

USIRG's Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)



TOPIC: Sauces, Gravies, and Condiments

Question: How do we use sauces, gravies, and condiments when serving any [IDDSI](#) level?

ANSWER: When we process and hold food, we often lose moisture and must add moisture back in to help foods pass the [IDDSI Testing Methods](#). Sauces, gravies, and condiments may be added at point-of-service too.

- Sauces and gravies can provide moisture, flavor, and nutrition.
- Characteristics of a sauce or gravy:
 - Adhere to or be incorporated into foods to make them moist and cohesive
 - Bind to foods to make the bolus slippery and easier to swallow
 - Prevent dry and crumbly textures
- [IDDSI Framework](#) outlines:
 - All levels from Pureed, Level 4 through Easy to Chew, Level 7 benefit from having sauces, gravies, and condiments.
 - Pureed, Level 4 and Minced & Moist, Level 5 have **smooth** sauces and gravies with no lumps.
 - Soft & Bite-Sized, Level 6 has **sauces and gravies that may have soft lumps with particle sizes** no larger than 1.5cm (15mm) for adults and 8mm for pediatrics.
 - Easy to Chew, Level 7; Soft & Bite-Sized, Level 6; and Minced & Moist, Level 5 solids can be served **"in mildly, moderately or extremely thick smooth sauce or gravy AND drain excess liquid."**
 - **"No thin liquid should separate from food."**
- The sauce and gravy may be problematic if it is a liquid that separates from the food.
- Use the IDDSI Testing Method, such as the [Spoon Tilt Test and the Fork Drip Test](#).

Question: Do we thicken gravy?

ANSWER:

- Some sauce or gravy may need to be thickened to be incorporated into the food product effectively. Thin liquid should not separate out.
- If you are unsure if the gravy needs to be thickened more or less, use the [IDDSI Testing Methods](#).

NOTE: For the liquids and broths in foods such as: fruit cocktails, cold cereals, and soups, please refer to the **USIRG FAQ on "Exceptions: Breads and Mixed Consistencies"** in [the USIRG chart](#).

Per the [IDDSI Framework](#): *"The IDDSI Framework provides a common terminology to describe food textures and drink thickness. IDDSI tests are intended to confirm the flow or textural characteristics of a particular product at the time of testing. Testing should be done on foods and drinks under the intended serving conditions (especially temperature). The clinician has the responsibility to make recommendations for foods or drinks for a particular patient based on their comprehensive clinical assessment."* (pg 2)