



REGULAR EASY TO CHEW



Level 7 Regular *Easy to Chew* for Babies and Children

What is this food texture level?

Level 7 – Regular *Easy to Chew* Foods:

- ✓ Normal, everyday foods* of soft/tender textures that are appropriate to your child's development. Your baby should have teeth and chewing skills
- ✓ Any method may be used to eat these foods (e.g. fingers, fork, spoon, chopsticks etc.)
- ✓ Food piece size is not restricted in Level 7, therefore foods may be a range of sizes. **Foods may be a range of sizes but must be appropriate to your child's age and level of development.** Food pieces can be smaller or bigger than 8mm x 8mm
- ✓ **Do not use foods that are:** hard, tough, chewy, fibrous, have stringy textures, or include pips/seeds, bones or gristle
- ✓ Your child should be able to 'bite off' pieces of soft and tender food and choose bite-sizes that are safe to chew and swallow
- ✓ Your child should be able to chew pieces of soft and tender food, so they are safe to swallow without tiring easily
- ✓ Your child's tongue should be able to move food for chewing and apply pressure until the food is soft and moist enough to be easily swallowed



*May include 'mixed thin and thick texture' food and liquids together – ask your clinician for direction on this.

Why is this food texture level used for babies and children?

Level 7 – Regular Easy to Chew food may be used if your child has strong enough chewing ability to break down soft/tender food given in pieces appropriate for their age and abilities. This texture may be right if your child has weaker chewing muscles for hard/firm textures but can chew soft and tender food without getting tired. It may also be a good choice if your child has been sick and is recovering. Your clinician might recommend this texture if they are teaching your child advanced chewing skills.

Who should not have this texture level?

This level is not intended for babies and children when your clinician has identified an increased choking risk. Your baby or child may be unsafe to have this level if they have chewing and/or swallowing problems or have unsafe mealtime behaviours. Examples of unsafe mealtime behaviours include: not chewing very much, putting too much food into the mouth, eating too fast or swallowing large mouthfuls of food. Always consult with your health professional for specific advice for your child's needs.

Intended for general information only. Please consult with your health care professional for specific advice for your baby or child



For young children, cut food into pieces that are appropriate for your child’s age. Children should sit when eating or drinking. Always supervise your child when they are eating. If you notice your child is not chewing food properly, contact your clinician to make sure your child is on the correct food texture to reduce their choking risk.

NOTE: Children under the age of 3 years are especially at a high risk for choking. Examples of foods that children under 3 years have choked on are shown in the table. These foods are **not** considered appropriate for a baby or child on Level 7 Regular *Easy to Chew*. See local guidelines for what to do in case of choking.

EXAMPLES of food characteristics that pose a choking risk for children under 3 years of age

Hard or dry food	Nuts, raw vegetables (e.g. carrot, cauliflower, broccoli); dry cakes
Round or long shaped food	Whole grapes, whole cherries, raisins, sausages, hot dogs
Stringy food	Celery, beans, rhubarb
Foods with husks	Corn, bread with grains, shredded wheat, bran
Tough or fibrous foods	Steak, pineapple
Floppy foods	Lettuce, cucumber, uncooked baby spinach leaves
Crunchy food	Popcorn, toast, dry biscuits/cookies, chips/crisps

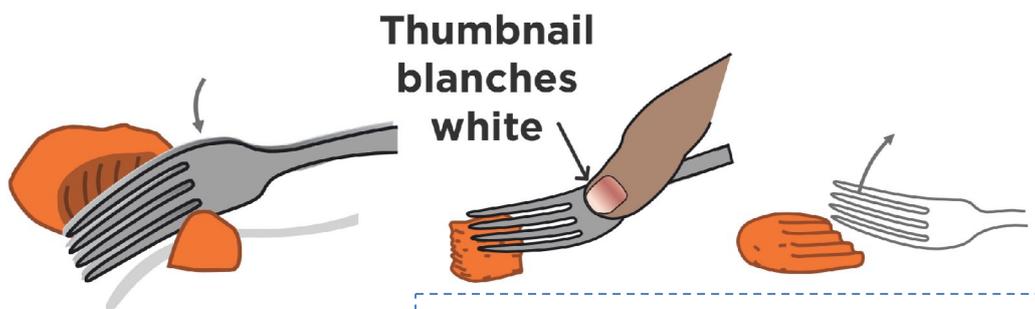
How do I test my food to make sure it is Level 7 Regular *Easy to Chew*?

