

Level 6 - Soft and Bite-Sized Diet

Information for patients, relatives and carers

6



Description / Characteristics

- Chewing is required before swallowing.
- Soft, tender and moist throughout but no separate thin liquid.
- Biting is not required as food is prepared to bite sized – 1.5cm x 1.5cm pieces.
- Can be eaten with a fork, spoon or chopsticks.
- Can be mashed /broken down with pressure from fork, spoon or chopsticks.
- A knife is not required to cut this food, but may be used to help loading a fork or spoon.
- Sample squashes and does not return to its original shape when pressure is released.

Food size

All level 6 foods must be chopped into bite-sized pieces not exceeding 1.5cm x 1.5cm, before eating.



Test Methods

Fork/Spoon test

- Pressure from a fork or spoon held on its side can be used to 'cut' or break this texture into smaller pieces.
- Food squashes and does not return to its original shape when pressure is released i.e. squashed with a fork, spoon or between fingers.

Food Textures to Avoid

Textures which are hard, tough, chewy, fibrous, have stringy textures, pips/seeds, bones or gristle.

Food textures to avoid	Food Example
Mixed thin + thick	Soup with pieces of food
Lumpy	Mashed potato
Hard or dry	Dry cereal
Tough or fibrous	Steak
Chewy	Sweets
Crispy	Crackling
Crunchy	Raw vegetables
Sharp or spiky	Crisps
Crumbly	Dry biscuits
Pips	Orange pips
Skins or shells	Grapes
Husks	Shredded wheat
Bone or gristle	Fish bones
Round long shaped	Sausage
Sticky or gummy	Nut butter
Stringy	Beans
Floppy	Lettuce
Crusty	Cheese topping
Juicy	Watermelon

No regular dry bread due to high choke risk.

See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W7bOufq mz18> for instructions on how to make a level 5 Minced and Moist sandwich as this is also suitable for use on Soft and Bite-Sized diet.

Meal preparation tips:

- It is important that meals look attractive and appetising
- To maintain their nutritional quality always enrich foods with nutritious fluids, e.g. gravy, sauces, milk or juices.

Check before serving/eating

- No hard pieces, crusts or skins have formed during cooking/heating/standing
- Fluid/gravy/sauce/custard in or on the food has not thinned out or separated off.

How to have a balanced diet:

To maintain health, it is important to eat a balanced diet, therefore try to include the following food groups and portions:

- Carbohydrates: e.g. potatoes, rice, pasta, and cereal (include a portion at each meal / 3 portions per day). Rice must be cooked soft, it should not be sticky or glutinous.
- Protein: e.g. fish, meat, chicken, eggs, lentils, meat alternatives, e.g. tofu or Quorn (2-3 portions per day)
- Fruit and vegetables: e.g. banana, carrot, broccoli (5 portions per day)
- Dairy: e.g. cheese, yoghurt, milk or alternatives (3 portions per day)
- High fibre: e.g. oats and wholegrains and fruit (include a portion at each meal / 3 portions per day).

Suitable menu ideas:

Breakfast:

- Soft fruit (e.g. banana, tinned peaches, stewed apple) and smooth yoghurt/fromage frais
- Weetabix, rice crispies or cornflakes with fully absorbed milk and soft fruit
- Porridge or instant oats with milk and soft fruit
- Homemade smoothie (e.g. fruit, oats and milk)
- Scrambled, boiled or poached egg, beans, skinless sausage, chopped tomato and potato.



Light meals:

- Cream of soups (check fluid recommendations) with bread blended into the soup
- Omelette with cheese sauce
- Jacket potato filling with tuna mayonnaise or cream cheese
- Tinned pasta meals e.g. ravioli, macaroni cheese, pasta bolognese
- Filling of a quiche.

Main meals:

Ensure to have a portion of protein, carbohydrate and vegetables.

- Pieces of soft tender meat (1.5cm x 1.5cm)
- Stews/casseroles
- Corned beef hash
- Cottage/shepherd's pie
- Bolognese sauces with pasta
- Chilli con carne with rice
- Chicken curry with rice
- Tender cooked vegetables cut into 1.5cm x 1.5cm pieces
- Flaked fish or salmon with potatoes, vegetables and parsley sauce.

Make your own meals:

- Pieces of soft, tender meat (1.5cm x 1.5 cm) or alternative with sauces, e.g. white or cheese sauce, gravy, cranberry, mint or horseradish
- Flakes salmon with hollandaise sauce or white fish with parsley/butter sauce

Served with:

- Mashed potato, sweet potato or rice
- Tender cooked vegetables cut into 1.5cm x 1.5cm pieces.

Desserts:

- Crème Caramel
- Mousse or instant whip
- Milk puddings: semolina/ground rice
- Yoghurts
- Soft fruit
- Trifles
- Panacotta
- Fruit fool
- Cheesecake topping
- Egg custard filling
- Plain cake with cream or custard
- Dunked and soaked plain biscuits.

What if I need to gain weight?

- Eat on a little and often basis
- Add additional double cream, sauces, butter, cheese, dried milk powder, or full fat milk or enriched milk to your meals and instead of your meals and desserts
- Add sugar, jam, honey or syrups to cereal and desserts
- Avoid all low fat or 'light' products
- Use full fat or thick and creamy food products
- Try to have a dessert or high calorie snack between meals
- Try to have a dessert, or pudding after main meals
- Avoid drinks just before meals
- Try to have milky/nourishing drinks between meals.



Getting help:

If you notice changes to your own swallow (eating / drinking), or that of an individual you support or care for, please contact your local Speech and Language Therapy Team for advice.

Doncaster Speech and Language Therapy Service

01302 796336

If you notice a reduction in appetite or weight, or that of an individual you support or care for, please contact your local Dietetic Team for advice.

Doncaster Dietetic Service

01302 796410

Adult Learning Disability Team Speech and Language Therapy Service

01302 796467

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Amharic

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Arabic

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Bengali

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Cantonese (traditional Chinese)

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Czech

Pokud byste chtěli dokument psaný většími písmeny, brailovým písmem nebo na zvukové kazetě nebo v jiném jazyku, prosím, kontaktujte poradenskou službu pacientům na tel. 0800 015 4334.

Farsi

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French

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Kurdish Sorani

ههنگه ئه زانیاریانه به چایی گهواره، برائیل یان لاسه شریتی دهنگی ددهوازیت باخود ئه به لاسه ئهنگه دیکه ددهوازیت، تکلێه پامهندی بکه به خزمهتگوزاری زینماهی و هاوناهاهنگی نهخوشامه به ژماره 0800 015 4334.

Polish

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Punjabi

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Somali

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Turkish

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Urdu

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Vietnamese

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This information is correct at the time of publishing
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