

## About the IDDSI Consumer Handouts



IDDSI has created these handouts in consultation with clinicians and patients. The handouts can be used by people who have feeding, chewing or swallowing problems, their caregivers and clinicians. There are separate handouts that have been designed for adults, and handouts that have been designed for use with babies and children. The handouts provide easy-to-read information about the IDDSI levels and their testing methods. The food levels also include examples of foods for each level, and food textures to avoid. Some handouts have only one page and others have 3 or 4 pages. The table below provides a list of the handouts and the number of pages for each handout.

Consumer handouts for adults and their carers		Consumer handouts for babies and children and their carers	
<b>General</b>			
General Back page	1 page	General Back page	1 page
		FAQ when to move from 'baby and child' food piece sizes to 'adult' food piece sizes	1 page
<b>Drinks</b>			
Level 0 – Thin	1 page	Level 0 - Thin	1 page
Level 1 – Slightly Thick		Level 1 – Slightly Thick	1 page
Level 2 - Mildly Thick	1 page	Level 2 - Mildly Thick	1 page
Level 3 - Moderately Thick	1 page	Level 3 - Moderately Thick	1 page
Level 4 - Extremely Thick	1 page	Level 4 - Extremely Thick	1 page
<b>Food</b>			
Level 3 – Liquidised	1 page	Level 3 – Liquidised	1 page
Level 4 – Pureed	2 pages	Level 4 – Pureed	2 pages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General information</li> <li>Food textures to avoid</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General information</li> <li>Food textures to avoid</li> </ul>	
Level 5 - Minced & Moist	3 pages	Level 5 - Minced & Moist	3 pages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General information</li> <li>Examples of for this level</li> <li>Food textures to avoid for this level</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General information</li> <li>Examples of for this level</li> <li>Food textures to avoid for this level</li> </ul>	
Level 6 - Soft & Bite-Sized	3 pages	Level 6 - Soft & Bite-Sized	3 pages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General information</li> <li>Examples of for this level</li> <li>Food textures to avoid for this level</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General information</li> <li>Examples of for this level</li> <li>Food textures to avoid for this level</li> </ul>	
Level 7- Easy to Chew	4 pages, 3 files	Level 7 - Easy to Chew	4 pages, 3 files
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General information</li> <li>Examples of for this level</li> <li>Food textures to avoid for this level</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General information</li> <li>Examples of for this level</li> <li>Food textures to avoid for this level</li> </ul>	
Level 7 - Regular	1 page	Level 7 - Regular	1 page
Transitional Food	1 page	Transitional Food	1 page



# **0 THIN**



## Use of Level 0 Thin Liquids for Babies and Children

### What is this thickness level?

Level 0 - Thin drinks:

- ✓ Flow like water
- ✓ Can flow through a straw or teat/nipple

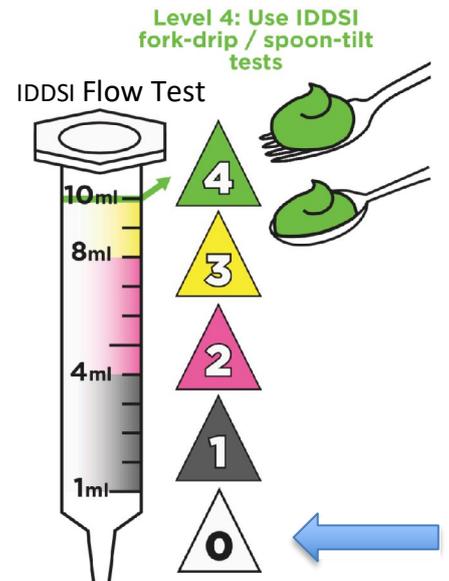
### Why is this thickness level used for babies and children?

Level 0 – Thin liquids are most often used if your child does not have a swallowing problem with liquids. Expressed breast milk, water and infant formula are all examples of the Level 0 Thin thickness level. Thin liquids can be taken through a nipple/teat, spout cup or standard cup.

### How do I measure my liquid or drink to make sure it is Level 0 Thin?

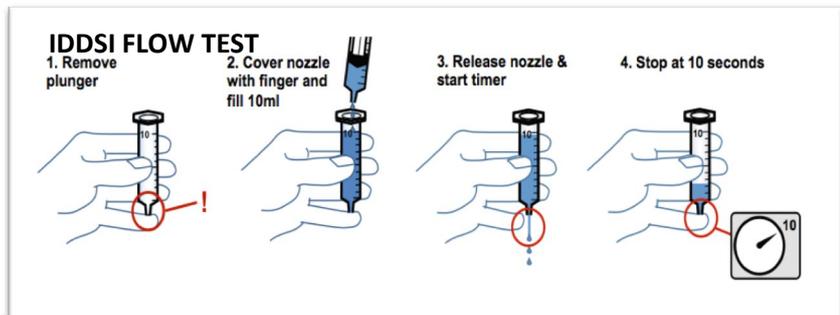
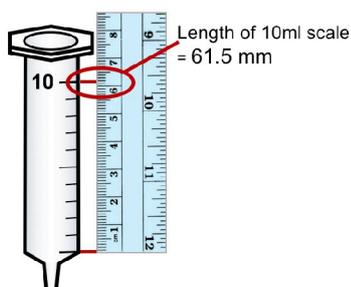
It is safest to measure the thickness using the IDDSI Flow Test. The IDDSI Flow Test measures how thick a liquid is by how much goes through a 10mL syringe in 10 seconds.

IDDSI recommends that you use a 10 mL syringe to check to make sure you have the correct thickness level using the instructions below. For Level 0 Thin thickness liquids, there should be *less than 1mL remaining* in the syringe after 10 seconds of flow.



