



# Liquidised Diet

This leaflet aims to answer your questions about having a liquidised diet recommended to you by your speech and language therapist. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to the speech and language therapist, GP or nurse caring for you.

## What is a liquidised diet?

Liquidised food is thinner than a thick puree. It is smooth and doesn't need to be chewed.

Most food can be liquidised by blending it with gravy, sauces, milk or water.

You can change the thickness of the liquidised diet by adding more or less liquid.

Most food can be liquidised using one of the following:

- Liquidiser
- Food processor
- Hand-held blender, ideal for small quantities
- Sieve, to push food through to remove pips, lumps and skin.

Liquidised food:

- Can be drunk from a cup
- Is usually eaten with a spoon – it will slowly drop through a fork in dollops
- Can be sucked through a standard or wide bore straw with some effort (wide bore straw = 0.75inch or 6.9mm)
- Can be poured
- Does **not** hold its shape on a plate or when scooped
- **Cannot** be piped, layered or moulded
- Has no lumps, fibres, shells or skin
- Is not sticky
- Requires no biting or chewing

This leaflet will help you to choose suitable food, adapt your own dishes and get the most nourishment from your meals. **Please note that baby food is NOT suitable for adults.**

## How do I liquidise food?

- Use strongly flavoured fresh ingredients, herbs and spices to give the liquidised food lots of flavour.
- Chop or mash the food by hand with a fork, then add a small amount at a time to a liquidiser and blend until all the lumps are removed.
- Add milk, water or sauce until the food is smooth. Add more fluid to make the diet a thin consistency.
- Puree with gravies, milks or stock – water will reduce the goodness in the food.
- Sieve to remove any remaining fragments of food.
- Don't mix different foods together – keep the flavours separate to give you a more pleasant meal.

- You can use food colourings or blend in beetroot, blackcurrants, blackberries or tomato puree to make your food look and taste better.

**If your food has cooled down or is taken from a frozen batch, make sure it is reheated to the right temperature.**

## How do I swallow liquidised food safely and comfortably?

- Sit upright in a chair while you eat and for at least half an hour afterwards, if you can.
- You should be awake and fully alert when you eat and drink. Try to make your mealtimes pleasant and relaxed.
- Only have one mouthful of food or fluid at a time. Swallow food and clear your mouth between mouthfuls. You may need to swallow twice.
- Don't rush mealtimes - take frequent pauses during the meal and take sips of fluid with your food
- If you feel something has gone down the wrong way, try to clear it with a cough and have a short break from eating and drinking. If this is happening frequently, please contact your speech and language therapist or GP.

At the end of each meal, make sure your mouth is empty and check for any food in your cheeks. If your speech and language therapist has already given you exercises or specific advice please follow this, and contact speech and language therapy if you need any further support or information.

## How do I make sure I have a balanced diet?

To get all the nutrients you need, make sure you include a wide variety of food in your meals and snacks each day.

Have some high protein food at every meal time, e.g. meat, chicken, fish, eggs, cheese, pulses, legumes, milk, yoghurt, nut pastes.

Stay well hydrated by sipping fluids throughout the day.

