

Several large, thick, purple curved lines of varying radii are positioned on the left side of the page, creating a stylized, abstract graphic element.

Dysphagia Diet Texture C – Thick Puree

Rehabilitation & Support

A guide for patients and carers



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Swallowing

Usually you eat, drink and swallow without thinking about it. The normal swallowing process is controlled by nerves and muscles, which ensure that the food in your mouth goes safely into your stomach and not into your lungs. When these nerves, muscles and the lining of your mouth and throat are affected by surgery, chemotherapy and/or radiotherapy food and fluids can go down the wrong way, that is – into your lungs. This increases the risk of getting a chest infection and may even lead to pneumonia. The medical term for food or fluid going into your lungs is ASPIRATION.

Swallowing problems

People who have swallowing problems may experience one or more of the following:

- It takes much longer to eat and drink
- Difficulty chewing
- The lips and/or tongue may not move as well as before
- Food feels as if it is sticking in the throat
- Food or drink may feel as if it is going down the wrong way causing coughing and/or choking
- Drooling, and food or fluid leaking from the mouth
- A gurgly voice after swallowing
- Weight loss
- Repeated chest infections

Who can help?

Speech & Language Therapists (SLT) assess, diagnose and treat patients who have swallowing difficulties. They carry out an assessment of swallowing ability and can provide exercises, strategies and/or provide advice on the best consistency for your food and drink to help you swallow safely.

Dietitians educate patients and their carers on appropriate food choices and fluid intake to ensure the patient meets their nutritional needs when on a modified diet. They also assess the need for food fortification / supplements.

Occupational Therapists advise on appropriate aids/ adaptations, such as seating and cutlery, to promote a positive environment and independence for the patient.

General advice to help you with eating and drinking

Mouth care

- Follow the mouth care guidance supplied by your Specialist Nurse
- Clean your mouth and take appropriate pain relief before eating
- Check your mouth after each meal to remove any leftover particles
- You may need to clean your teeth and use your mouthwash more often if you are taking thickened drinks between meals



Eating Safely

- Be careful not to put too much in your mouth at once
- Clear your mouth before taking any more food
- Take your time over eating and drinking so that you can concentrate on chewing and swallowing
- Your Speech & Language Therapist may give you additional advice on the best way to eat and drink

Positioning

- Choose a chair that lets you sit in an upright position
- To help your food go down safely try to stay in an upright position for at least 20 minutes after eating

Try not to worry if it takes a long time to eat - this is common. To avoid feeling pressured to finish your meal, try starting before your family. If eating is tiring have small meals with puddings and snacks in-between.

You have been advised to have: DIET TEXTURE C – THICK PUREE

Your food will require preparation with a blender/liquidiser to achieve the required texture C consistency.

Texture C - Thick Puree means

- Food has been pureed / blended or has puree texture
- It does not require chewing
- It is smooth throughout with no 'bits' (no lumps, fibres, bits of shell/skin, bits of husk particles or gristle/bone). It may need to be sieved to achieve this
- It is moist
- Any fluid in or on the food is as thick as the puree itself
- Food holds its shape on a plate when some is scooped off
- It can be eaten with a fork because it does not drop through the prongs
- The prongs of a fork make a clear pattern on the surface

Examples of texture C foods

ALL food needs to be cooked until soft, then pureed or liquidised to the correct, smooth consistency. Some foods will need to be sieved after pureeing to ensure all lumps, particles and stringy bits are removed. Some foods will need to be thickened.



Fish (sieved to remove particles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pureed fish in sauce• Pureed fish pie and potatoes
Vegetarian (sieved to remove particles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pureed macaroni cheese• Pureed cauliflower cheese• Pureed lentil casserole• Pureed pasta in sauce• Pureed bean casserole• Pureed vegetable curry
Soup	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All varieties – no lumps ; may require additional milk/stock to achieve the correct consistency
Meat/chicken (sieved to remove particles)	Any pureed meat, or meat dishes e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pureed corned beef hash• Pureed cottage pie and potatoes• Pureed meat casserole
Vegetables and fruit (sieved to remove particles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any pureed fruit, including stewed fruit• Pureed cooked vegetables
Desserts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Smooth yoghurt, fromage frais or custard• Pureed rice pudding with seedless jam• Smooth mousse or whip – may require additional milk/cream to achieve the correct consistency