See videos of the IDDSI Flow Test at  
[www.IDDSI.org/framework/drink-testing-methods/](http://www.IDDSI.org/framework/drink-testing-methods/)

**Before you test...**  
 You **must check** your syringe length because there are differences in syringe lengths. Your syringe should look like this



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



# 1 SLIGHTLY THICK



## Use of Level 1 Slightly Thick Liquids for Babies and Children

### What is this thickness level?

Level 1 - Slightly Thick drinks:

- ✓ Are thicker than water
- ✓ Can flow through a straw, teat/nipple

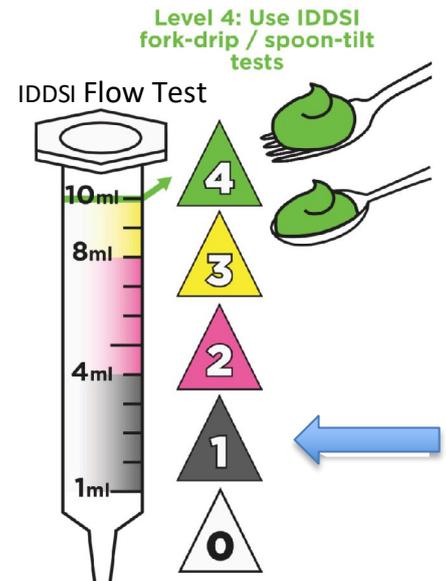
### Why is this thickness level used for babies and children?

Level 1 – Slightly Thick is most often used if your child is having swallowing problems with thin liquids. Slightly Thick liquids are thicker than water, but still thin enough to flow through an infant teat/nipple.

Some drinks may naturally be slightly thick (like some fruit nectars or milks). Expressed breast milk or infant formula may be thickened to the Slightly Thick level. Your clinician will help you find the best type of nipple/teat to use with Slightly Thick liquids for your child. Slightly Thick drinks can also be taken using a spout cup or standard cup.

### How do I measure my liquid or drink to make sure it is Level 1 Slightly Thick?

It is safest to measure the thickness using the IDDSI Flow Test. The IDDSI Flow Test measures how thick a liquid is by how much goes through a 10 mL syringe in 10 seconds. IDDSI recommends that you use a 10 mL syringe to check to make sure you have the correct thickness level using the instructions below. For Level 1- Slightly Thick liquids, there should be **1-4 mL remaining** in the syringe after 10 seconds of flow. Your clinician may give you a specific number between 1-4 mL to aim for.

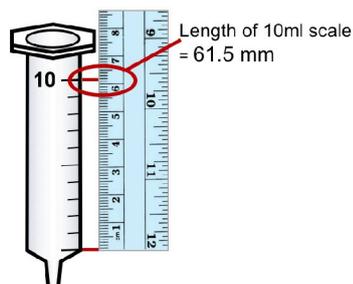


See videos of the IDDSI Flow Test at

[www.IDDSI.org/framework/drink-testing-methods/](http://www.IDDSI.org/framework/drink-testing-methods/)

#### Before you test...

You **must check** your syringe length because there are differences in syringe lengths. Your syringe should look like this



#### IDDSI FLOW TEST

1. Remove plunger

2. Cover nozzle with finger and fill 10ml

3. Release nozzle & start timer

4. Stop at 10 seconds



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



# 2 MILDLY THICK



## Use of Level 2 Mildly Thick Liquids for Babies and Children

### What is this thickness level?

Level 2 - Mildly Thick liquids:

- ✓ Are 'sippable'
- ✓ Pour quickly from a spoon but slower than Thin drinks and Slightly Thick drinks
- ✓ Need some effort to drink this thickness using a standard straw.

### Why is this thickness level used for babies and children?

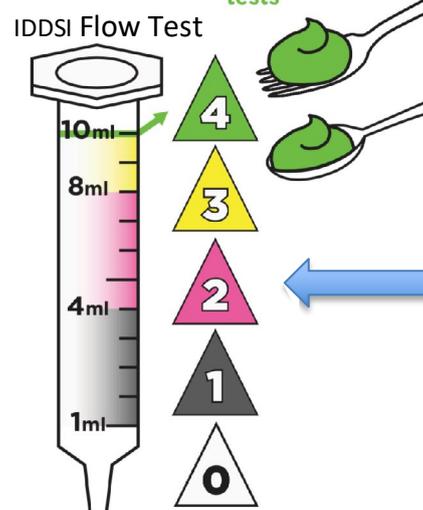
Level 2 – Mildly Thick drinks may be used if Thin drinks (water, milk) and Level 1 Slightly Thick liquids flow too quickly to be swallowed safely by your child. Some milk shakes and thick shakes may be this thickness level already, but other drinks may need thickener added to reach the correct thickness level. Use the IDDSI testing methods below to check.

Mildly Thick drinks flow at a slower rate. These drinks may be too thick for use with some types of infant teats/nipples. Your clinician will help you work out which nipple/teat will work best. These drinks may also be taken from a spout cup or standard cup.

### How do I measure my liquid or drink to make sure it is Level 2 Mildly Thick?

It is safest to measure the thickness using the IDDSI Flow Test. The IDDSI Flow Test measures how thick a liquid is by how much goes through a 10 mL syringe in 10 seconds. IDDSI recommends that you use a 10 mL syringe to check to make sure you have the correct thickness level using the instructions below. For Level 2- Mildly Thick liquids, there should be **4-8 mL remaining** in the syringe after 10 seconds of flow. Your clinician may give you a specific number between 4-8 mL to aim for.

Level 4: Use IDDSI fork-drip / spoon-tilt tests

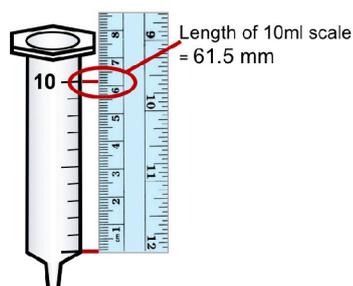


See videos of the IDDSI Flow Test at

[www.IDDSI.org/framework/drink-testing-methods/](http://www.IDDSI.org/framework/drink-testing-methods/)

#### Before you test...

You **must check** your syringe length because there are differences in syringe lengths. Your syringe should look like this



#### IDDSI FLOW TEST

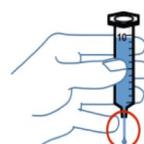
1. Remove plunger



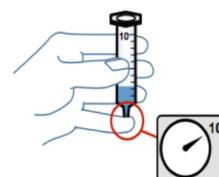
2. Cover nozzle with finger and fill 10ml



3. Release nozzle & start timer



4. Stop at 10 seconds



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



# 3 LIQUIDISED



## Use of Level 3 Liquidised Food for Babies and Children

### What is this thickness level?

Level 3 – Liquidised Food:

