallowing strategies, such as a chin tuck or turn of the head with each swallow. The treatment plan is individualized and formulated by a health care team usually including a speech pathologist, a radiological physician, a dietitian and a nurse. The diet is then progressed to the safest consistency the patient is able to tolerate towards a regular diet.

The diet is usually advanced in nationally recognized terms using the National Dysphagia Diets. They are separated in 3 levels and classifies liquids in tolerable levels.

1. Level 1: Dysphagia Pureed Diet includes foods that are pureed, homogenous and cohesive. Foods are "pudding like".
2. Level 2: Dysphagia Mechanically Altered includes foods that are moist, soft-textured and easily formed into a bolus (ball of food to be swallowed together)
3. Level 3: Dysphagia Advanced Diet includes food that is nearly regular textures with the exception of very hard, sticky or crunchy foods.
4. Liquid Consistency Levels can be classified as Thin (regular), Nectar thick, Honey thick or spoon thick (pudding).

Following are Graphs to be used as guidelines in menu selection for the diet consistency your Medical Practitioner has ordered for you to follow.

Level1: Dysphagia Pureed

Food Classification	Suggested Daily Servings	Recommended choices	Avoid
Beverages	6-8 cups	Any smooth, homogenous beverages without lumps, chunks or pulp. Thickened to appropriate consistency <u>If thin/regular liquids allowed man also have:</u> Milk, juices, coffee, tea, soda, carbonated beverages, nutritional supplements, ice chips and water.	Any beverages with lumps, chunks, seeds, pulp, etc.
Breads	4-6	Commercially or facility prepared pureed bread mixes, pregelled	All other breads, rolls, crackers, biscuits, pancakes, waffles, French

		slurried bread, pancakes, sweet rolls, Danish pastries, French toast, etc. that are gelled through the entire thickness of the product. Can add milk, broth, etc for fluid to soak through the product and make it spoon able.	toast, muffins, etc.
Cereals Add just enough milk to moisten		Smooth homogenous cooked cereal to pudding-like consistency.	All dry cereal and any cooked cereal with lumps, seeds, chunks, nuts, etc. Oatmeal
Desserts	As desired	Smooth puddings, custards, yogurt, pureed desserts & soufflés. <u>If thin/regular liquids allowed, may also have:</u> Frozen malts, milk shakes, eggnog, nutritional supplements, ice cream, sherbet, plain regular or sugar free gelatin.	Ices, gelatin, frozen juice bars, cookies, cakes, pies, pastry, coarse or textured puddings, bread & rice pudding, fruited yogurt. <u>Caution</u> with foods that at room to body temperature would turn to liquids if you are not able to tolerate thin/regular liquids.
Fats and Oils	3-6	Margarine, butter, mayonnaise, unsalted or low salt versions of marg, butter, salad dressing, strained gravies, Smooth sauces or cream sauces.	All fats with coarse or chunky additives.
Fruits	4-5	Pureed fruits or well mashed fresh bananas. Fruit juices of all kinds without chunks or pulp thickened to desired consistency if necessary.	Whole fruits (fresh, frozen, canned or dried)
Meats, poultry and fish	2 or less (2-3 oz portions)	Pureed meats. Braunschweiger. Soufflés that are smooth and homogenous. Softened tofu mixed with moisture. Hummus or other pureed legume spread.	Whole or ground meats, fish or poultry. Nonpureed lentils or legumes. Cheese, cottage cheese. Peanut butter, unless pureed into foods correctly. Nonpureed fried, scrambled or hard cooked eggs.
Potatoes and starches	As desired	Mashed potatoes or sauce, pureed potatoes with gravy, butter, margarine, or sour cream. Well cooked pasta, noodles, bread dressing or rice that have been pureed in a blender to a smooth, homogenous consistency.	All other potatoes rice or noodles. Plain mashed potatoes, cooked grains. Nonpureed bread dressing.
Soups	As desired	Soups that have been pureed in a blender or strained. <u>May need to be thickened to appropriate thickness.</u>	Soups that have chunks, lumps, etc.
Vegetables	4-5	Pureed vegetables without chunks, lumps, pulp, or seeds. Tomato paste or sauce without seeds. Tomato or vegetable juice <u>thickened if necessary.</u>	All other vegetables that have not been pureed. Tomato sauce with seeds, thin tomato juice.