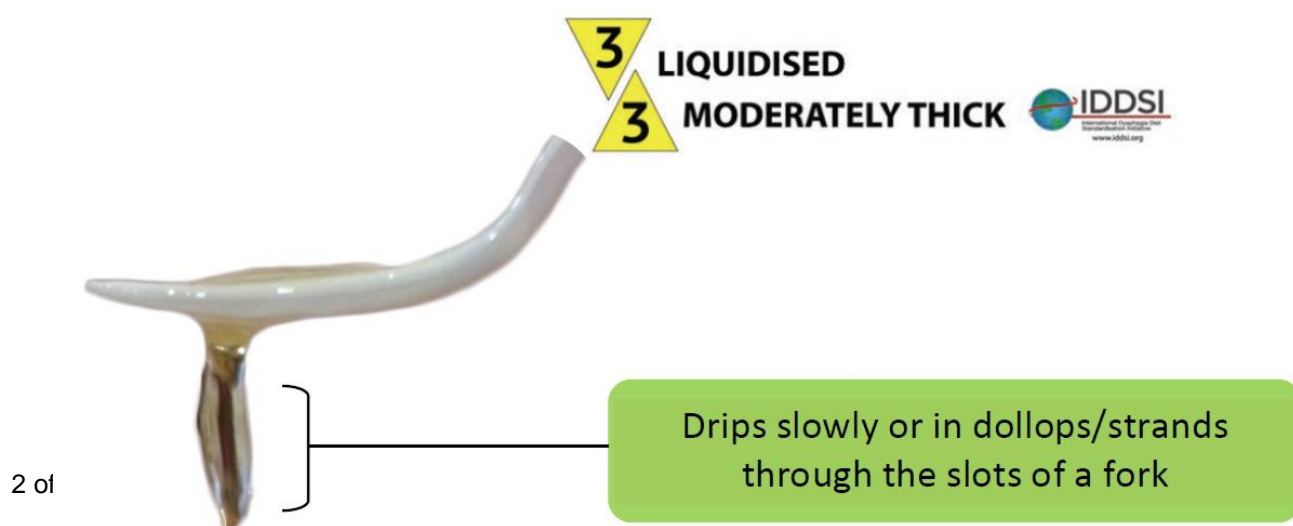
## What should I do if I'm not sure if a food fits the criteria?

We have given you some examples of foods that would fit the criteria, but if you are not sure there are a few tests you could try at home:

**IDDSI flow test:** Test liquid flows through a 10ml slip tip syringe leaving >8ml in the syringe after 10 seconds (see Syringe Test Guide\*)

**Fork pressure test:** The prongs of a fork do not make a clear pattern on the surface of the food as it is too thin.

**Fork drip test:** Drips slowly in dollops through the prongs of a fork.



**Spoon tilt test:** Easily pours from the spoon when tilted; does not stick to the spoon.

**Chopstick test:** Chopsticks are not suitable for this texture.

**Finger test:** It is not possible to hold a sample of this food texture using fingers, however, this texture slides smoothly and easily between the thumb and fingers, leaving a coating.

## Food examples

The following will provide a liquidised texture. Ensure any fluid examples below are thickened to the appropriate consistency as recommended by your speech and language therapist.

### Breads and cereals – for energy and fibre

Food	Choose	Avoid
<b>Breakfast cereals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not appropriate for this diet consistency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Porridge oats</li> <li>Muesli or cereals with clusters</li> <li>Weetabix</li> <li>All other cereals</li> </ul>
<b>Bread</b>	<b>Bread is not appropriate for this diet</b>	<b>All types of bread</b>
<b>Pasta</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overcooked pasta that is very soft. Add sauces e.g. tomato or cream, plus extra milk, cheese or cream, <b>then blend well until the whole dish is smooth and of a liquidised consistency</b></li> <li>Try adding liquidised sundried tomato, pesto, parmesan cheese or smoked liquidised ham and blend into the pasta</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any pasta that does not liquidise completely smooth</li> </ul>
<b>Rice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Liquidised risotto with plenty of sauce to ensure the right consistency</li> <li>Liquidised rice pudding with cream, jam or honey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grains of rice</li> </ul>
<b>Potatoes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potato can be blended to a liquidised consistency with added milk or cream</li> <li>Cook thoroughly then mash with margarine, milk and add to a blender or food processor. You may need to add extra milk to ensure a liquidised consistency</li> <li>Ensure the texture is smooth and get rid of any lumps</li> <li>Instant potato can also be used</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any potatoes cooked with crispy or hard parts that may not be liquidised completely smooth</li> </ul>

