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Meal ideas and advice when you need to follow a level 5 minced and moist diet

Nutrition and Dietetics /
Adult Speech and Language Therapy
Information for Patients

Last reviewed: November 2026
Next review: November 2029
Leaflet number: 1408 Version: 3

Main points

1. You will need to mince or well mash your food before serving.
2. It can have some texture but lumps should be no bigger than 4mm such as rice pudding, fine minced meat.
3. You should try to have lots of different foods in your diet.
4. Some food textures may not be suitable.

Introduction

You may need a minced and moist diet as advised by a speech and language therapist if you are having difficulty with:

- Biting, chewing or swallowing your food,
- Coughing during or after eating,
- Or if your tongue control is reduced due to illness,

A **minced and moist diet** may also be easier to eat if you have pain on chewing or swallowing, missing teeth or poorly fitting dentures.

It is important that you keep eating lots of different types of food to make sure you get all the vitamins and minerals that your body needs to stay healthy.

This leaflet will give you ideas on what to eat to keep your meals at the right consistency, as well as advice on how to get the most out of your meal times.

Many people find it difficult to keep their weight steady while eating a minced and moist diet. The information in this leaflet will give you ideas on how to make your meals as nourishing as possible, to stop you losing weight and help you gain weight if you need to.

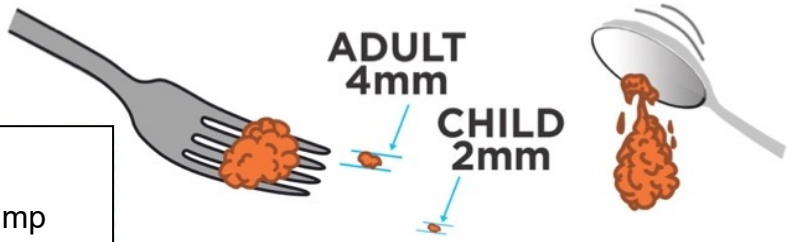
What is a minced and moist diet?

Minced and moist foods are very soft and moist. They have been minced or mashed before serving (such as with a fork), with no big lumps and needs no biting/ little chewing.

- For adults, lumps should be no more than 4mm in width and no longer than 15mm in length. This is about the space between the prongs of a standard fork. They should be easy to squash with the tongue. If meat cannot be finely minced, it should be puréed.
- Mix in extra thick sauce, such as cheese sauce, or gravy to make the right consistency. There should be no separate thin liquid.
- It can be scooped and should hold its shape on a plate.
- It can be eaten with a spoon or a fork. Food should sit on a pile on the fork and should not fall easily through the prongs.

IDDSI Fork Test

For **adults** the lump size is **4mm**, which is about the gap between the prongs of a standard dinner fork.



Minced & Moist food must pass both tests!

IDDSI Spoon tilt test

Sample holds its shapes on the spoon and falls off fairly easily if the spoon is titled or lightly flicked.

Sample should **not** be firm or sticky.

Intended for general information only

The International Dysphagia Diet Standardization Initiative v2.2 2026 https://iddsi.org/framework/

Examples of suitable minced and moist foods

- Finely minced meat or mashed fish chopped to 4mm in width and no longer than 15mm in length lump size served with a thick smooth, non-pouring sauce or gravy.
- Mashed fruit or vegetables with any excess fluid drained. Can be served with thick smooth sauce.
- Fully softened smooth cereal with small soft lumps with all excess fluid drained before serving.
- Rice should not be sticky (particularly short grain rice). Rice should not separate into individual grains when cooked and served (particularly long grain rice) but be cooked in thick sauce such as risotto, rice pudding.

