



Mersey and West Lancashire
Teaching Hospitals
NHS Trust

PATIENT INFORMATION

Soft & Bite-Sized Diet

A Guide to Safer Eating



Chewing and swallowing are actions we all take for granted. In reality these are complex but automatic processes which take place many times during the day. These actions may be affected by many different medical problems.

Problems with swallowing are known as **DYSPHAGIA**.

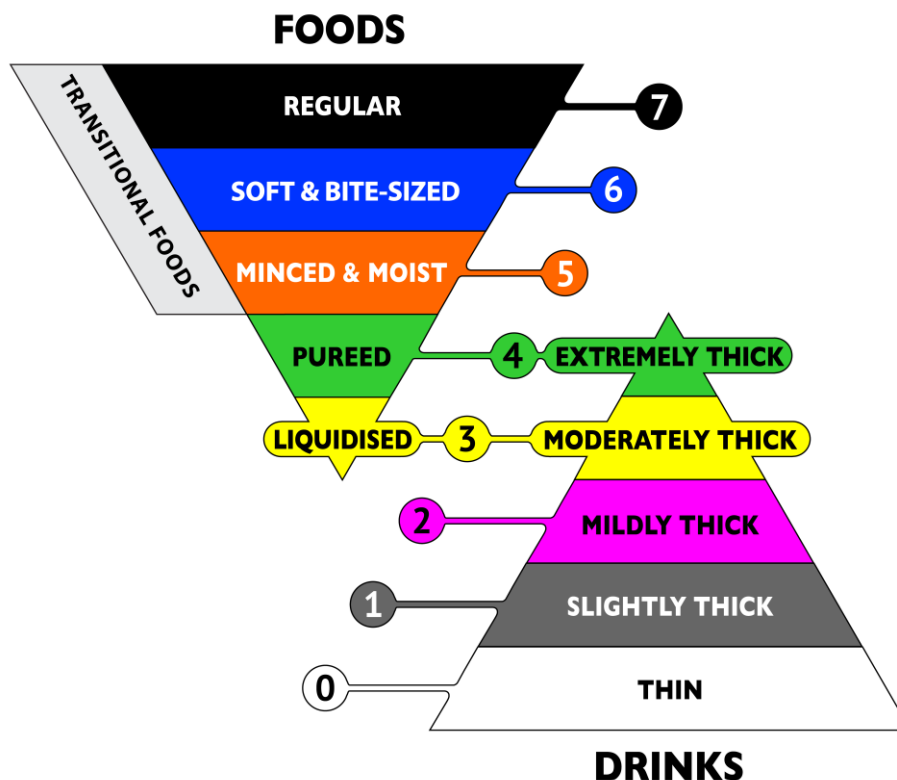
The advice in this leaflet will help you to eat more easily and safely.

Patient's Name

Date

Speech & Language Therapist

Tel No



Your Speech and Language Therapist has advised you to change the consistency of the food that you eat a “soft and bite-sized” diet.

This means that you need foods that:

- Are soft, tender and moist throughout but with no separate thin liquid
- Often served with thick sauces or gravies, but with no separate thin liquid
- Require chewing before swallowing
- Has been cut/broken down easily into small bite sized pieces – no bigger than 1.5 cm (for adults)

Food squashes when pressed with a fork and does not return to its original shape:



When serving food:

- It can be eaten with fork, spoon or chopsticks
- A knife is not required to cut this food

To prepare food in this way it should be:-

- Tender/well cooked with hard lumps/husks removed
- Diced (eg meat pieces no larger than 1.5cm)
- Often moistened with additional sauce/gravy/butter/cream

You will still be able to enjoy a wide variety of foods. This texture is modified only slightly from the foods you would normally eat, to reduce the risk of choking.

SOFT and BITE SIZED DIET	
Suitable	Unsuitable
<u>MEAT</u> : Cooked, tender meat, pieces no bigger than 1.5cm x 1.5cm.	Fat, gristle, bones, skin, pork pie, spare ribs, all tough meat, large pieces of meat
<u>FISH</u> : Softly cooked so it can be broken into small pieces easily with a fork, no bigger than 1.5cm x 1.5cm	Shellfish Skin and bones Watch out for breaded or battered fish which may be very crispy
<u>RICE</u> :	Not separate grains. Not grainy sticky or glutinous.