### Meat, fish and alternatives – for protein

Food	Choose	Avoid
<b>Meat</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All types of meat and poultry can be liquidised</li> <li>Cook until soft and remove any skin, bones, fat or gristle</li> <li>Liquidise stews, curries, casseroles etc. with extra sauce or add tinned soup, sauces, curry powder, wine, chutney, mustard, gravy or stock</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gristly, stringy, chewy, tough meat that may cause lumps</li> <li>Bacon</li> </ul>
<b>Fish</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frozen or tinned fish can be liquidised and thinned. Fresh fish is not advised due to the risk of bones.</li> <li>Cook until soft and then flake or mash the fish and blend into a liquidised consistency</li> <li>Blend with cheese sauce, parsley sauce, tomato sauce, condensed soup, mayonnaise, lemon juice etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fish with bones</li> </ul>
<b>Eggs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>NOT ADVISED</b></li> </ul>	
<b>Beans, pulses, lentils and nuts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skinless beans, pulses and lentils only, liquidised</li> <li>Tinned varieties may be softer and easier to blend</li> <li>Blend with a sauce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nuts should be avoided</li> <li>Beans, pulses and lentils with skins/husks</li> </ul>

### Dairy foods – for protein and calcium

Food	Choose	Avoid
<b>Milk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All types of milk if suited to your diet</li> <li>Milkshakes / flavoured milk</li> <li>Buttermilk, evaporated and condensed milk</li> <li>Ensure all of the above fluids are thickened as required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fruit smoothies with lumps of fruit</li> </ul>
<b>Cheese</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cheese sauces</li> <li>Soft cheeses, blended such as cottage cheese and ricotta with additional milk or cream to thin to a liquidised consistency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cheeses that contain nuts or fruit</li> <li>Cheeses which cannot be liquidised</li> </ul>
<b>Yoghurt</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Smooth yoghurt with no fruit pieces adding milk or cream as required to make a liquidised texture</li> <li>Set yoghurt, Greek yoghurt, fromage frais adding milk or cream as required to make a liquidised texture</li> <li>Yoghurt drink e.g. Actimel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yoghurt with fruit</li> </ul>
<b>Milk based desserts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cream, custard</li> <li>Tinned or packet puddings that are liquidised</li> <li>For flavour add nutmeg, cinnamon, jam, honey, chocolate powder or chocolate spread before blending</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Please note that ice cream, sorbet and jelly are not suitable for those on thickened fluids</b></li> </ul>

## Fruits and vegetables – for vitamins, minerals and fibre.

Food	Choose	Avoid
<b>Fruit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liquidised fruit, with all the skins, pips and pith, stones and skin removed</li> <li>• Add milk, cream or fruit juice to make it smooth and thin</li> <li>• Liquidised tinned or stewed fruit with fruit juice, syrup, cream, milk, yoghurt or evaporated or condensed milk</li> <li>• Liquidised cooked apple, pear or plums</li> <li>• Fruit fools, with no lumps</li> <li>• Thin fruit smoothies, well blended. No bits (see pg. 7)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stringy, fibrous textures that do not blend well e.g. pineapple</li> <li>• Fruit skins</li> </ul>
<b>Vegetables</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fresh tinned or frozen vegetables can all be liquidised once cooked</li> <li>• Peel and cut the vegetables into small pieces, remove seeds or skin, cook until soft, drain off any water and liquidise in a blender until smooth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fibrous, stringy vegetables like celery and cabbage</li> <li>• Vegetable skins e.g. broad beans, baked beans, soya beans</li> <li>• Husks</li> </ul>

**Some foods can be very difficult to swallow safely and may need extra care or be avoided all together.** Please contact your speech and language therapist for more advice.

**Soup:** all soup should be liquidised smooth with no lumps, strings or bits. You may need to sieve the soup to remove these. Make up condensed and packet soups with milk or cream.

## How can I make my liquidised meals look good?

Food that looks good helps with your appetite.

Liquidised food lacks texture and so can look boring, but you can improve this by:

### **Presentation**

Liquidise and serve different foods separately on the plate Garnish to liven up meals, try sprinkling with paprika or pepper.