Food textures to avoid on a minced and moist diet

Food types to avoid	Examples of foods to avoid
Mixed thin and thick textures	Soup with pieces of food, cereal with milk
Hard or dry food	Nuts, raw vegetables (such as carrot, cauliflower, broccoli), dry cakes, bread, dry cereal
Tough and stringy food	Steak, pineapple, celery
Chewy food	Lollies, sweets, cheese chunks, marshmallows, chewing gum, sticky mashed potato, dried fruits, sticky foods
Crispy food	Crackling, crisp bacon, cornflakes
Crunchy food	Raw carrot, raw apple, popcorn,
Sharp or spiky food	Corn chips, crisps
Crumbly bits	Dry cake crumble, dry biscuits
Pips, seeds	Apple seeds, pumpkin seeds, white of an orange
Foods with skins or outer shell	Peas, grapes, sausage skin, chicken skin, salmon skin
Foods with husks	Corn, shredded wheat, bran
Bone or gristle	Chicken bones, fish bones, meat with gristle
Round, long shaped food	Sausage, grape
Sticky or gummy food	Nut butters: overcooked oatmeal/ porridge, edible gelatine, sticky rice cakes
Stringy food	Beans, rhubarb
‘Floppy’ foods	Lettuce, cucumber, uncooked baby spinach leaves
Crust formed during cooking or heating	Crust or skin that forms on food during cooking or after eating such as cheese topping, mashed potato
‘Juicy’ food	Where juice separates from the food piece in the mouth, such as watermelon
Large or hard lumps of food lumps	Casserole pieces larger than 4mm x 4mm x 15mm, fruit, vegetable, meat or other food pieces larger than 4mm x 4mm x 15mm

Ice-cream and jelly may not be recommended if you are also having thickened fluids. Check with your speech and language therapist.

Practical tips

We all must eat. For most of us it is an enjoyable time, often involving family and friends. Eating a minced and moist diet will mean a change from your normal routine. By following these ideas you can still enjoy your food.

- Have a wide range of foods. This will give you lots of different nutrients to keep you healthy and stop you getting bored.
- Make the food look appetising, choose food of different colours. Mince/ mash each food separately, so it keeps its own colour and flavour.
- You may find it easier to prepare food in bulk and then store it in your freezer. Make sure that the food is defrosted thoroughly before reheating. Ideally, plan ahead to leave enough time and space to defrost small amounts of food in the fridge.
- Eat in a quiet, relaxed atmosphere and take your time. Sit upright during your meal.
- Finish each mouthful before taking the next. Make sure there is no food in your mouth at the end of meals.
- If you are eating out, let the restaurant know beforehand that you have a special diet and what your needs are. Most places will be happy to cater for you. If you know you take longer to eat, think about ordering a main course and ask for that, while everyone else is eating their starter. You may then be ready for dessert at the same time as everyone else.
- If you are struggling to cook or shop on a regular basis, make use of convenience foods, which need very little preparation. Or order in pre-prepared food from delivery companies (see links for these and store cupboard ideas on pages 9 and 10).
- If possible, weigh yourself once a week. If you are losing weight or your appetite is poor, please make sure you are following the ideas on page 6.

Your dietitian or speech and language therapist will be happy to help you. Please contact them if you are worried or have any questions about your diet or swallowing.

Preparing and serving your food

Equipment you will need: A hand blender can be used to purée small amounts of food such as soups or sauces. Or a food processor or liquidiser would be useful to mince/ finely chop meat, fish or fruit. Some foods may not need puréeing or processing beforehand such as thick, smooth soup. Well cooked vegetables may be mashed with a fork / potato masher.

Presentation: Make your meals look appealing by using foods that are different colours. Foods that are light in colour, such as chicken or fish, are better served with brightly coloured vegetables such as carrots or broccoli.

Thickening foods: Once you have prepared your food to the right texture, you may need to thicken it, if recommended by a speech and language therapist. You can use things such as mashed potato (must be really smooth, no lumps) or potato flakes, cornflour, custard powder, instant sauce (smooth, no lumps) or gravy granules, as well as the thickening agent you may be using for your drinks (if recommended by a speech and language therapist).

