

# Dysphagia Pureed Diet

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

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

Speech Language Pathologist: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupational Therapist: \_\_\_\_\_

## **What is Dysphagia?**

Some people have trouble swallowing when eating solid food and/or drinking liquids. When you have trouble swallowing, this is called 'dysphagia' (sounds like dis-fay-jah).

Signs of dysphagia include coughing, choking, gurgly voice, throat clearing, runny nose, teary eyes, increased trouble breathing, unexplained rise in body temperature, the feeling of food being stuck in your throat when you eat, leftover food in your mouth after swallowing, and/or trouble starting your swallow. Please note, however, that not everyone who has dysphagia shows these signs.

When you have dysphagia, you might need to change what and how you eat to make swallowing easier and safer.

A swallowing problem could cause food or liquid to go into the lungs. This is called 'aspiration' (sounds like ass-per-ay-shun). If you aspirate, you could get a lung infection such as pneumonia (sounds like new-moan-yah).

## **Which food texture is safest for me?**

We recommend you have a 'Dysphagia Pureed' diet. This means all foods should be pureed completely smooth. Food should not have any lumps or solid pieces. Food should be the consistency of applesauce, mashed potatoes, or pudding. Pureed foods do not need to be chewed.

Other diet recommendations:

---

---

---

## How do I prepare pureed foods?

You will need:

- A fork or potato masher to mash soft foods like ripe bananas or cooked potatoes
- A blender or food processor to puree other foods
- A fine-mesh strainer (optional)

### Directions:

1. Cook food until soft and tender.
2. Chop the food into small pieces.
3. Put into a blender or food processor.  
Fill the blender no more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  full.
4. Cover and puree until smooth. Add liquids, if needed.
5. Strain the food if there are still lumps or pieces of food remaining.
6. Check the consistency of the food:  
Make sure the pureed food is smooth.  
Pureed food should not separate into its solid and liquid parts.  
If you have been told to thicken fluids, you might need to thicken the pureed food.
7. Clean the blender and blades well with hot soapy water after each use and rinse well.
8. Refrigerate or freeze extra servings of pureed food in closed containers.  
Pureed foods can be kept in the refrigerator for 2 days.  
Single portions of pureed food can be frozen in the freezer for 2 to 3 months.

## What can I add to food to help puree?

To moisten foods:

Try adding...	To...	By...
gravy, broth, sauce, or cooking liquids	meat, poultry, pasta, rice, and casseroles	Using ¼ cup (125mL) liquid for each 3 ounces (90gm.)
Juice, milk, yogurt, or supplement drinks (e.g. Ensure <sup>®</sup> or Boost <sup>®</sup> )	bread, cereals, and desserts	Blending 1 to 2 tablespoons in at a time

To enhance flavours, add ground herbs, spices, smooth sauces, or condiments such as tomato sauce, ketchup, or mustard.

Foods that do not puree well: foods with skins, seeds, or tough membranes, fried foods, and overcooked or tough meats

## Can I buy pureed foods at the grocery store?

**Yes.** You can buy pre-packaged, pureed foods at grocery stores.

Some examples:

- pureed baby foods such as meat, vegetables, and fruit
- plain, vanilla, or other smooth flavoured yogurts
- instant oatmeal, Cream of Wheat<sup>®</sup>, or Pablum<sup>®</sup> cereal
- instant mashed potatoes
- pudding
- applesauce or other fruit sauces
- smooth hummus
- smooth pureed soups (e.g. cream of tomato, butternut squash, or carrot soup)

## **Can I buy convenience foods?**

Yes, but you will need to puree these foods.

Some examples include:

- Canned soups, stews, chili, beans, or pasta
- Frozen entrees (e.g. macaroni and cheese)
- Canned or frozen fruit and vegetables

## **What can I do to help make swallowing easier?**

- Keep distractions to a minimum by eating in a calm and quiet place.
- Remember to swallow before talking.
- Sit upright while eating.
- Take small bites and sips.
- Eat and drink slowly.
- Swallow your mouthful completely before taking another bite or sip.  
You might need extra swallows for each bite or sip.

## **Meal delivery options:**

---

---


---

## Dysphagia Pureed Foods

Note: If you have also been told to thicken fluids, please see the Thickened Fluids booklet for more on what drinks to choose.