Food should be eaten with a fork and should not drop between the prongs of the fork. This is a good way of checking that you have the right consistency for all your food.

### **Flavour**

Vary the flavours of meals by adding herbs, spices, lemon juice or sauces e.g. soy sauce, curry sauce, mint sauce or ketchup.

### **Colour**

Choose different coloured foods to make meals look good.

Try mixing brightly coloured vegetables with paler foods such as creamed potato and cheese.

### **Temperature**

Re-heat to the right temperature to make sure your food tastes good.

### **Potatoes and vegetables**

Add grated cheese, butter or margarine, milk, cream, sauces, or gravy to liquidised mashed potato or vegetables.

### **Desserts**

Try serving desserts in individual glasses and add sauces or cream or dust with chocolate sauce or icing sugar.

## Sample meal plan

### Breakfast

Fruit juice (with no seeds or bits, thickened as required)  
Liquidised fruit and yoghurt.

### Mid-morning

Milky coffee or tea (thickened as required)  
Milkshake (thickened as required)

### Lunch

Liquidised tinned mackerel with tomato sauce  
Pork liquidised with apple sauce  
Thin custard

### Mid-afternoon

Nourishing drink (see examples on page seven).

### Dinner

Smooth single consistency soup  
Liquidised beef stew or liquidised Bolognese sauce with vegetables.  
Liquidised rice pudding

### Before bed

Fruit smoothie or milkshake (see examples on page seven).

### What if I don't have time to liquidise?

Tinned, packet, frozen or boil in the bag **ready-to-eat meals** can be reheated according to the instructions and then blended. You may need to add fluid to make sure they are smooth and thin.

If you have a freezer, you may wish to **portion and freeze food:**

- Make up four - six servings of a dish and then divide it into portions
- Cool the food after cooking
- Put each portion into clean, empty yoghurt pots, margarine tubs or other plastic containers
- Label and date the containers
- Freeze immediately.

To eat, defrost portions thoroughly at room temperature or in the microwave and then reheat.

**Never re-freeze food once you have defrosted it and never reheat food more than once as this could cause food poisoning.**

## Is there anything else I need to know?

### Tips to help with a small appetite

If you have lost your appetite, had unintended weight loss or been advised by your dietitian to fortify your food, use the information below.

**Always follow your speech and language therapist's recommendations even when using this information.**

The extras may need to be added before the liquidising process or stirred in to achieve a smooth consistency.

You can add extra calories and protein to your food without increasing the amount.

To vegetables, add grated cheese, butter or margarine, salad dressings, sauces, salad cream, mayonnaise or oil.

To breakfast, add yoghurt, seedless jam, cream or honey.

To sauces, add yoghurt, cheese, margarine or butter, evaporated milk or cream.

To soups, add 1 tablespoon of milk powder or 2 tablespoons of cream.

To mashed potato, add grated cheese, cream, margarine or butter.

To puddings, add seedless jam, honey, syrup, cream, evaporated milk or custard.

### **General tips**

Eat frequent small meals, five or six per day.

Use full fat and sugar foods e.g. full cream milk, thick and creamy yoghurts, high juices, and avoid diet or low fat foods.

Have nourishing drinks in between your meals and use fortified milk.

Try to eat puddings often to add variety and calories.

### **Constipation**

Constipation can be a problem for some people following a liquidised diet.

Liquidising does not destroy the fibre content of foods so make sure you include high fibre foods in your meals, e.g. fruit and vegetables. Drink plenty of fluid, aiming for eight to ten cups, or three to four pints of fluid per day.

If needed, speak to your GP about laxatives and use them as prescribed.

### **Recipes**

#### **High Energy Porridge**

1 sachet / 30g porridge oats

180ml full cream milk

1 tablespoon sugar or honey

1-2 tablespoons of cream

Put the oats and milk into a microwavable bowl and heat for 2 minutes. Stir in the cream and sugar or honey. Liquidise all ingredients in a blender adding extra hot milk to ensure a smooth consistency.