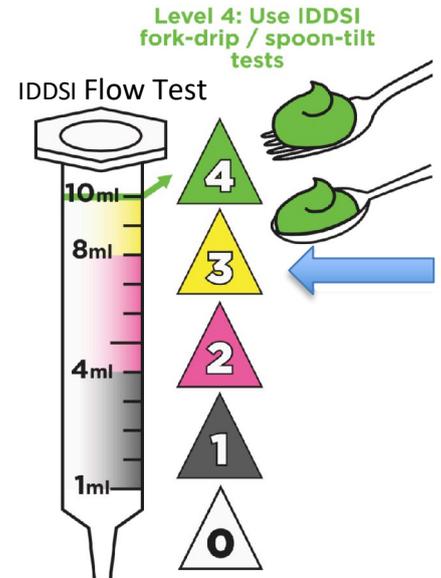
- ✓ Can be eaten with a spoon or drunk from a cup
- ✓ **Cannot** be eaten with a fork because it drips through the fork prongs
- ✓ Has a smooth texture with no ‘bits’ (lumps, fibers, husk, bits of shell or skin, particles of gristle or bone)

### Why is this thickness level used for babies and children?

Level 3- Liquidised foods may be used if your child has trouble moving their tongue. The thicker consistency gives more time for the tongue to “hold and move” the liquidised food. It is easiest to eat liquidised food with a spoon. Seek help about nutrition when using this texture to be sure your child is getting the right nutrition to meet their needs.

### How do I measure my liquid or drink to make sure it is Level 3 Liquidised?

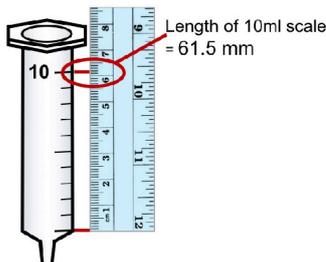
It is safest to measure the thickness of Liquidised food using the IDDSI Flow Test *and* the IDDSI Fork Drip Test. These tests measure how thick a liquid is by how fast it flows through a 10 mL syringe in 10 seconds and how quickly it flows through the prongs of a dinner fork. IDDSI recommends that you use a 10 mL syringe to check to make sure you have the correct thickness level using the instructions below. For Level 3 – Liquidised foods there should be **no less than 8 mL remaining** in the syringe after 10 seconds of flow. Your clinician may give you a specific number between 8-10 mL to aim for. Using the IDDSI Fork Test the liquid drips slowly in dollops through the prongs of a fork.



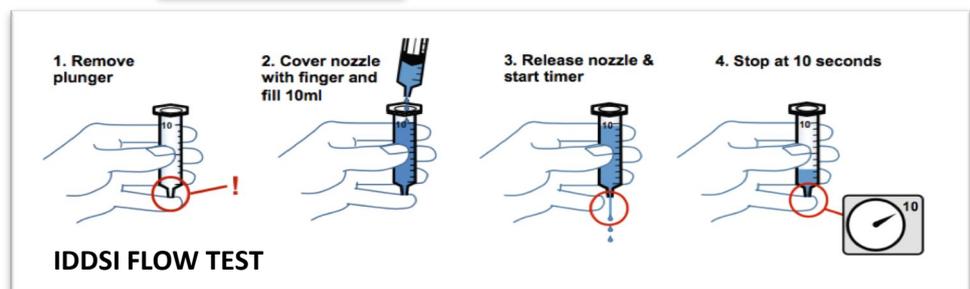
See videos of the IDDSI Flow Test and IDDSI Fork Drip Test at [www.IDDSI.org/framework/drink-testing-methods/](http://www.IDDSI.org/framework/drink-testing-methods/)

### Before you test...

You **must check** your syringe because there are differences in syringe lengths. Your syringe should look like this



**IDDSI Fork Drip Test**  
Drips slowly in dollops through the prongs of a fork





# MODERATELY THICK



## Level 3 Moderately Thick Liquids for Babies and Children

### What is this thickness level?

Level 3 - Moderately Thick drinks:

- ✓ Can be drunk from a cup or taken with a spoon
- ✓ Need some effort to drink them through a *wide* diameter straw and cannot be sucked through an infant teat/nipple
- ✓ Have a smooth texture with no lumps, fibers or seeds

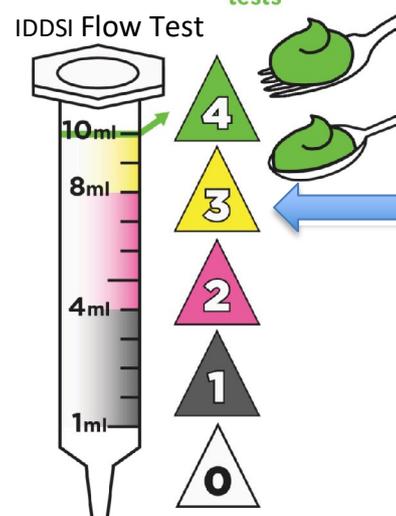
### Why is this thickness level used for babies and children?

Level 3 – Moderately Thick drinks may be used if your baby or child’s tongue control is not good enough to manage Mildly Thick, Slightly Thick or Thin drinks. Moderately Thick drinks allows more time for the tongue to “hold and move” the drink. These drinks are best taken from a cup or using a spoon.

### How do I measure my liquid or drink to make sure it is Level 3 Moderately thick?

It is safest to measure Moderately Thick drinks using the IDDSI Flow Test *and* the IDDSI Fork Drip Test. These tests measure how thick a liquid is by how fast it flows through a 10 mL syringe in 10 seconds and how quickly it flows through the prongs of a dinner fork. IDDSI recommends that you use a 10 mL syringe to check to make sure you have the correct thickness level using the instructions below. For Level 3- Moderately Thick liquids there should be **no less than 8 mL remaining** in the syringe after 10 seconds of flow. Your clinician may give you a specific number between 8-10 mL to aim for. Using the IDDSI Fork Test the liquid should drip slowly in dollops through the prongs of a fork.