Foods which are difficult to puree and should be avoided

- Stringy, fibrous textures such as pineapple, runner beans, celery, lettuce, oranges, sweet corn
- Stringy and chewy meats such as bacon or meats with fat
- Mixed consistency foods, such as cereals which do not blend with milk and soup with lumps
- Crunchy foods such as toast, flaky pastry, dry biscuits and crisps
- Crispy or crumbly pastries
- Nuts and seeds, including granary bread

Ways to enrich / fortify your food before liquidising

- To increase the calories and protein in milk try adding 2-4 tablespoons of milk powder to 1 pint of full fat milk. Then use this instead of ordinary milk or water in tea/coffee, on breakfast cereal and when making porridge, milk puddings, sauces and soups
- Add cream or evaporated milk to puddings, sauces, breakfast cereal, soups and fruit
- Add grated cheese to potatoes, pasta, soups or sauces
- Add olive oil or butter to potatoes, vegetables or soup
- Add milk powder into mashed potato and yoghurts



- Add croutons, pasta, bread, beans, lentils and/or rice to soups (you may need to sieve these after blending)
- Add smooth peanut butter or pesto to mashed potato and/or vegetables
- Mix salad cream or mayonnaise with suitable foods
- Mix smooth full fat yoghurt with fruit and puddings

Making pureed meals more appealing

- Rather than liquidising the different parts of your meal all together, liquidise the main element of the meal and the vegetables separately. This way, they keep their individual taste, smell and colour and look more appetising
- Use a range of different coloured foods in meals to increase variety e.g. fish or meat in sauce, pureed carrots and mashed potato
- Serve different foods in individual bowls, or use a plate with a rim, to avoid foods spreading across the plate, mixing and going cold quickly
- Think about the presentation of food to make it appear attractive and appetising e.g. pipe mashed potato through a shaped nozzle or pipe cream on to pureed fruit; serve pureed food using an ice cream scoop; use moulds to give food shape; add a swirl of sauce to savoury meals; add a swirl of chocolate sauce or seedless jam to puddings

Tips if you have a small appetite

- Some fresh air before your meal can help to stimulate your appetite
- On the days when your appetite is better, make the most of it and eat well
- If you are feeling nauseous, ginger drinks (thickened if necessary) may help e.g. ginger beer, ginger and lemon tea
- Try not to worry too much if you can't face 'normal' sized meals. Try to eat or drink something nourishing every couple of hours, even if it's a small portion
- Have a pudding once or twice a day. It may help to have it as a snack in between meals rather than straight after your meal if you are likely to be full

Tips for getting the best nutrition possible

When you are unable to eat as much as usual there are some things you can try to make your diet as nutritious as possible:

- Eat little and often e.g. 3 small meals per day, as well as 2-3 small snacks or milky drinks
- Drink at least 8-10 cups of fluid per day (thickened if necessary) including two milk based nourishing drinks e.g. milkshake, hot chocolate or milky coffee. Try to have at least 1 pint of **full fat milk daily**



- Have drinks after, or between, meals so they do not fill you up and stop you from eating your meal
- Try to include at least two protein servings daily i.e. meat, fish, eggs, cheese, beans or lentils
- Choose brands that are full fat. Avoid any that are labelled fat free, light, diet, reduced fat or low sugar

Ready-made meals and desserts are available to purchase from Wiltshire Farm Foods. These specialised meals have their texture modified to a thick puree / texture C consistency and are suitable for you to have. A brochure is available by telephone: **0800 773773** or via their website: **www.wiltshirefarmfoods.com**.

Alternatively the 'Meals on Wheels' service provides modified diets. For more information, speak to your social worker or, if you do not currently have a social worker, your local central advice and duty team.

Contact details

The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre NHS Foundation Trust,
Clatterbridge Road, Bebington, Wirral, CH63 4JY.

Your Speech & Language Therapist is:

Telephone:

Your Dietitian is:

Telephone:

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