SOFT and BITE SIZED DIET	
Suitable	Unsuitable
<p><u>CASSEROLES/</u> <u>/STEWES/CURRY :</u> Liquid portion must be thick (as per S&LT fluid recommendations – refer to IDDSI levels 0 to 4. Can contain tender cooked meat, fish and/or vegetables if cut into small pieces (1.5 cm)</p>	<p>No hard lumps</p>
<p><u>FRUIT :</u> Serve mashed – pieces no bigger than 1.5cm x 1.5cm</p>	<p>Fibrous parts of fruit are not suitable Drain excess juice Beware of fruit with high water content (eg watermelon) where juice separates from solid in the mouth during chewing</p>
<p><u>VEGETABLES :</u> Steamed or boiled vegetables with pieces no bigger than 1.5cm x 1.5cm</p>	<p>Stir fried vegetables are too hard and are not soft or tender.</p>
<p><u>CEREAL :</u> Smooth with soft tender lumps no bigger than 1.5cm x 1.5cm.</p>	<p>Any excess milk or fluid must be drained.</p>

SOFT and BITE SIZED DIET	
Suitable	Unsuitable
The texture must be fully softened	
<u>BREAD and SPONGE:</u> No regular dry bread unless assessed as suitable by a Speech and Language Therapist on an individual basis.(if considered appropriate, bread must also conform to 1.5cm x 1.5cm	No regular dry bread unless assessed as suitable by a Speech and Language Therapist on an individual basis.(if considered appropriate, bread must also conform to 1.5cm x 1.5cm

IF YOU ARE UNSURE ABOUT THE SAFETY OF ANY FOOD, PLEASE CHECK WITH THE PERSON WHO GAVE YOU THIS LEAFLET.

Caution:

Some patients require their fluid to be thickened using a thickening agent. Please ensure any foods which have separate liquids, are thickened to the required textures.

SUGGESTIONS TO MAKE EATING AND DRINKING SAFER

- Position:** Make sure you are comfortable and relaxed
Sit as upright as possible whilst eating and drinking and for 30 minutes afterwards
Reduce distractions eg phone calls/TV when eating and drinking
- Timing:** Take time to enjoy your food and drink – don't rush
Do not worry about keeping up when eating and drinking with others
Try to eat and drink little and often – eat small, frequent meals and snacks
Avoid eating and drinking when tired
- Mouth Care:** It is essential to keep your mouth and teeth clean
- ask your Dentist/District Nurse for advice
 - make sure they are aware you have difficulty swallowing
- Medication:** You may need to take your usual medication in a different form eg syrup or soluble
- ask your Doctor/Pharmacist for advice

SPECIAL ADVICE FOR YOU

Your Speech and Language Therapist will advise you if you also need to adjust the thickness of drinks

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REASONS TO CONTACT YOUR SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPIST

- Frequent/reoccurring chest infections
- Coughing during or after eating and drinking
- Feeling of food getting stuck
- Difficulty swallowing your saliva
- Wet, gurgly voice following eating and drinking
- Tiring quickly when eating or meals take longer than 45 minutes
- Loss of appetite or interest in food and drink
- If you are unsure about any particular foods and drinks
- Weight changes

The Speech & Language Therapy Service cannot be held responsible for how patients/clients interpret and use this resource. Always consult your GP/relevant health professional if you have any health problems, comments or queries.

Contact details :

Southport and Ormskirk Hospital Trust

Medical and Surgical Team Speech and Language

Therapists 01704 704361

Stroke Therapy Speech and Language Therapists 01704
704940

Southport & Formby Community

01704 387215

Lancashire Care Foundation Trust

Adult Speech & Language Therapy

91 Zetland Street

Southport

PR9 9DL

West Lancashire Community: 0300 247 0011

Adult Speech and Language Therapy

Hilldale

Ormskirk Hospital

Wigan Road

Ormskirk

L39 2JW

During your contact with us, it is important that you are happy with your care and treatment. Please speak to a member of staff and/or the ward/department Sister/Charge Nurse if you have questions or concerns.

MATRON

A Matron is also available during the hours of 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. During these periods, ward/department staff can contact Matron to arrange to meet with you. Out of hours, a Senior Nurse can be contacted via the ward/department to deal with any concerns you may have.

INFECTION CONTROL REQUEST

Preventing infections is a crucial part of our patients' care. To ensure that our standards remain high our staff have regular infection prevention and control training and their practice is monitored in the workplace. We ask patients and visitors to assist us in preventing infections by cleaning their hands at regular intervals and informing staff of areas within the hospital that appear soiled.

As a patient there may be times that you are unsure whether a staff member has cleaned their hands; if in doubt please ask the staff member and they will be only too happy to put your mind at ease by cleaning their hands so that you can see them.

**Please call 01704 704714 if you need
this leaflet in an alternative format**

Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust

Ormskirk & District General Hospital
Wigan Road, Ormskirk, L39 2AZ
Tel: (01695) 577111

Southport & Formby District General Hospital
Town Lane, Kew, Southport, PR8 6PN
Tel: (01704) 547471

FOR APPOINTMENTS

Telephone (01695) 656680
Email soh-tr.appointments@nhs.net

We would welcome your feedback about your experience
at Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust.
Please access the Friends and Family Test at the following
link:

[https://www.southportandormskirk.nhs.uk/patients-and-
visitors/fft/](https://www.southportandormskirk.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/fft/)

Thank you

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