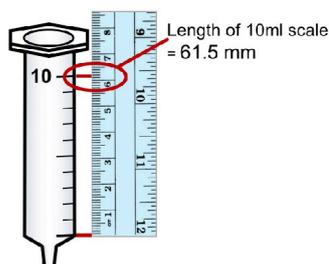
Level 4: Use IDDSI fork-drip / spoon-tilt tests



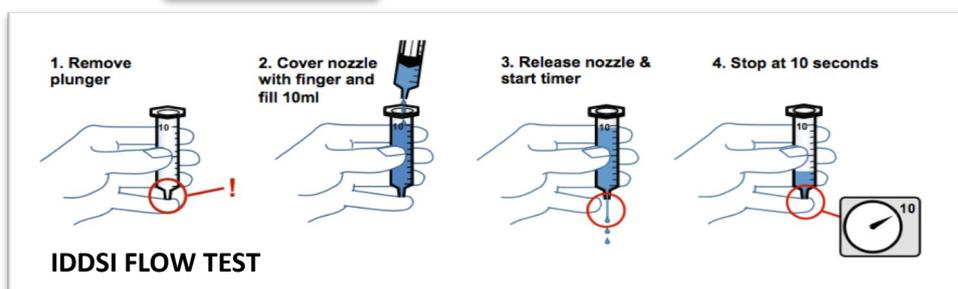
See videos of the IDDSI Flow Test and IDDSI Fork Drip Test at [www.IDDSI.org/framework/drink-testing-methods/](http://www.IDDSI.org/framework/drink-testing-methods/)

### Before you test...

You **must** **check** your syringe because there are differences in syringe lengths. Your syringe should look like this



**IDDSI Fork Drip Test**  
Drips slowly in dollops through the prongs of a fork





# 4

# EXTREMELY THICK



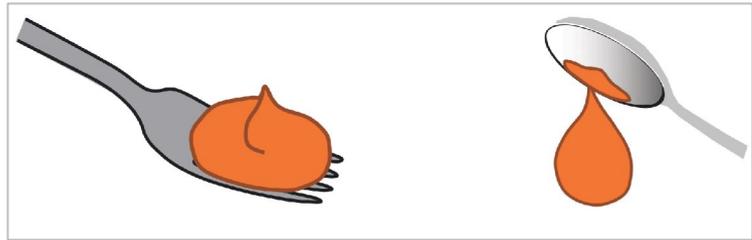
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## Level 4 Extremely Thick Liquids for Babies and Children

### What is this thickness level?

Level 4 – Extremely Thick drinks:

- ✓ Are usually eaten with a spoon
- ✓ Cannot be drunk from a cup or sucked through a straw or infant teat/nipple.
- ✓ Do **not** require chewing
- ✓ Have a smooth texture with no lumps
- ✓ Hold shape on a spoon
- ✓ Fall off a spoon in a single spoonful when tilted
- ✓ Are **not** sticky



### Why is this thickness level used for babies and children?

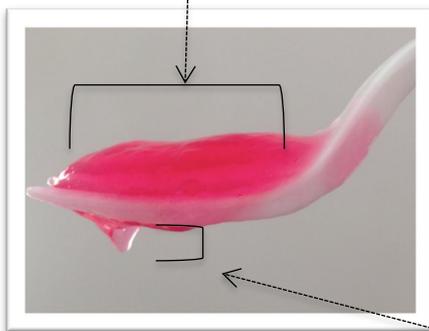
Level 4 - Extremely Thick drinks may be used if your child's tongue control is not good enough to manage Moderately Thick, Mildly Thick, Slightly Thick or Thin drinks. Extremely Thick drinks allows more time for the tongue to "hold and move" the liquid. It's important that Extremely Thick drinks are not too sticky because this can cause the food to stick to the cheeks, teeth, roof of the mouth or in the throat. Extremely Thick drinks are best taken using a spoon.

### How do I measure my liquid or drink to make sure it is Level 4 Extremely thick?

It is safest to measure Extremely Thick drinks using the IDDSI Fork Drip Test **and** the IDDSI Spoon Tilt Test.

See videos of the IDDSI Fork Drip Test and IDDSI Spoon Tilt Test at [www.IDDSI.org/framework/food-testing-methods/](http://www.IDDSI.org/framework/food-testing-methods/)

Extremely thick liquids sit in a mound or pile above the fork



**IDDSI Fork Drip Test**  
Liquid does **not** dollop, or drip continuously through the fork prongs

A small amount may flow through and form a tail below the fork



### IDDSI Spoon Tilt Test

Sample holds its shape on the spoon and falls off fairly easily if the spoon is tilted or lightly flicked

Sample should **not** be firm or sticky

**Extremely Thick drink or liquid must pass both tests!**

Intended for general information only

Please consult with your health care professional for specific advice for your baby or child



# 4 PUREED



For safety, **AVOID** these food textures that pose a choking risk for babies and children who need Level 4 Pureed food

Food characteristic to AVOID	Examples of foods to AVOID
<b>Mixed thin + thick textures</b>	Soup with pieces of food, cereal with milk
<b>Hard or dry food</b>	Nuts, raw vegetables (e.g. carrot, cauliflower, broccoli), dry cakes, bread, dry cereal
<b>Tough or fibrous foods</b>	Steak, pineapple
<b>Chewy</b>	Lollies/candies/sweets, cheese chunks, marshmallows, chewing gum, sticky mashed potato, dried fruits, sticky foods
<b>Crispy</b>	Crackling, crisp bacon, cornflakes
<b>Crunchy food</b>	Raw carrot, raw apple, popcorn
<b>Sharp or spiky</b>	Corn chips and crisps
<b>Crumbly bits</b>	Dry cake crumble, dry biscuits
<b>Pips, seeds</b>	Apple seeds, pumpkin seeds, white of an orange
<b>Food with skins or outer shell</b>	Peas, grapes, chicken skin, salmon skin, sausage skin
<b>Foods with husks</b>	Corn, shredded wheat, bran
<b>Bone or gristle</b>	Chicken bones, fish bones, other bones, meat with gristle
<b>Round, long shaped food</b>	Sausage, grape
<b>Sticky or gummy food</b>	Nut butter; overcooked oatmeal/porridge, edible gelatin, konjac containing jelly, sticky rice cakes
<b>Stringy food</b>	Beans, rhubarb
<b>Floppy foods</b>	Lettuce, cucumber, uncooked baby spinach leaves
<b>Crust formed during cooking or heating</b>	Crust or skin that forms on food during cooking or after heating, for example, cheese topping, mashed potato
<b>'Floppy' food</b>	Lettuce, cucumber, baby spinach leaves
<b>'Juicy' food</b>	Where juice separates from the food piece in the mouth, for example watermelon
<b>Visible lumps</b>	Lumps in pureed food or yoghurt
<b>Extra Clinician notes</b>	

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



# 4 PUREED



## Level 4 Pureed Food for Babies and Children

### What is this food texture level?

Level 4 – Pureed Foods:

- ✓ Are usually eaten with a spoon
- ✓ Do **not** require chewing
- ✓ Have a smooth texture with no lumps
- ✓ Hold shape on a spoon
- ✓ Fall off a spoon in a single spoonful when tilted
- ✓ Are NOT sticky
- ✓ Liquid (like sauces) must not separate from solids



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

Level 4 – Pureed Food may be used if your child is not able to bite or chew food or if your child’s tongue control is reduced. Pureed foods only need the tongue to be able to move forward and back to bring the food to the back of the mouth for swallowing.

