

Transitional Foods

This leaflet aims to answer your questions about transitional foods. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to your speech and language therapist, GP or nurse.

What are transitional foods?

Transitional foods are those which start as one texture and then change into another when moisture (e.g., water or saliva) is applied or when there is a change in temperature. These foods don't need to be bitten or chewed and the pressure of your tongue should be enough to break them down after they have changed in moisture or temperature.

How do I swallow transitional food safely and comfortably?

Follow this advice when you eat, drink and take medication.

- Ideally sit upright in a chair while you eat and for at least half an hour afterwards.
- You should be awake and fully alert when you eat and drink.
- Make sure you only have one mouthful of food or fluid at a time.
- Swallow food and clear your mouth before you take the next mouthful. This might mean swallowing twice.
- Don't rush mealtimes. Take frequent pauses during the meal and try to chew well. Take sips of fluid with your food.
- At the end of each meal, make sure your mouth is empty and check for any food in the cheeks.
- 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 often, contact your speech and language therapist or GP.
- Make mealtimes a pleasant and relaxed experience.

If you already have exercises and specific advice from your speech and language therapist please follow these.

What are some examples of transitional foods?

- Ice cream, ice chips or ice lollies
- Jelly
- Wafers
- Waffle cones used to hold ice cream
- Certain biscuits, cookies and crackers
- Short bread
- Rice puffs
- Some crisps: Skips, Cheetos, Wotsits.

Can I test other foods to see if they are transitional?

If you're unsure if a food meets the criteria you can apply a small amount of water (1ml) to a small piece of food (half the base of a fork) and press with a fork. The food should squash and fracture and not return to its original shape when you release the pressure.

Is there anything else I need to know?

Because of their interesting textural qualities, these foods are frequently introduced to help move towards more challenging textures or to help with rehabilitation in terms of chewing and swallowing.

Useful sources of information

Wiltshire Farm Foods (Soft and pureed meals delivered to your door

www.wiltshirefarmfoods.com

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

British Dietetics Association

www.bda.uk.com/foodfacts

Age UK Advice

www.ageuk.org.uk

Freephone: 0800 169 6565

Dysphagia Cafe

www.dysphagiacafe.com

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns, 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

Queen Mary's Hospital:

Mary Seacole speech and language therapy: 020 8487 6146

Bryson white rehabilitation speech and language therapy:

020 8487 6170

Wolfson Neurorehabilitation:

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

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

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

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

AccessAble

You can download accessibility guides for all our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website (www.accessable.co.uk). The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.