Miscellaneous	As desired	<p>Sugar, artificial sweetener, salt, finely ground pepper, and spices. Ketchup, mustard, BBQ sauce and other smooth sauces. Honey, smooth jellies Very soft, smooth candy such as truffles.</p> <p><u>If thin/regular liquids allowed</u>, smooth chocolate with no nuts, or chunks.</p>	<p>Coarsely ground pepper and herbs. Chunky fruit preserves and seedy jams. Seeds, nuts, sticky foods. Chewy candies such as caramels or licorice.</p>
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Level 2: Mechanically Altered

Includes all foods from level 1 diet, and adds the foods listed below.

Food Classification	Suggested Daily Servings	Recommended choices	Avoid
Beverages	6-8 cups	<p>Any beverages with small amounts of texture or pulp. Thickened to appropriate consistency <u>If thin/regular liquids allowed man also have:</u> Milk, juices, coffee, tea, soda, carbonated beverages, alcoholic beverages if allowed, nutritional supplements, ice chips and water.</p>	
Breads	4-6 including cereal & other starches	<p>Soft pancakes, well moistened with syrup or sauce. Pureed bread mixes, pregelled or slurried breads that are gelled through entire thickness.</p>	All other breads.
Cereals Add just enough milk to moisten	As desired	<p>All cooked cereals with little texture, including oatmeal. Slightly moistened dry cereal with little texture such as corn flakes, Rice Krispies, Wheaties, etc. Unprocessed what bran stirred into cereal for bulk. If thin liquids are restricted it is important liquids are absorbed into cereal.</p>	<p>Very coarse cooked or dry cereals that contain dried fruits, nuts, seeds, coconut etc. Whole grains that maintain coarse texture.</p>
Desserts	As desired	<p>Puddings, custards Soft fruit pies with bottom crust only. Crisps & cobblers without seed or nuts but with soft breading or crumb top. Canned fruit, except pineapple. Soft moist cakes with icing or "slurried" cakes.</p>	<p>No seeds, nuts, etc. <u>Caution</u> with foods that at room to body temperature would turn to liquids if you are not able to tolerate thin/regular liquids.</p>

		<p>Pregelged cookies or soft, moist cookies that have been “dunked” in milk, coffee or other liquid.</p> <p><u>If thin/regular liquids allowed, may also have:</u></p> <p>Frozen malts, milk shakes, eggnog, nutritional supplements, ice cream, sherbet, plain regular or sugar free gelatin.</p>	
Fats and Oils	3-6	<p>Margarine, butter, mayonnaise, unsalted or low salt versions of marg, butter, salad dressing, gravies, sauces or cream sauces, sour cream, or dips cream and whipped toppings.</p>	All fats with coarse or chunky additives.
Fruits	4-5	<p>Soft drained canned or cooked fruits without seeds or skin.</p> <p>Fresh soft/ripe banana.</p> <p>Fruit juices of all kinds with small amount of pulp <u>thickened to desired consistency as necessary.</u></p>	<p>Fresh or frozen fruits.</p> <p>Cooked fruit with skin or seeds.</p> <p>Dried Fruits</p> <p>Fresh, canned or cooked pineapple.</p>
Meats, poultry and fish	2 or less (2-3 oz portions)	<p>Moistened (gravy, broth or other sauces) ground or cooked meat, poultry or fish.</p> <p>Casseroles with rice</p> <p>Moist Mac & Cheese, tuna & noodles, or lasagna with well cooked pasta.</p> <p>Moist meatballs, meat loaf, or fish loaf.</p> <p>Protein salads (egg, tuna, ham) without large chunks of celery or onion.</p> <p>Cottage cheese, smooth quiche without large chunks.</p> <p>Poached, scrambled, or soft-cooked eggs (egg yolks should not be runny but should be moist & mash able with butter, margarine or other moisture added. Cooked to 160 degrees for food safety.</p> <p>Soufflés with small soft chunks.</p> <p>Tofu</p> <p>Well-cooked, slightly mashed moist legumes, such as baked beans.</p> <p>All meat/proteins served with sauces or moisture to help maintain cohesiveness in the mouth.</p>	<p>Dry meats, tough meats (such as bacon, sausage, hot dogs, or bratwurst)</p> <p>Dry casseroles with rice or large chunks. Cheese slices and cubes.</p> <p>Peanut butter</p> <p>Hard cooked or crisp fried eggs.</p> <p>Sandwiches.</p> <p>Pizza</p>
Potatoes and starches	As desired	<p>Well-cooked, moistened, boiled, baked, or mashed potatoes.</p> <p>Well-cooked shredded hash brown potatoes, not crisp. All potatoes moist with sauces.</p>	<p>Potato skins and chips.</p> <p>Fried or French-fried potatoes.</p> <p>Rice.</p>

		Well-cooked pasta & noodles in sauces. Moist dumplings.	
Soups	As desired	Soups with easy to chew or easy to swallow meats or veg. Veggies should be <1/2 inch.	Soups that have large chunks. Soups with rice, corn or peas.
Vegetables	4-5	Soft well-cooked vegetables <1/2 inch chunks. Easily mash able with fork.	Cooked corn & peas. Broccoli, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, asparagus, or other fibrous, non-tender or rubbery cooked vegetables.
Miscellaneous	As desired	Jams & preserves without seeds, jelly. Sauces, salsas, etc. that may have small tender chunks <1/2 inch. Soft smooth chocolate bars that are easy to chew.	Seeds, nuts, coconut, sticky foods. Chewy candies such as caramels or licorice.