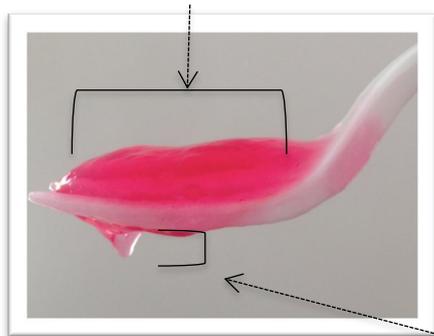
It’s important that puree foods are not too sticky because this can cause the food to stick to the cheeks, teeth, roof of the mouth or in the throat. Pureed foods are best eaten using a spoon.

### How do I test my food to make sure it is Level 4 Pureed?

It is safest to test Pureed Food using the IDDSI Fork Drip Test **and** the IDDSI Spoon Tilt Test.

See videos of the IDDSI Fork Drip Test and IDDSI Spoon Tilt Test at [www.IDDSI.org/framework/food-testing-methods/](http://www.IDDSI.org/framework/food-testing-methods/)

Extremely thick liquids sit in a mound or pile above the fork



#### IDDSI Fork Drip Test

Liquid does **not** dollop, or drip continuously through the fork prongs

A small amount may flow through and form a tail below the fork



#### IDDSI Spoon Tilt Test

Sample holds its shape on the spoon and falls off fairly easily if the spoon is tilted or lightly flicked

Sample should **not** be firm or sticky

**Pureed food must pass both tests!**

Intended for general information only

Please consult with your health care professional for specific advice for your baby or child



# 5 MINCED & MOIST



## Level 5 Minced & Moist Food for Babies and Children

### What is this food texture level?

Level 5 – Minced & Moist Foods:

- ✓ Soft and moist, but with no liquid leaking/dripping from the food
- ✓ Biting is **not** required
- ✓ Minimal chewing required
- ✓ Lumps of 2mm in size
- ✓ Lumps can be mashed with the tongue
- ✓ Food can be easily mashed with just a little pressure from a fork
- ✓ Should be able to scoop food onto a fork, with no liquid dripping and no crumbs falling off the fork



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

Level 5 – Minced & Moist food may be used if your child is not able to bite off pieces of food safely but has some beginner or basic chewing ability. Children may be able to bite off a large piece of food but may not be able to chew it down into little pieces that are safe to swallow. Minced & Moist foods only need a small amount of chewing and for the tongue to ‘collect’ the food into a ball and bring it to the back of the mouth for swallowing. It’s important that Minced & Moist foods are not too sticky because this can cause the food to stick to the cheeks, teeth, roof of the mouth or in the throat. These foods are eaten using a spoon or fork.

### How do I test my food to make sure it is Level 5 Minced & Moist?

It is safest to test Minced & Moist food using the IDDSI Fork Drip Test **and** the IDDSI Spoon Tilt Test.

See videos of the IDDSI Fork Test and IDDSI Spoon Tilt Test at [www.IDDSI.org/framework/food-testing-methods/](http://www.IDDSI.org/framework/food-testing-methods/)

**IDDSI Fork Test**

For *children* the lump size is **2mm**, which is about half the gap between the prongs of a standard dinner fork

**ADULT 4mm**  
**CHILD 2mm**

**IDDSI Spoon Tilt Test**

Sample holds its shape on the spoon and falls off fairly easily if the spoon is tilted or lightly flicked

Sample should **not** be firm or sticky

*Minced & Moist food must pass both tests!*



# 5 MINCED & MOIST

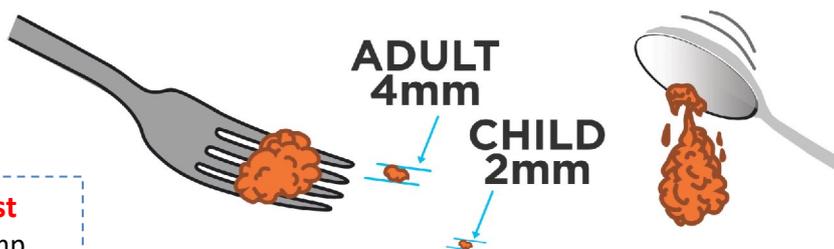


## EXAMPLES of Level 5 Minced & Moist Food for Babies and Children

- \* **Meat** served finely minced or chopped to 2mm lump size served in a thick, smooth, non-pouring sauce or gravy
- \* **Fish** served finely mashed or chopped to 2mm lump size served in a thick, smooth, non-pouring sauce or gravy
- \* **Fruit** served finely mashed or use a blender to finely chop it into to 2mm lump size pieces (drain any excess liquid)
- \* **Vegetables** cooked, finely mashed or use a blender to finely chop it into to 2mm lump size pieces (drain any excess liquid)
- \* **Cereal** served thick with small soft 2mm lumps. Any milk/fluid should not separate from the cereal. Drain any excess liquid before serving
- \* **Rice** requires a sauce to moisten it and hold it together. Rice should *not* be sticky or gluey, and should *not* separate into individual grains when cooked and served. May require a thick, smooth, non-pouring sauce to moisten and hold the rice together
- \* **NO REGULAR DRY BREAD** due to high choking risk!  
See <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0I9FDjwJR0L5svIGCvIqHA/featured?reload=9> for instructions on how to make a Level 5 Minced & Moist sandwich



See videos of the IDDSI Fork Test and IDDSI Spoon Tilt Test at [www.IDDSI.org/framework/food-testing-methods/](http://www.IDDSI.org/framework/food-testing-methods/)



### IDDSI Fork Test

For *children* the lump size is *2mm*, which is about half the gap between the prongs of a standard dinner fork

### IDDSI Spoon Tilt Test

Sample holds its shape on the spoon and falls off fairly easily if the spoon is tilted or lightly flicked  
Sample should *not* be firm or sticky