Balanced diet

You should try to have foods from each different food group every day:

Protein foods: try to have 1 of these foods 2 times a day:

- Puréed or finely minced meat or well mashed fish in sauce
- Lentils, beans, pulses (may need to be blended or sieved)
- Scrambled egg
- Cheese in sauce

Starchy food: gives energy. Have food from this group at least 3 times a day:

- Ready Brek, smooth instant porridge or 'Weetabix' with warm milk
- Mashed potato or pasta, rice with a sauce
- Rice pudding, semolina or custard

Vegetables: which will cook until soft and can be well mashed such as:

- Carrots
- Turnips
- Cauliflower
- Broccoli
- Parsnip
- Swede

Fruit: try to have 2 portions a day of stewed, mashed or pureed fruit such as:

- Mango
- Banana
- Apple (without the skin)
- Tinned peaches or pears

Or fruit which can be pureed and sieved if needed or put in a drink such as banana or strawberry milkshake.

Dairy products: have protein and calcium. Try to have the amount equal to at least 1 pint of milk per day:

- 1 smooth yogurt (no bits) = ⅓ of a pint
- 30g/1oz cheese = ⅓ of a pint

Do not use reduced fat options, and wherever possible make custard, semolina or rice pudding with whole milk.

Fatty and sugary foods: add more of these foods if you need to gain weight such as butter, margarine, oil, cream or grated cheese, sugar, honey or syrup.

Problems you may have

Poor appetite/ weight loss: if you have a small appetite or find that you are losing weight, you should make your foods more nourishing. There are some ideas below on how to do this.

Practical hints:

- Try to have small meals/ snacks often. Aim for 3 small meals and 2 to 3 snacks per day, that is 'little and often'.
- If you are not able to manage a full meal try instead to have a milkshake, soup or pudding where you have added a fortifier such as 'Complan' (these are available from the chemist or supermarket).
- Take only sips of drinks with a meal, as these can be quite filling. Have more drinks between meals/ snacks.
- Extra nourishment can be added to your food in different ways such as:
  - Use whole milk to make milk puddings, milky drinks and sauces.
  - Add 4 tablespoons of milk powder (such as 'Marvel') to 1 pint of whole milk. Use this in hot drinks, puddings, mashed potato (no lumps) and sauces. Make packet soups with fortified milk, or add 2 tablespoons of milk powder to smooth tinned or packet soup.
  - Add grated cheese to vegetables, potato and sauces.
  - Add extra butter/ margarine/ oil to sauces, potatoes, vegetables and pasta.
  - Use double cream or plain Greek yogurt in soups, curries, sauces, cereals, potatoes and puddings such as custard.
  - Add extra sugar, syrup, jam without bits or honey into puddings, drinks or cereals (caution if you have diabetes)
  - Make sure meals are minced with nourishing fluids such as thick gravy or sauces, not just water.

If you continue to lose weight, then please call your dietitian for some more advice.

Note: Remember to thicken all drinks, including soup and foods if advised by a speech and language therapist.

Minced and moist meal ideas

Breakfast:

- Ready Brek, smooth instant porridge or 'Weetabix' (well soaked with warm full cream milk and sugar, no separate fluid).
- Soft mashed fruit and full fat smooth yogurt such as Greek yogurt.
- Scrambled egg cooked with milk, very creamy, soft and smooth, no big lumps.

Between meal snacks:

- Milky drink such as 'Ovaltine', 'Horlicks' or 'Complan' or smooth soup. These may need to be thickened, check with your speech and language therapist.
- Ripe avocado mashed and mixed with Greek yogurt/ cream cheese/ mashed banana.
- Full fat smooth yogurt, custard pot or soft pudding (see pudding list on next page).

Snack and main meal ideas:

- Cream of tomato soup (smooth, no bits).
- Other smooth soups that have been puréed or sieved - should contain meat, fish, lentils or has cheese, cream, soft breadcrumbs added for extra nourishment.
  Note: soups need to be of a thick consistency or thickened, if needed, as per the speech and language therapist's recommendations.
- Scrambled egg cooked with full cream milk, very creamy, soft, smooth, no lumps.
- Hard boiled egg, mashed and mixed with salad cream/ mayonnaise to a soft, moist paste.
- Smooth pâté.
- Cauliflower/ broccoli cheese, well cooked and well mashed.
- Finely minced, well cooked meat with thick gravy/ sauce.
- Shepherd's pie/cottage pie.
- Corned beef, well mashed.
- Quiché without pastry, mashed.
- Salmon/ mackerel mousse with mashed avocado.
- Tinned fish, mashed and mixed with mayonnaise (such as tuna, salmon).
- White fish with thick sauce/ fish pie, well mashed.
- Thick lentil based dishes (well cooked) such as dhal.
- Vegetable/ tofu curry or stew, well cooked and mashed.