Level 3: Dysphagia Advanced

Nearly regular textured foods except very hard, sticky or crunchy foods.

Food Classification	Suggested Daily Servings	Recommended choices	Avoid
Beverages	6-8 cups	All beverages thickened to appropriate consistency. <u>If thin/regular liquids allowed man also have:</u> Milk, juices, coffee, tea, soda, carbonated beverages, alcoholic beverages if allowed, nutritional supplements, ice chips and water.	
Breads	4-6 including cereal & other starches	Any well-moistened bread, biscuits, muffins, pancakes, waffles, etc. Need to add adequate syrup, jelly, margarine, butter, etc. to moisten.	Dry bread, toast, crackers, etc. Tough, crusty breads such as French bread or baguettes.
Cereals Add just enough milk to moisten	As desired	All well-moistened cereals.	Coarse or dry cereals such as shredded wheat or All bran.
Desserts	As desired	All others except those on Avoid list. <u>If thin/regular liquids allowed, may also have:</u> malts, milk shakes, frozen yogurts, eggnog, nutritional supplements, ice cream, sherbet, plain regular or sugar free gelatin.	Dry cakes, cookies that are chewy or very dry. Anything with nuts, seeds, dry fruits, coconut, and pineapple. <u>Caution</u> with foods that at room to body temperature would turn to liquids if you are not able to tolerate thin/regular liquids.
Fats and Oils	3-6	All other fats except those on Avoid list.	All fats with coarse or chunky additives. No nuts or pineapple.
Fruits	4-5	All canned or cooked fruits. Soft, peeled fresh fruits such as peaches, nectarines, kiwi,	Difficult to chew fresh or frozen fruits like grapes, apples or pears. Stringy, high-pulp fruits such as

		mangos, cantaloupe, honeydew, watermelon without seeds. Soft berried with small seeds, such as strawberries. Fruit juices of all kinds with small amount of pulp <u>thickened to desired consistency as necessary.</u>	papaya, pineapple or mango. Uncooked dried Fruits. Fruit leather, fruit roll-ups, fruit snacks, dried fruits.
Meats, poultry and fish	2 or less (2-3 oz portions)	Thin-sliced tender or ground meats or poultry. Well-moistened fish. Eggs prepared any way. Yogurt without nuts or coconut. Casseroles with small chunks or meat, ground meats, or tender meats.	Tough dry meats or poultry Dry fish or fish with bones. Chunky peanut butter. Yogurt with nuts or coconut.
Potatoes and starches	As desired	All, including rice, wild rice, moist bread dressing, and tender, fried potatoes.	Tough, crisp-fried potatoes. Potato skins Dry bread dressing.
Soups	As desired	All soups except those on the avoid list. Strained corn or clam chowder. <u>If thin/regular liquids allowed, may also have:</u> Broth & bouillon.	Soups with tough meats. Corn or clam chowders. Soups that have large chunks of meat or veg. >1 inch.
Vegetables	4-5	All cooked tender vegetables. Shredded lettuce.	All raw vegetables except shredded lettuce. Cooked corn. Nontender or rubbery cooked vegetables.
Miscellaneous	As desired	Jams, preserves, honey, jelly. All seasoning and sweeteners. All sauces. Nonchewy candies without nuts, seeds, or coconut.	Seeds, nuts, coconut, sticky foods. Chewy candies such as caramels or licorice.

Liquid Consistencies

A variety of methods and products are available to use to alter thickness of liquids. Can use food thickened, instant pudding mix, instant potato flakes, yogurt, applesauce and pudding.

Thin (regular): Milk, water, juices, coffee, soda, tea, etc.

Nectar thick: Thick as apricot or pear nectar, V-8 juice.

Honey thick: Thicken to like honey consistency using a thickening agent.

Spoon thick (pudding): Thicken to pudding consistency using a thickening agent.

When on thick liquids it is important to get in plenty of liquids as often with the textures modified it is not desirable to “drink” a lot, but is still needed to meet your individual needs.

Source: 10th Edition Simplified Diet Manual.