Foods should be able to be cut or broken apart with the side of a fork or spoon. It is then safest to test Regular *Easy to Chew* food using the IDDSI Fork Pressure test.

See videos of the IDDSI Fork Pressure Test at www.IDDSI.org/framework/food-testing-methods/



Must be able to break food apart easily with the side of a fork or spoon



Easy to Chew foods must break apart easily and pass Fork Pressure Test!

IDDSI Fork Pressure Test

To make sure the food is soft enough, press down on the fork until the thumbnail blanches to white, then lift the fork to see that the food is completely squashed and does not regain its shape



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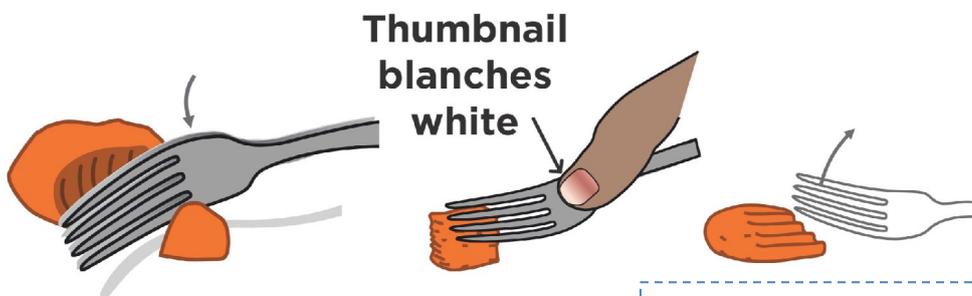


EXAMPLES of Level 7 Regular *Easy to Chew* food for Babies and Children

- * **Meat** cooked until tender. If you cannot serve soft and tender, serve as Minced and Moist
- * **Fish** cooked soft enough to break apart easily with the side of a fork or spoon
- * **Fruit** are soft enough to break apart into smaller pieces with the side of a fork or spoon (drain any excess liquid). Do not use the fibrous parts of fruit (for example, the white parts of an orange). Be careful if your child is eating fruit with a high water content, where the juice separates from the solid in the mouth during chewing (for example, fruits like watermelon or other melons)
- * **Vegetables** are steamed or boiled until tender. Stir fried vegetables may be too firm for this level
- * **Cereal** is served with texture softened. Drain excess liquid before serving
- * **Check with your clinician for direction about bread and sandwiches (and appropriate sandwich fillings)**
- * **Rice** does not have any special cooking requirements at this level



See videos of the IDDSI Fork Pressure Test at www.IDDSI.org/framework/food-testing-methods/



IDDSI Fork Pressure Test

Must be able to break food apart easily with the side of a fork or spoon

Easy to Chew foods must break apart easily and pass Fork Pressure Test!

To make sure the food is soft enough, press down on the fork until the thumbnail blanches to white, then lift the fork to see that the food is completely squashed and does not regain its shape



REGULAR *EASY TO CHEW*



For safety, **AVOID** these food textures that pose a choking risk for babies and children who need Level 7 Regular *Easy to Chew*

Children under the age of 3 years are especially at a high risk for choking. Always supervise your child while they are eating. Encourage children to sit while eating or drinking. If you notice the food pieces are not being chewed well enough, please contact your clinician to make sure your child is on the correct food texture to reduce their choking risk.

Food characteristic to AVOID	Examples of foods to AVOID
Hard or dry food	Nuts, raw vegetables (e.g. carrot, cauliflower, broccoli), dry cakes, bread, dry cereal
Round or long shaped food	Whole grapes, whole cherries, raisins, sausages, hot dogs
Tough or fibrous foods	Steak, pineapple
Chewy	Lollies/candies/sweets, cheese chunks, marshmallows, chewing gum, sticky mashed potato, dried fruits, sticky foods
Crispy	Crackling, crisp bacon, cornflakes
Crunchy food	Raw carrot, raw apple, popcorn
Sharp or spiky	Corn chips/crisps
Pips, seeds	Apple seeds, pumpkin seeds, white of orange
Bone or gristle	Chicken bones, fish bones, other bones, meat with gristle
Sticky or gummy food	Edible gelatin, konjac containing jelly, sticky rice cakes
Stringy food	Celery, beans, rhubarb
Food with husks	Bread with grains, shredded wheat, bran
Floppy foods	Lettuce, cucumber, uncooked baby spinach leaves
Extra Clinician notes	

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