**Minced & Moist food must pass both tests!**



# 5 MINCED & MOIST



For safety, **AVOID** these food textures that pose a choking risk for babies and children who need Level 5 Minced & Moist Food

Food characteristic to AVOID	Examples of foods to AVOID
<b>Mixed thin + thick textures</b>	Soup with pieces of food, cereal with milk
<b>Hard or dry food</b>	Nuts, raw vegetables (e.g. carrot, cauliflower, broccoli), dry cakes, bread, dry cereal
<b>Tough or fibrous foods</b>	Steak, pineapple
<b>Chewy</b>	Lollies/candies/sweets, cheese chunks, marshmallows, chewing gum, sticky mashed potato, dried fruits, sticky foods
<b>Crispy</b>	Crackling; crisp bacon, cornflakes
<b>Crunchy food</b>	Raw carrot, raw apple, popcorn
<b>Sharp or spiky</b>	Corn chips and crisps
<b>Crumbly bits</b>	Dry cake crumble, dry biscuits
<b>Pips, seeds</b>	Apple seeds, pumpkin seeds, white of orange
<b>Food with skins or outer shell</b>	Peas, grapes, chicken skin, salmon skin, sausage skin
<b>Foods with husks</b>	Corn, shredded wheat, bran
<b>Bone or gristle</b>	Chicken bones, fish bones, other bones, meat with gristle
<b>Round, long shaped food</b>	Sausage, grape
<b>Sticky or gummy food</b>	Nut butter, overcooked oatmeal/porridge, edible gelatin, konjac containing jelly, sticky rice cakes
<b>Stringy food</b>	Beans, rhubarb
<b>Floppy foods</b>	Lettuce, cucumber, uncooked baby spinach leaves
<b>Crust formed during cooking or heating</b>	Crust or skin that forms on food during cooking or after heating, for example cheese topping, mashed potato
<b>'Floppy' food</b>	Lettuce, cucumber, baby spinach leaves
<b>'Juicy' food</b>	Where juice separates from the food piece in the mouth, for example watermelon
<b>Large or hard lumps of food</b>	Casserole pieces larger than 2mm x 2mm x 8mm; fruit, vegetable, meat or other food pieces larger than 2mm x 2mm x 8mm
<b>Extra Clinician notes</b>	

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



# 6

# SOFT & BITE-SIZED



## Level 6 Soft & Bite-Sized for Babies and Children

### What is this food texture level?

Level 6 – Soft & Bite-Sized Foods:

- ✓ Soft, tender and moist, but with no thin liquid leaking/dripping from the food
- ✓ Ability to ‘bite off’ a piece of food is *not* required
- ✓ Ability to chew ‘bite-sized’ pieces so that they are safe to swallow *is required*
- ✓ ‘Bite-sized’ pieces no bigger than 8mm x 8mm in size
- ✓ Food can be mashed/broken down with pressure from fork
- ✓ A knife is *not* required to cut this food



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

Level 6 – Soft & Bite-Sized food may be used if your child is not able to bite off pieces of food safely but is able to chew bite-sized pieces down into little pieces that are safe to swallow. Soft & Bite-Sized foods need a moderate amount of chewing, for the tongue to ‘collect’ the food into a ball and bring it to the back of the mouth for swallowing. The pieces are ‘bite-sized’ to reduce choking risk. If you notice the food pieces are not being chewed well though, please contact your clinician to make sure your child is on the correct food texture to reduce choking risk. Soft & Bite-Sized foods are eaten using a fork, spoon or chopsticks.

### How do I test my food to make sure it is Level 6 Soft & Bite-Sized?

It is safest to test Soft & Bite-Sized food using the IDDSI Fork Pressure test.

See videos of the IDDSI Fork Pressure Test at [www.IDDSI.org/framework/food-testing-methods/](http://www.IDDSI.org/framework/food-testing-methods/)

#### IDDSI Fork Pressure Test

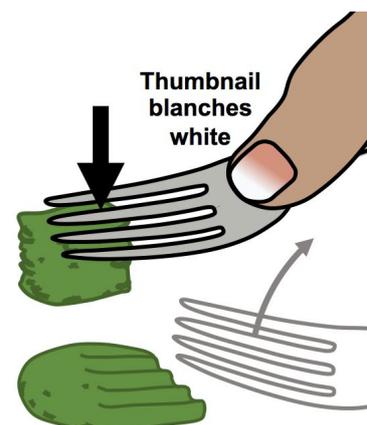
For *children* the lump size is no bigger than **8mm x 8mm**, which is about *half of the width* of a standard dinner fork.

**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

No bigger than 8mm x 8mm lump size for children



**Soft & Bite-Sized food must pass both size and softness tests!**





# 6

# SOFT & BITE-SIZED



## EXAMPLES of Level 6 Soft & Bite-Sized Food for Babies and Children

- \* **Meat** cooked tender and chopped to no bigger than 8mmx8mm lump size.  
If cannot serve soft and tender, serve as Minced and Moist
- \* **Fish** cooked soft enough to break and serve in pieces no bigger than 8mmx8mm
- \* **Fruit** soft and chopped to pieces no bigger than 8mmx8mm pieces (drain any excess liquid). Do not use the fibrous parts of fruit (for example, the white parts of an orange). Be extra careful to watch when children are eating fruit with a high water content, where the juice separates from the solid in the mouth during chewing (for instance, fruits like watermelon or other melons)
- \* **Vegetables** steamed or boiled with final cooked size of pieces no bigger than 8mmx8mm. (Stir fried vegetables are *too firm* and are *not* suitable)
- \* **Cereal** served with pieces no larger than 8mmx8mm, with their texture fully softened. Drain excess liquid before serving
- \* **NO REGULAR DRY BREAD** due to high choking risk!  
See <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0I9FDjwJR0L5svIGCvIqHA/featured?reload=9> for instructions on how to make a Level 5 Minced & Moist sandwich, as this is also suitable for use on Soft & Bite-Sized diet
- \* **Rice** requires a sauce to moisten it and hold it together. Rice should *not* be sticky or gluey and should *not* separate into individual grains when cooked and served. May require a thick, smooth, non-pouring sauce to moisten and hold the rice together



See videos of the IDDSI Fork Pressure Test at [www.IDDSI.org/framework/food-testing-methods/](http://www.IDDSI.org/framework/food-testing-methods/)

### IDDSI Fork Pressure Test

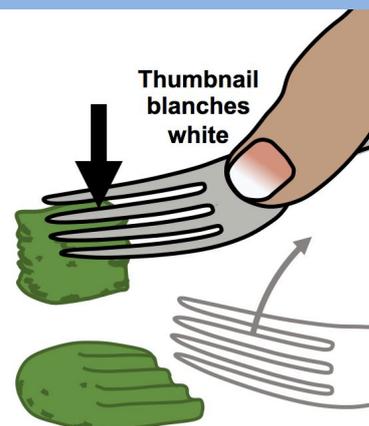
For **children** the lump size is no bigger than **8mm x 8mm**, which is about **half of the width** of a standard dinner fork.

