FAQ Category: Foods

Q: I’ve not heard of transitional foods before, what are they?

A: Transitional foods are used predominantly used by paediatric clinicians or clinicians who work with individuals with developmental disability. They refer to foods or substances that change quickly to become easier to chew or swallow with added moisture or a change in temperature. For example, items such as ice cream wafers or some potato crisps are firm in their original state but when moisture (e.g. water or saliva) is added, they break down quickly and easily with tongue to palate pressure. Chewing can be achieved with reduced effort and less likelihood of fatigue. Ice chips also fall into this category, starting as firm solids that are slippery and easy to swallow, but melting at body temperature. Similarly, ice cream or gelatin-based jellies may be firm when served at room temperature but melt quickly in the mouth to a liquid consistency. In Japan, locust-bean or carrageenan based Dysphagia Japanese Training Jelly is firm yet slippery to facilitate swallowing. Often these foods or substances are introduced as a first step in the process of advancing towards more challenging textures or are used for therapeutic rehabilitation of chewing or swallowing due to their unique textural qualities (Gisel 1991; Dovey et al., 2013).

Examples:

- Cheese puffs
- Wafers

References: