

Dysphagia Diet Consistencies (For People With Swallowing Problems)

Liquid Consistency

Thickened liquids should be smooth (without lumps, chunks or pulp) and be thickened to the following (checked) consistency.

Thin (level 0): Flows like water.

Examples include:

- milk
- juice
- coffee, tea
- soda, carbonated beverages
- ready-to-drink nutrition beverages.

Mildly thick (level 2): Pours quickly from a spoon but slower than thin liquids (consistency of apricot nectar).

Moderately thick (level 3): Pours from a spoon when tilted and does not stick to the spoon (thicker than mildly thick).

Extremely thick (level 4): Falls off spoon in a single spoonful when tilted and holds shape on a plate. Cannot be drank.

No solids that can melt in your mouth and become a thin liquid are allowed on a thickened liquids above level 0 diet (ice cream, sherbet, plain gelatin).

Food Consistency

Pureed (level 4)

- No chewing is needed (no lumps or sticky foods).
- Food falls off a spoon in a single spoonful when tilted and holds its shape on a plate.
- Liquids must not separate from solids.

Examples include:

- pudding
- mashed potatoes with thick gravy
- custard
- applesauce
- custard-style yogurt.

Minced and moist (level 5)

- Little chewing is needed.
- All foods must be soft and moist.
- All foods must be minced to 1/8-inch size (for adults) or able to fit between the prongs of a fork.
- Liquids must not separate from solids.

Examples include:

- canned, drained minced fruit (no pineapple)
- scrambled eggs
- well-cooked vegetables (no corn or peas)
- cottage cheese
- tuna and egg salad.

All of these foods must be minced to 1/8-inch size.

Soft and bite-size (level 6)

- Foods need to be chewed before swallowing.
- All foods must be soft and moist.
- Foods must be bite-size and no larger than 1/2 inch (for adults). **(over)**
- Liquids must not separate from solids.

Examples include:

- all foods on level 4 or level 5
- moist foods no larger than ½ inch in size
- pre-gelled (soaked) breads (recipe below).
Regular bread or bread-like products (cake, cookies) are **not** allowed.

Regular diet (level 7)

This diet has no restrictions.

Whom to Call With Questions

Call your dietitian or speech language pathologist (SLP) if you have questions about dysphagia diet consistencies.

Pre-gelled Bread

Makes 2 servings

Ingredients

1 tablespoon + 2 teaspoons vegetable broth
1 tablespoon gelatin powder
2 slices bread (any kind)
nonstick cooking spray

Directions

1. In a shallow pan, combine broth and gelatin. Stir.
2. Add bread to pan in a single layer. Allow to soak in gelatin mixture for 2 minutes. Use a spatula to flip bread and allow to soak for 1 more minute. Make sure bread is completely soaked in the gelatin mixture.
3. Spray another pan with nonstick cooking spray. Use a spatula to transfer soaked bread to prepared pan. Place in the refrigerator for 2 hours or until gelatin has set.
4. Remove from refrigerator and allow to sit at room temperature for 1 hour.
5. Enjoy!