#### **Fruit smoothie**

Serves 1-2

Blend 75g fruit (fresh, tinned or frozen) with 100ml milk or fruit juice, 125g full fat Greek yoghurt and 1-2 teaspoons of honey.

#### **Sweet Potato Liquidised**

2 sweet potatoes, peeled and cooked

2 tablespoons butter or margarine

3 tablespoons whole milk

Salt and pepper to taste

Mash/liquidise the potatoes, adding butter, milk and season to taste.

#### **Snack Soup**

Blend 1/2 - 1 carton of fresh soup until smooth, adding any extra liquid as required. Heat and serve.

You can experiment with adding in nutritious extras such as meat, beans or cheese before blending.

## **Nourishing drinks ideas**

### **Fortified milk**

Mix 2-3 tablespoons of milk powder into 1 pint of full cream milk. Have on its own or use in milk based food and drinks.

### **Hot chocolate malted drink**

Heat 150mls full fat milk for 1 1/2 to 2 minutes, whisk in 2 tablespoons of milk powder and 3 tablespoons of hot chocolate or malted drink powder. Stir in 2 tablespoons double cream and serve.

### **Fruit smoothie**

1/2 small banana, broken into chunks

50g frozen strawberries

100ml vanilla yoghurt

50ml milk

Blend together until smooth, adding extra milk if needed.

### **Milkshake**

150-200mls fortified / full cream, milk, 1 scoop of ice cream, 4 teaspoons of Nesquik or 2 teaspoons Crusha syrup and 2 teaspoons of cream.

### **Creamy soup**

Whisk together 1 sachet powdered soup and 150ml hot milk to achieve a smooth consistency.

### **Ready-made drinks**

Mars, Yazoo, Galaxy, Aero, supermarket smoothies and milkshakes are all suitable.

## **Useful sources of information**

### **Wiltshire Farm Foods**

Liquidised meals delivered to your door

[www.wiltshirefarmfoods.com/](http://www.wiltshirefarmfoods.com/)

Freephone: 0800 773 773 (24 hours, 7 days per week)

### **Nutricia Nutillis**

Tasty food, safer food – delicious recipes for people with swallowing difficulties

[www.mynutillis.co.uk](http://www.mynutillis.co.uk)

### **British Dietetics Association**

[www.bda.uk.com/foodfacts](http://www.bda.uk.com/foodfacts)

### **Age UK Advice**

[www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)

Freephone: 0800 169 6565

### **Dysphagia Cafe**

[www.dysphagiacafe.com](http://www.dysphagiacafe.com)

### **Essential Liquidised A-Z guidebook**

[www.essentialliquidised.com](http://www.essentialliquidised.com)



## Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about high risk foods, please contact your speech and language therapy team (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm):

Acute / general medical speech and language therapy:	020 8725 3007
Adult neurology speech and language therapy:	020 8725 4492
Stroke speech and language therapy:	020 8725 2001
Head and neck speech and language therapy:	020 8725 1163
Community Neuro-therapy speech and language therapy:	020 8812 4060
<u>Queen Mary's Hospital:</u>	
Mary Seacole speech and language therapy:	020 8487 6146
Bryson White rehabilitation speech and language therapy:	020 8487 6170
<u>Wolfson Neurorehabilitation:</u>	
Queen Mary's Hospital	020 8487 6142
St George's Hospital	020 8266 6549



**For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit [www.stgeorges.nhs.uk](http://www.stgeorges.nhs.uk)**

## Additional services

### Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you on-the-spot advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or the care you have received. You can visit the PALS office between 9.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday in the main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough wings (near the lift foyer).

**Tel:** 020 8725 2453 **Email:** [pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk)

### NHS Choices

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health.

**Web:** [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

### NHS 111

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

**Tel:** 111