The above could be served with:

- Creamed/ mashed or instant mashed potatoes (no lumps).
- Well mashed jacket potato (no skin) with butter.
- Well cooked white rice which will need to be finely mashed with sauce or as risotto/ with your main dish such as curry.
- Well cooked pasta finely mashed into smooth or finely minced sauce such as cheese or bolognese/ tinned spaghetti or ravioli, mashed with fork.

And mashed soft vegetables (without skins) with butter, gravy or sauce. For example, well-cooked root vegetables, broccoli tops or baked beans/ mushy peas (may need sieving) or finely chopped tomatoes (either tinned or fresh, skinned and deseeded first).

Puddings:

Make all desserts, where applicable, with full cream milk:

- Yogurt, smooth with no 'bits', thick and creamy varieties, Greek yogurt.
- Fromage frais, smooth with no 'bits'.
- Mousse such as chocolate.
- Blancmange or Instant Whip.
- Baked egg custard, mashed with fork, no pastry.
- Soft mashed fresh or tinned fruit such as banana/ mashed or stewed apple/ peaches with cream/ thick custard.
- Custard (thick).
- Sponge pudding with pureed fruit, mashed well with custard/ cream.

- Crème caramel.
- Thick milk pudding with seedless jam, semolina, tapioca, rice pudding or sago.
- Fruit smoothies (these may need to be sieved).
- Milkshakes.

Example of meal plan

Breakfast:

Smooth instant porridge or ‘Ready Brek’ made with full cream milk and sugar.

Stewed fruit (no lumps bigger than 4mm).

Mid-morning:

Milky drink such as ‘Ovaltine’, ‘Horlicks’ or ‘Complan’.

Or see pudding ideas.

Midday meal:

Minced beef with thick gravy, mashed potatoes, well mashed carrots, sponge pudding with custard and stewed fruit.

Mid-afternoon:

Well mashed banana and smooth yogurt.

Evening meal:

Well mashed cauliflower cheese, mashed potatoes, chocolate mousse.

Bedtime:

Smooth yogurt, custard, fromage frais or milky drink.

Buying ready prepared minced and moist meals

The following companies provide meals delivered to your door:

- **Wiltshire Farm Foods:** softer foods range includes minced meals and puddings.
  0800 077 3100 / https://www.wiltshirefarmfoods.com/about-our-food/specialist-nutrition
- **Simply puree:** a range of texture modified meals and puddings.
  0191 456 0456 / https://simplyfoodsolutions.co.uk/simply-puree/
- **Oakhouse foods:** a selection of minced and moist meals as part of softer foods range.
  0333 370 6700 / www.oakhousefoods.co.uk

Store cupboard ideas

Suitable convenience foods to keep in your store cupboard that are easy to modify to minced and moist consistency are:

- Tinned minced meat, corned beef
- Tinned fish
- Tinned or packet soup (without bits)
- Tinned cream/ evaporated milk
- ‘Ready Brek’/ smooth instant porridge
- Custard/ instant whip/ milk puddings
- Soft tinned fruit or fruit puree sachets
- Instant mashed potato
- Pasta/ pasta sauces
- Tinned vegetables, spaghetti
- Gravy granules
- Milk powder, Complan

Weight chart

Some people find it useful to write down their weight. If you would like to keep a record of your weight you can do that here. There is no need to weigh yourself more than once a week.

Date	Weight

Contact details

Nutrition and Dietetic Service: _

Adult Speech and Language Therapy Service: _

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