

FAQ Category: Foods; Choking

Q: There seems to be a big jump between Level 6 – Soft & Bite-sized and Level 7 – Regular. Why is this?

A: The IDDSI Framework has been developed to address safety for liquids and solids. For solids, both particle size and texture are important for reducing choking risk. Particle sizes have been chosen to reduce choking risk for both paediatric and adult populations (Brodsky et al., 1996; Litman et al., 2003). The other strategy that has been identified to reduce choking risk is the provision of mealtime supervision (Berzlanovich et al., 2005). Although all efforts are made to ensure adequate supervision, it cannot be assumed. The specific that foods at Level 6 Soft & Bites-sized cannot exceed a maximum particle size dimension of 8mm x 8mm (paediatrics) and 1.5 x 1.5 cm (adults) is intended to address choking risk.

For individuals who are NOT at risk of choking, who are independently able to cut or bite foods into appropriate sample sizes, and who do NOT need supervision or assistance while eating, then consideration should be given to prescribing a Level 7 – Regular diet, beginning with ‘soft options’ from this level. Regular diets contain many foods that are typically cooked and served to meet a soft texture requirement (e.g. items like lasagna, shepherd’s pie, risotto, paella are soft and moist, and do not have particle size restrictions).

References:

Berzlanovich AM, Fazen-Dorner B, Waldhoer T, and Fasching P. Foreign body asphyxia: A preventable cause of death in the elderly, *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*. 2005; 28, 65-69.

Brodsky JB, Macario A, Mark JBD (1996) Tracheal diameter predicts double-lumen tube size: A method for selecting left double-lumen tubes. *Anesthesia Analgesia*, 82: 861-4.

Litman RS, Weissend EE, Shibata D, Westesson P-L (2003). Developmental changes of laryngeal dimensions in unparalyzed, sedated children. *Anesthesiology*, 98(1): 41-45.



This document is to be read in conjunction with the Complete IDDSI Framework, IDDSI Testing Methods and IDDSI Evidence documents (<http://iddsi.org/resources/framework/>).

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