**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

No bigger than 8mm x 8mm lump size for children



**Soft & Bite-Sized food must pass both size and softness tests!**





# 6 SOFT & BITE-SIZED



For safety, **AVOID** these food textures that pose a choking risk for babies and children who need Level 6 Soft & Bite-Sized Food

Food characteristic to AVOID	Examples of foods to AVOID
<b>Mixed thin + thick textures</b>	Soup with pieces of food, cereal with milk
<b>Hard or dry food</b>	Nuts, raw vegetables (e.g. carrot, cauliflower, broccoli); dry cakes, bread, dry cereal
<b>Tough or fibrous foods</b>	Steak; pineapple
<b>Chewy</b>	Lollies/candies/sweets, cheese chunks, marshmallows, chewing gum, sticky mashed potato, dried fruits, sticky foods
<b>Crispy</b>	Crackling, crisp bacon, cornflakes
<b>Crunchy food</b>	Raw carrot, raw apple, popcorn
<b>Sharp or spiky</b>	Corn chips and crisps
<b>Crumbly bits</b>	Dry cake crumble, dry biscuits (add sauce to make these suitable)
<b>Pips, seeds</b>	Apple seeds, pumpkin seeds, white of orange
<b>Food with skins or outer shell</b>	Peas, grapes, chicken skin, salmon skin, sausage skin
<b>Foods with husks</b>	Corn, shredded wheat, bran
<b>Bone or gristle</b>	Chicken bones, fish bones, other bones, meat with gristle
<b>Round, long shaped food</b>	Sausage, grape
<b>Sticky or gummy food</b>	Nut butter, overcooked oatmeal/porridge, edible gelatin, konjac containing jelly, sticky rice cakes
<b>Stringy food</b>	Beans, rhubarb
<b>Floppy foods</b>	Lettuce, cucumber, uncooked baby spinach leaves
<b>Crust formed during cooking or heating</b>	Crust or skin that forms on food during cooking or after heating, for example, cheese topping; mashed potato
<b>'Floppy' food</b>	Lettuce, cucumber, baby spinach leaves
<b>'Juicy' food</b>	Where juice separates from the food piece in the mouth, for example watermelon
<b>Large or hard lumps of food</b>	Casserole pieces larger than 8mm x 8mm, fruit, vegetable, meat or pasta or other food pieces larger than 8mm x 8mm
<b>Extra Clinician notes</b>	

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



# 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

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

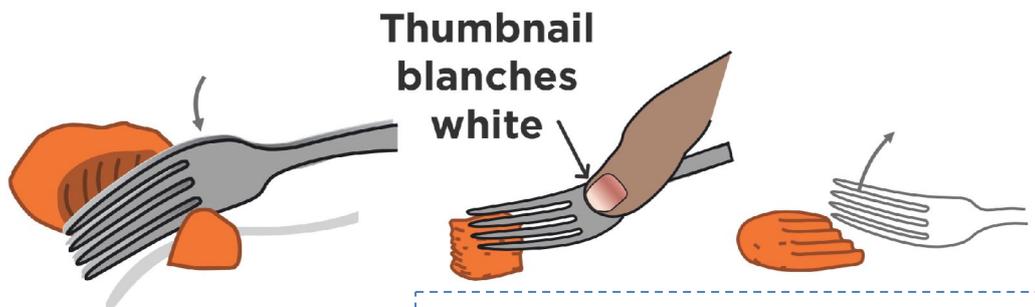
### How do I test my food to make sure it is Level 7 Regular *Easy to Chew*?

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/](http://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



# 7 REGULAR EASY TO CHEW

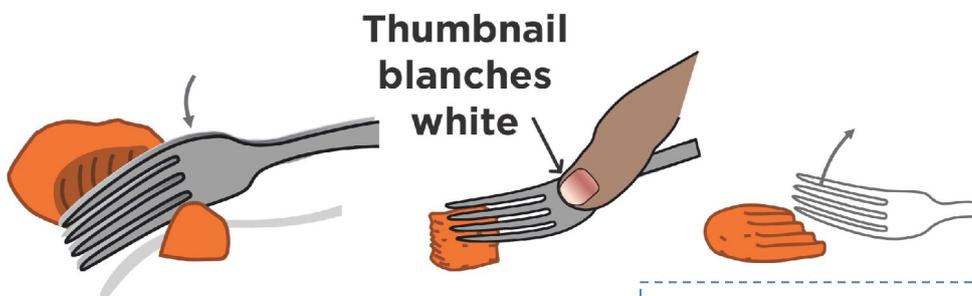


## EXAMPLES of Level 7 Regular *Easy to Chew* food for Babies and Children

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

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# 7 REGULAR



## Level 7 Regular for Babies and Children

### What is this food texture level?

Level 7 – Regular Foods:

- ✓ Normal, everyday foods of various textures that are appropriate to your child’s development (have teeth, has chewing skills)
- ✓ Ability to ‘bite off’ pieces of food is required
- ✓ Chewing ability is required for hard *and* soft food
- ✓ Ability to chew all types of food textures without tiring easily
- ✓ Includes ‘mixed consistency’ foods (for example, cereal with milk or soup with vegetables pieces)
- ✓ Includes sandwiches



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

Level 7 – Regular food may be used if your child **does not** have problems with chewing or swallowing that would increase their risk for choking. Serve food as normal. For young children cut food into pieces that are appropriate for your child’s age. 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 below.

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. See local guidelines for what to do in case of choking.