Food Group	Foods to Choose	Foods to Avoid
<b>Milk and Alternatives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>plain or smooth, flavoured yogurt</li> <li>plain or smooth pudding</li> <li>cottage cheese if pureed</li> <li>melted cheese or cheese if used as an ingredient in pureed food</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>yogurt with nuts, seeds, or fruit</li> <li>all cheese including hard cheeses, soft cheeses, cheese spread, and cream cheese</li> </ul>
<b>Grain Products</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cooked refined cereals (e.g. instant oatmeal, Cream of Wheat®, Cream of Rice®, Pablum® cereal)</li> <li>pureed white bread, muffins, or pancakes</li> <li>pureed pasta or noodles</li> <li>pureed moist dressing/stuffing</li> <li>pureed rice or congee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cooked cereals or breads with bran, seeds, nuts, or fruits</li> <li>all dry cereals</li> <li>breads, pastries, other baked goods made with bran, seeds, nuts, or fruits</li> <li>French toast, waffles</li> <li>rice or pasta unless pureed</li> <li>pita bread, tortilla, naan, roti, chapatti</li> <li>crackers, melba toast, rice cakes, chips, popcorn, pretzels</li> </ul>
<b>Meat and Alternates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>pureed meats, poultry, or fish, if pureed smooth and holds its shape</li> <li>pureed scrambled eggs, egg salad, egg custard</li> <li>pureed legumes and lentils</li> <li>smooth hummus</li> <li>pureed tofu, egg tofu, silken soft tofu</li> <li>smooth peanut butter or nut butter only if used as an ingredient in pureed food</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>meat and alternatives that do not puree well, including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fried, battered, or breaded meats, poultry, or fish</li> <li>bacon, sausage, and wieners</li> <li>fried tofu</li> <li>meat or vegetarian patties that are dry and crumbly</li> </ul> </li> <li>hard and soft boiled eggs</li> <li>nuts and seeds</li> <li>peanut or nut butter, unless as specified</li> </ul>

Food Group	Foods to Choose	Foods to Avoid
<b>Fruits and Vegetables</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• applesauce and other pureed canned or soft fruit</li> <li>• pureed or mashed, ripe bananas, and ripe avocados</li> <li>• pureed stewed/cooked dried fruit</li> <li>• pureed canned or soft cooked vegetables</li> <li>• smooth mashed potatoes or pureed scalloped potatoes</li> <li>• saag (spinach curry)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fruits and vegetables that do not puree well, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- fruits with membranes or tough skins (e.g. pineapple)</li> <li>- juicy fruits</li> <li>- (e.g. oranges, watermelon, grapes, canned mandarins)</li> <li>- raw vegetables</li> <li>- stringy, tough or fibrous vegetables</li> <li>- (e.g. bok choy, gai lan, celery)</li> <li>- vegetables with skins (e.g. corn, lima beans)</li> <li>- fried potatoes or vegetables</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Soups, Mixed Dishes and Entrees</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pureed or strained soups, thickened to the recommended fluid consistency</li> <li>• pureed sandwiches made with white bread</li> <li>• pureed casseroles made with foods that puree smoothly and evenly (e.g. macaroni and cheese, tuna casserole)</li> <li>• pureed kichari (lentil and rice soup)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• soups or stews that are chunky and do not puree well (e.g. corn chowder)</li> <li>• sandwiches, burgers, and hot dogs that do not puree smoothly (e.g. cheese sandwich, cheeseburger)</li> <li>• casseroles and entrées that do not puree smoothly (e.g. breakfast casserole with sausage, chicken pot pie, pizza)</li> </ul>
<b>Desserts and Sweets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• desserts that are smooth or pureed (e.g. custard, puddings, mousses)</li> <li>• honey, jellies, sugars, syrups</li> <li>• pureed rice pudding or kheer (Indian rice pudding)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• desserts or baked goods with seeds, nuts, dried fruits, or a crumbly topping</li> <li>• desserts that are not smooth or pureed</li> <li>• tapioca, rice, and bread pudding</li> <li>• jam with seeds, marmalades</li> <li>• lotus paste</li> </ul>



If you have questions after leaving the hospital,  
Call 8-1-1 to speak to a Registered Dietitian.

For an interpreter, say your language in English.  
Wait until the interpreter comes on the phone.

*Adapted with permission: Vancouver Coastal Health FI.710.P87 Dysphagia Pureed Diet (April 2014)*

[www.fraserhealth.ca](http://www.fraserhealth.ca)

This information does not replace the advice given to you by your healthcare provider.

Catalogue #265446 (February 2017)

To order: [patienteduc@fraserhealth.ca](mailto:patienteduc@fraserhealth.ca)

