

## Department of Nutrition and Dietetics

# Pureed Diet

### For those who have difficulty chewing and swallowing solid food

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dietitian: \_\_\_\_\_

If you are under the care of a Speech and Language Therapist it is important that you follow the advice provided by them. Certain foods and fluids may not be appropriate depending on your swallowing ability i.e. more liquid foods or foods that melt to a liquid e.g. ice-cream or jelly. Speak with your Speech and Language Therapist if you are on thickened fluids, to check if these foods are suitable or not. It is also likely that you will need to sieve your food, after it has been pureed, to ensure there are no 'bits' in it at all. Likely foods will be cooked vegetables, peas, beans and pulses, fruit, soups and stews.

### Pureed Diet

If you have difficulty chewing or swallowing food, you may need a pureed diet. The aim of this advice booklet is to give ideas on what to eat to keep your meals a smooth consistency, advice on how to get the most out of your mealtimes and make them as enjoyable as possible. Many people find it difficult to keep their weight steady whilst eating a pureed diet. This advice sheet will give you ideas on how to make your meals as nourishing as possible, to help stop you losing weight and help you gain weight if you need to.

### Throughout the day these pureed foods need to provide:

- Calories - to help prevent weight loss and provide energy.
- Protein - for growth and repair of tissues/muscle.
- Vitamins and minerals - for protection and general good health.

If you have already been given advice by a speech therapist to thicken food and drinks, you must continue to follow their advice. If you are unsure, ask your dietitian or speech therapist.

## What should I have?

### High Calorie / Energy Rich Foods

Fat and sugar are concentrated sources of energy (calories). Try to add these to foods where possible – these will give you more energy, especially if you are losing weight or need to gain weight.

**Sugar / syrup** – add to drinks, cereals, puddings.

**Fats** – butter or margarine can be added to mashed potatoes and to vegetables before being liquidised. Cream can be added to soups, sauces, pureed fruit and puddings.

**Ice cream** – choose thick dairy cream types. Speak with your Speech and Language therapist if you are on thickened fluids, as ice cream may not be suitable.

**Cereals** – breakfast cereals for example, porridge (powdered), Weetabix, or Ready Brek can be made using extra milk or fortified milk. Add seedless jam, syrup or honey for extra calories. Ensure that the cereal is fully mixed with milk to a smooth consistency.

**Potatoes** – blended with extra fortified milk / cream. Add cheese, butter or margarine to increase calories.

**Ground/ flaked rice, semolina, custard or blancmange** – make using fortified milk, and add cream. Ensure these are fully pureed.

**Fruit and vegetables** – these are important to give a balanced diet. Fruit can be pureed e.g. mashed banana, or use fruit juice / squash with added vitamin C. Well-cooked vegetables can be liquidised and sieved. Avoid stringy or fibrous fruits and vegetables e.g. citrus fruit, rhubarb, pineapple, celery, asparagus, broccoli stalks, lettuce, runner beans etc. Also avoid fruit and vegetables with skins and pips e.g. peas, broad beans, sweetcorn and grapes etc.

Aim to have at least one glass of fruit juice or vitamin C drink daily to ensure adequate vitamin C intake.

If your intake of fruit and vegetables is small and you need a puree diet for a long time you may require a multi-vitamin supplement. Talk to your doctor or dietitian if you think you need a supplement.

### Protein foods: aim to have 3 – 4 servings daily

**Milk** – try to have 1 – 2 pints of full fat (blue top) milk daily. Use it in: drinks, puddings, sauces, cereals, whip-type desserts, soups, milkshakes.

**Fortified milk** – to add extra protein and calories add 4 tbsp of skimmed milk powder to one pint of full fat milk and then use like ordinary milk. Milk powder can also be stirred into drinks, porridge, soups, custard, rice pudding. It is best to mix the milk powder into a paste with some of the liquid before adding it to foods to avoid lumps.

**Cheese** – can be grated finely into soups, sauces and creamed potato. Ensure cheese is fully melted and mixed in (not stringy) or use soft cheese.

**Crème fraiche** – can be added to soups, puddings and sauces. Choose full fat to add more calories.

**Eggs** – beaten into milk for milk puddings, custard and sauces prior to cooking.

Always make sure when using eggs that they are thoroughly cooked.

**Meat, Poultry, Fish** – liquidise in gravy or sauces. Fish can be flaked into cheese or white sauce, before blending.

**Peas, beans and lentils** – liquidise on their own for soups or add to liquidised meat meals, and sieve to remove husks.

**Meat alternatives** – soya mince, Quorn, tofu can all be blended to a smooth consistency. These can be marinated first to give more flavour.

**Yoghurts/Mousses** – choose smooth options (avoid any containing ‘bits’). Try yoghurt drinks. Choose full fat rather than low fat / diet options to add more calories.

## Ideas for Meals

It is best to take small volumes of liquid or pureed food frequently e.g. every one to two hours, rather than trying to have large amounts at a time. Try to include as many sweet and savoury flavours as possible to keep your diet interesting.

### Breakfast

- Fruit juice or pureed fruit.
- Cereal e.g. porridge made with fortified milk, Weetabix softened in milk.
- Nutritious milk drink e.g. milkshake, milky coffee, yoghurt drinks.

### Main meal

#### Liquidised and sieved:

- Meat or vegetarian mince with gravy.
- Chilli con carne or spaghetti bolognese using meat or vegetarian mince.
- Fish with white sauce or butter sauce.
- Pork with apple sauce and gravy.
- Pureed potato, sweet potato or root vegetables. Cauliflower and/or broccoli cheese.