### How do I test my food to make sure it is Level 7 Regular?

There are no specific tests for Level 7 Regular

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

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

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# TRANSITIONAL FOODS



## Transitional Foods for Babies and Children

### What is this food texture level?

Transitional Foods:

- ✓ Foods that start as one texture but change into another texture when moisture like water or saliva is added or when a change in temperature occurs (for instance, when the food is heated)
- ✓ Biting is not required
- ✓ Minimal chewing is required
- ✓ Tongue pressure can be used to break these foods once the texture has been changed by moisture/saliva or temperature
- ✓ May be used to teach chewing skills



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

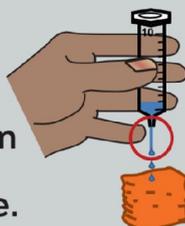
Transitional food may be used to help teach chewing skills. These foods require very little chewing. Tongue strength alone is able to break these foods down when they are softened. Transitional foods often do not have much nutrition so they cannot be relied on for a full diet. Your clinician might suggest they be used together with Level 5 Minced & Moist, Level 6 Soft & Bite-Sized or Level 7 Regular Foods.

### How do I test my food to make sure it is Transitional food?

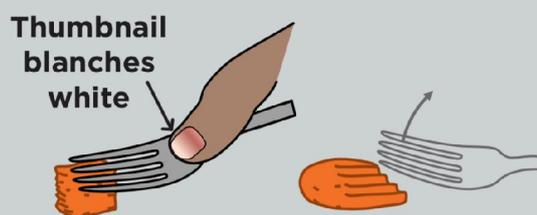
To test transitional food, use a piece of food 1.5x1.5cm. Add 1 mL of water to the food and wait for one minute for the food to soften, then test using the IDDSI Fork Pressure Test. Serve food pieces in the size recommended by your clinician.

See videos of the IDDSI Fork Pressure Test at [www.IDDSI.org/framework/food-testing-methods/](http://www.IDDSI.org/framework/food-testing-methods/)

1. Add 1mL of water to 1.5cm x 1.5cm sample and wait 1 minute.



2. Then complete the IDDSI Fork Pressure Test.



#### IDDSI Fork Pressure Test for Transitional Food

Take a piece 1.5cmx1.5cm, which is about the width of a standard dinner fork. Add 1 mL of water to the sample and wait 1 minute. *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, broken apart, and does not regain its shape

#### Some examples of Transitional foods include:

Wafers, shortbread, Veggie Stix™, potato crisps, Cheeto Puffs™, Rice Puffs™, ice chips, ice cream

Intended for general information only.

Please consult with your health care professional for specific advice for your baby or child



**5 MINCED & MOIST**

**6 SOFT & BITE-SIZED**



**When can you change from Baby and Child food piece sizes to Adult food piece sizes?**



IDDSI recommends using food pieces that are smaller for babies and children and larger food pieces for teenagers and adults. This is because babies and children’s airways are smaller than adult airways. The smaller size of food pieces is to help reduce the risk of a piece of food fully blocking the airway and causing choking.

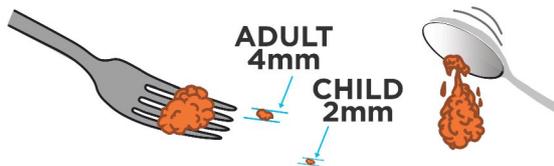


Changes to the size of food pieces is based on the size of your child, as well as their ability to chew food. During puberty children can grow to

close to adult size. Puberty can be used as a guide to change the size of food pieces, but you must check with your clinician to ensure your child has the chewing ability to manage bigger size food pieces. You can also check with your doctor for their advice on when your child is big enough to change to IDDSI adult food piece sizes. Remember to always supervise children of any age when they are eating.



**5 MINCED & MOIST**

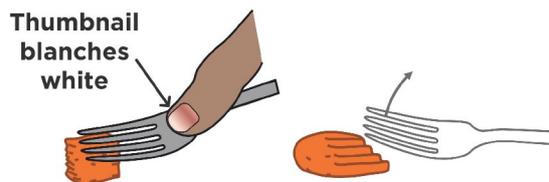


No bigger than 8mm x 8mm lump size for children

No bigger than 1.5cm x 1.5cm bite size for adults



**6 SOFT & BITE-SIZED**



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## What is the IDDSI Framework?

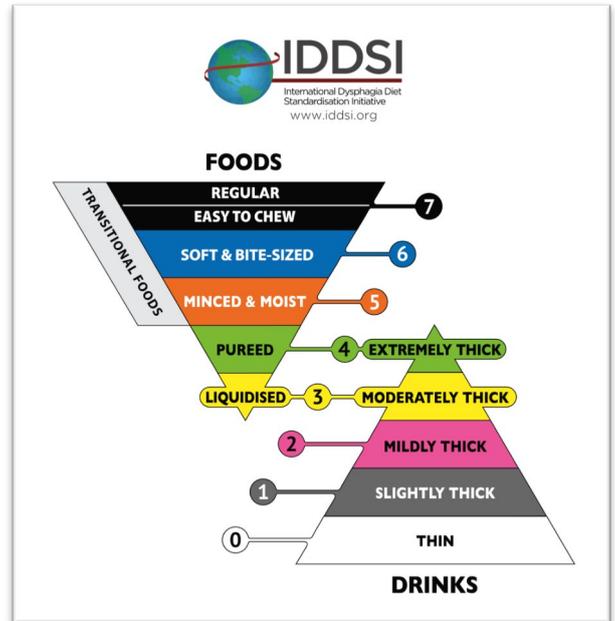
Some people have problems feeding, chewing or swallowing. This means some foods and drinks are a danger for choking or for material to 'go down the wrong way' and into the airway.

The International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative (IDDSI), through consultation and following best practice principles, has developed a global standardized way of describing foods and drinks that are safest for people with feeding, chewing or swallowing problems. The Framework can be used for people of all ages, in all care settings and can be applied to all cultures.

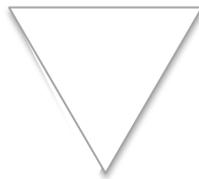
Simple measurement methods are included in the Framework. These measurement methods confirm the IDDSI Level a food or drink belongs to, or if it is unsafe for people with feeding, chewing or swallowing problems.

The measurement methods are included on our handouts. We created these handouts in consultation with clinicians and patients. The handouts can be used by people who have feeding, chewing or swallowing problems, their caregivers and clinicians.

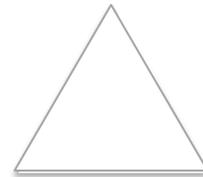
You can find out more about IDDSI at [www.iddsi.org](http://www.iddsi.org)



My IDDSI food level is



My IDDSI drink level is



Clinician's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Clinician's Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

