

Department of
SPEECH THERAPY

Modified Consistencies for Swallowing Problems



Modified Consistencies for Swallowing Problems

Fluid Consistencies (Resource Clear)

Thin fluid

No powder is added into fluid. Fluid runs freely off a spoon.



Slightly thick fluid

Fluid is thicker than water but still thin enough to flow easily through a standard straw.



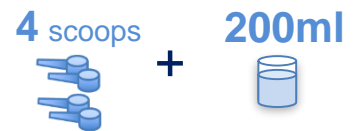
Mildly thick fluid (Nectar thick)

Fluid flows quickly from a spoon but requires some effort to drink through a standard straw.



Moderately thick fluid (Honey thick)

Fluid flows slowly from a spoon and requires effort to drink through a wide straw.



Extremely thick fluid (Pudding thick)

Fluid sits on a spoon and cannot be drunk from a cup or sucked through a straw.



Modes of Feeding



Cup



Straw



Teaspoon



Tablespoon

Modified Consistencies for Swallowing Problems

Diet Consistencies

Regular

Food that can be in large pieces, hard, crunchy, dry, chewy, or fibrous. Biting is required to break bigger pieces of food apart. Chewing is needed to mash food before swallowing. Requires no special preparation. May contain bones, seeds, skin.

Examples: Wholemeal bread, nasi lemak, biscuits



Regular diet

Easy to chew

Normal, everyday food of soft, tender texture. You should be able to bite off pieces of soft and tender food. Choose bite sizes that are safe to chew and swallow. Sizes of food pieces are not restricted. **No tough, chewy, fibrous, stringy, or hard foods.**

Examples: Chee cheong fun, swiss roll, soft rice



Easy to chew diet

Soft & bite-sized Porridge Rice

Food that is soft, tender and moist in texture. Easily broken apart by a fork/ spoon/ chopsticks. Chewing is needed to mash food before swallowing. Prepared as small bite-sized pieces. **No larger than 1.5cm x 1.5cm pieces.**

Examples: Bite-sized steamed fish, chopped soft cabbage, cut-up steamed egg



Soft & bite-sized diet

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Diet Consistencies

Minced & moist

Food that is soft, moist and finely minced with no excess liquid seen. Requires minimal chewing. Food pieces appear in small lumps **no larger than 4mm in width and 15mm in length.**

Examples: Oats, softened crushed biscuits

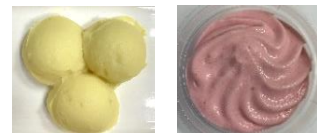


Minced & moist diet

Pureed

Food that is smooth and lump-free. Does not require any chewing. Usually prepared with a blender. Cannot be sucked through a straw. Equivalent to Extremely Thick Fluids.

Examples: Black sesame paste, mousse, mashed potatoes

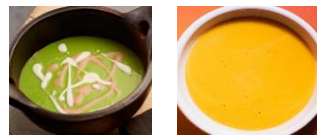


Pureed diet

Liquidised

Smooth texture with no 'bits' e.g., lumps, fibres, skin, husk. Can be eaten with a spoon or drunk from a cup but runs through the prongs of a fork. Equivalent to Moderately Thick fluids.

Examples: Watery blended diet



Liquidised diet

Modes of Feeding



Teaspoon



Tablespoon

Modified Consistencies for Swallowing Problems

Medications

You or your carer may be advised to adjust the way you prepare your tablets. This depends on the diet consistency recommended by your Speech Therapist.

General Guidelines

Diet Consistencies

**Regular diet,
Easy to chew**



Pill Modification



Mix crushed or powdered medications with liquids of appropriate thickness level

Soft & bite-sized



(see photos below for final product)

Minced & moist



Pureed



For liquid medications, please serve at the fluid consistency level recommended by your Speech Therapist.

Always check with your doctor or pharmacist if your medications can be broken, crushed or pounded. Ask for alternatives if available.

Modified Consistencies for Swallowing Problems

Preparing Oral Nutritional Supplements (Resource Clear)

1. Add thickener with the normal ratio
2. Stir for 3 minutes for the thickener to dissolve
3. Let the solution sit until the **10th** minute (i.e., 7 minutes more)
4. Stir before serving
5. Discard solution once beyond the **15th** minute (ideally)



For Fortisip (pictured on right):

Please add an additional scoop of thickener per 100ml

Oral Care

Maintaining good oral hygiene and dental care helps to reduce incidence of pneumonia by 20% in patients with dysphagia (Sørensen et. al, 2013).

You can maintain good oral hygiene/health by using:

- Antiseptic mouth wash
- Oral swabs with/without alcohol-free products or non-foaming toothpastes to clean the tongue and roof of mouth
- Oral moisturisers to keep moisture in the oral cavity and prevent dry mouth (xerostomia)



Common oral care products

Modified Consistencies for Swallowing Problems

A) Feeding Techniques

- Feed only when he/she is alert
- Feed slowly
- Monitor swallows by placing fingers on the throat
- Ensure he/she swallows before feeding next spoonful
 - Remind/prompt for him/her to swallow (verbally/ empty spoon)
- Minimise distractions and talking during feeding
- Allow rest breaks during feeding if he/she appears breathless
- Avoid mixed consistencies (i.e., fluids and food in the same mouthful)
- Stop feeding if signs of aspiration are noted (i.e, coughing, choking)
- Reflux precautions:
 - Sit upright after meals and do not lie down immediately
 - Take small frequent meals
- Others: _____

B) Compensatory Strategies

- Hold fluid/food in mouth for 3 seconds before swallowing
- Swallow _____ times for each mouthful (multiple swallow strategy)
- Take _____ of fluids after _____ of food (cyclic ingestion)
- Others: _____

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