### Soups

Soups may need to be liquidised or sieved to remove lumps. Tinned or packet soups do not provide enough nutrients for a meal on their own, however they can be made more nourishing by using the following:

- By using milk or fortified milk instead of water to make up packet or condensed soups.
- Adding cream or evaporated milk to the soup, and ensure smooth consistency.
- Finely grating cheese into it.
- Adding a tablespoon of skimmed milk powder to creamy soups (mix the milk powder in cold water first to avoid lumps forming).
- Adding 2oz / 50g finely minced, cooked meat or chicken (pureed).

### Puddings

- Yoghurts – natural, French-style, Greek, set or fruit (smooth), thick and creamy, or fromage frais. Extra milk may be added to make it easier to swallow/ sip through a straw.
- Soft ice-cream (if suitable) or custard on its own or blended with tinned/ stewed sieved fruit.
- Ground or flaked rice pudding / semolina / sago.
- Instant desserts, custard made with extra milk / cream to make it runnier. Pureed fruit on its own or blend with cream/ evaporated milk/ condensed milk / custard.  
Baked egg custard (no pastry), crème caramel, pannacotte.  
Mousses – bought or home-made.

## Between Meals

It is important to eat little and often. The following food and drinks make nourishing in-between meal snacks: Milky drinks, custards, mousses, fruit juice, milk puddings, ice-cream, pureed fruit, yoghurt, yoghurt drinks, food supplements (sweet or savoury).

## Food Supplements

Food supplements may be appropriate if you are struggling to eat enough to meet your nutritional needs. Some food supplements can be bought over the counter in larger supermarkets, chemists and health food shops. These come as powder sachets, which are made into a drink or soup using milk or water e.g. Build Up (soups / shakes) or Complian (soups / shakes).

These are best taken in-between meals as taking them as a meal replacement can be counterproductive.

There are other supplements available which have to be prescribed by your doctor. Ask your dietitian if these supplements are appropriate/ which may be the best one for you. Check with your Speech and Language therapist whether or not you will need to thicken these drinks. please be aware that not all supplement drinks can be thickened.

## Helpful Hints

The consistency of food you are able to manage depends on how well you can swallow. A speech therapist can help advise you on the right consistencies for you. A liquidiser can blend meat, fish, beans and vegetables in gravy or sauce to a suitable consistency; if a thinner puree is required, use stock, sauce, milk or gravy rather than water as the liquid, to not dilute the calories.

It is best to blend meat or fish and vegetables individually and serve separately on the plate as this improves the meal's appearance. Alternatively, the meal can be blended together and served as a soup.

Drinks like water, tea and coffee provide very little nourishment and can fill you up so try milky drinks instead. Try not to drink just before a meal, as you may not be able to eat as much. Eat in a quiet, relaxed atmosphere and take your time.

Make sure that you swallow each mouthful before you take the next one. If you feel that some food is still at the back of your throat, swallow again before continuing.

If you are eating out, let the restaurant know in advance that you need a special diet and what your requirements are. If you know you take longer to eat then think about ordering a main course and ask for that while everyone else is eating the starter. You may then be ready for dessert at the same time as them.

## Equipment you will need

A food processor or liquidiser would be useful. A hand blender can be used for small quantities of food.

A masher or sieve and spoon can be used on some foods such as fruit, cooked vegetables or soup.

## Presentation

Make your meals look appealing by using foods that are different colours.  
Pale-coloured foods e.g. chicken or fish, look best served with brightly coloured vegetables e.g. carrots, sweet potato or broccoli.

## Thickening foods

Once you have blended your food, you may need to thicken it. You can use things like corn flour, custard powder, instant sauce or gravy granules.

## Flavours

Spices, lemon or lime juice, tomato ketchup, brown sauce, Worcestershire or soy sauce can help improve the flavour of foods.

You may find it easier to prepare food in bulk, divide into portions, then store in the freezer. Make sure that the food is defrosted completely before reheating thoroughly.

## Some foods do not puree well; these include:

- Bread.
- Very dry foods like cheese, meat without gravy / sauce, biscuits.
- Peas, green beans, baked beans, kidney beans and sweetcorn.

## Oral Hygiene

Even if you have difficulty eating, oral hygiene is still very important:

- Clean your teeth with fluoride toothpaste at least twice a day or after each meal.
- If you have dentures, clean them after every meal and soak them overnight in a suitable denture-cleansing solution.
- Food may taste unpleasant if your tongue becomes 'coated' and this may discourage you from eating. To clean your tongue, dissolve one teaspoonful of bicarbonate of soda in a pint of warm water, and softly brush with a soft / child's toothbrush.
- Ask your doctor or nurse about suitable mouthwashes. Many that you can buy contain alcohol that can make your mouth feel more uncomfortable; look for alcohol-free ones.
- There are also toothpastes available specially formulated for people with dry mouths – ask your pharmacist.
- If your lips become cracked or sore, apply a lip balm.

**If you have any comments about this leaflet or the service you have received you can contact :**

Department of Nutrition and Dietetics  
Dietetic Service Manager  
Dietetic Department

Calderdale Royal Hospital  
Tel: 01422 224267

or

Huddersfield Royal Infirmary  
Tel: 01484 342749

[www.cht.nhs.uk](http://www.cht.nhs.uk)

**If you would like this information in another format or language contact the above.**

Potřebujete-li tyto informace v jiném formátu nebo jazyce, obraťte se prosím na výše uvedené oddělení

Jeżeli są Państwo zainteresowani otrzymaniem tych informacji w innym formacie lub wersji językowej, prosimy skontaktować się z nami, korzystając z ww. danych kontaktowych

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برائے مہربانی مندرجہ بالا شعبے میں ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

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