

IDDSI Level 6

Soft and Bite Sized



Information and advice about modifying diets for someone with swallowing difficulties

IDDSI Diet 6: Soft and Bite Sized

You have been advised to have a Soft and Bite Sized diet. This is because you have difficulty chewing and/or swallowing as a result of a recent illness, surgery or part of a long term condition. A soft and bite sized diet is recommended because these are everyday foods that require less chewing and reduce the risk of choking.

What is soft and bite sized food	
 Easy to chew	Food is soft, tender and moist. Chewing is required before swallowing
 Easy to mash up with a fork	Food can be eaten with a fork, spoon or chopsticks. Food can be mashed down or broken down using a fork, spoon or chopsticks.
 Sometimes needs a sauce	Thick sauces may be required.
 Bite sized pieces	Food should be bite sized and pieces no bigger than 1.5cm x 1.5cm

How do I follow a soft and bite sized diet?

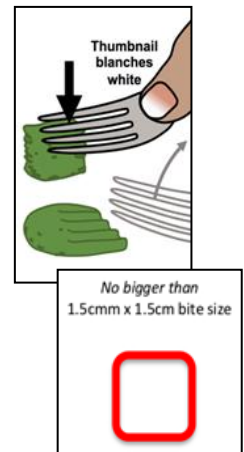
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Most everyday foods can be changed to make them suitable for a soft and bite-sized diet. The table overleaf provides a general idea of the foods that are safe and those to avoid. This is only a general guide and the soft and bite-sized foods you choose will also depend on your likes and dislikes. Use the methods below to adapt your favourite foods.

Testing food to make sure it is safe

➤ Fork pressure test

- Each bite-sized piece of food should be **no bigger** than 1.5cm x 1.5 cm in diameter which is about the width of a standard dinner fork.
- Press down on the fork until the **thumbnail blanches white**, then lift the fork to see if the food is completely squashed and does not regain its shape.



If eating out or having take-away

- Plan ahead before eating out at a restaurant by obtaining the menu beforehand.
- Consider which meals are appropriate and how they could be adapted to a soft and bite sized diet (see testing methods above).
- Phone the venue before you go with any questions or special requests.

Other tips and ideas

- Remember: Food does not need to be mashed before serving.
- Foods that are not soft enough to pass the fork pressure test (i.e., tougher meats) can be added to a food processor or blender with a thick sauce and minced up finely instead.
- Cook fruits/vegetables so that they are soft, avoid any skins or pips.
- A sieve and spoon can be used to remove pips and skins.
- Any gravy, sauce or custard in or on the food must be very thick so that it cannot be poured and holds its shape when scooped.
- Avoid mixed textures – no thin loose fluids. You should be able to eat the food easily with a fork.



Meat and poultry

Cooked tender meat no bigger than 1.5 cm by 1.5cm.

Remove all skin, bones and gristle.

If texture cannot be served soft and tender, serve minced and moist.

Casserole/curry liquid should be as per Speech and Language therapist's recommendations.



Fish

Remove skin and bones.

Soft enough cooked fish - break into pieces no larger than 1.5cm x 1.5cm.



Vegetables and potatoes

Steamed or boiled vegetables with a final cooked size of 1.5cm x 1.5cm.

Avoid stir fried vegetables.



Fruit

Drain excess juice. Remove pips, fibrous parts and skin.

Pieces should be soft and no bigger than 1.5cm x 1.5 cm.

Mash as required

Please refer to Foods to Avoid list.

What foods am I allowed?

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Cereal

Smooth, fully softened lumps no bigger than 1.5cm x 1.5cm.
Drain any excess milk or fluid before serving.



Rice

Not sticky and should not separate into individual grains when cooked.
Preferably fluffy with a sauce.

**** If you are on thickened fluids, please check with your Speech & Language Therapist before eating ice cream or jelly.**

If you have any concerns regarding your diet or you need to follow a special diet due to a medical condition, please speak to your GP who may refer you to a dietitian.

Suggested Meal Ideas

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If you are unsure of what your meals will look like, please use the suggested ideas below.

- Breakfast: Fruit juice
Very thick, smooth porridge/Ready Brek/Weetabix with added sugar/honey
Scrambled or poached eggs
- Mid-morning: Thick and creamy smooth yoghurt
Egg custard (inside only)
- Midday Meal: Shepherd's pie with well cooked vegetables - avoid tough, fibrous, stringy, hard and crispy vegetables
- Mid-Afternoon: Cup of tea and a soft sponge covered in thick, smooth custard
- Evening Meal: Fortified soup smooth or with lumps no bigger than 1.5 cm x1.5 cm long
Soft or stewed fruit
- Supper: Nourishing milk drink

Meal	Sweet Menu Ideas	Savoury Menu Ideas
Breakfast	-Very thick porridge or Weetabix with added sugar/honey -Fruit Juice	-Scrambled/ Poached Eggs -Omelette with cream cheese filling. Cut into pieces no bigger than 1.5 cm x 1.5 cm -Skinless Sausage cut into pieces no bigger than 1.5 cm x 1.5 cm - Spaghetti hoops (liquid drained)
Mid-Morning	-Thick and creamy smooth yoghurt -Egg custard (inside)	-Hummus -Smooth Pate -Cheese Spread -Taramasalata -Avocado cut into pieces no bigger than 1.5 cm x 1.5 cm
Midday Meal	-Banana mashed/ soaked in peanut butter blended syrup.	-Cottage/ Shepherd's pie with well cooked vegetables- avoid tough, fibrous, stringy, hard, and crispy vegetables. Avoid sweetcorn and peas as they can separate. -Fish Pie
Mid-Afternoon	-Cup of tea -Soft sponge covered in thick, smooth custard. Sponge cut into lumps no bigger than 1.5 cm x 1.5 cm -Mousse -Smooth cheesecake (no biscuit crust)	-Ovaltine/Horlicks/Tea/ Coffee -Inside of jacket potato with butter - Tinned fish with mayonnaise/ thick sauce
Evening Meal	-Inside of sweet potato with butter/ Croquette - sweet potato fully soaked (no skins) with spaghetti hoops. Well cooked carrot/swede.	-Vegetable curry. - Vegetables cut into pieces no bigger than 1.5 cm x 1.5 cm, well cooked and not fibrous or stringy.

	-Crème Caramel/ Stewed fruit with custard/ panna cotta	-Fortified Soup smooth or with lumps no bigger than 1.5 cm x 1.5 cm long -Lasagne (no crust) cut into pieces no bigger than 1.5 cm x 1.5 cm -Mac and cheese- Mashed with fork -Cauliflower Cheese (milky not stringy) cut into lumps no bigger than 1.5 cm x 1.5 cm -Moussaka with skinless aubergine cut into lumps no bigger than 1.5 cm x 1.5 cm -Cheese and potato bake (no pastry or hard crust) cut into lumps no bigger than 1.5 cm x 1.5 cm -Crustless Quiche cut into lumps no bigger than 1.5 cm x 1.5 cm -Soft and tender meat cut into lumps no bigger than 1.5 cm x 1.5 cm -Casseroles- Not too many contrasting textures of vegetables, cut into lumps no bigger than 1.5 cm x 1.5 cm -Risotto- make sure its creamy
Supper	Nourishing milk drink	Nourishing milk drink

Cuisine	Menu Ideas
Caribbean/African	Boiled yam/plantain cut into 1.5 cm x 1.5 cm pieces Soft and tender jerk chicken (no skin/bone and not chewy) cut into 1.5 cm x 1.5 cm pieces
Indian	Lassi (yogurt style drink) Lentil Dahl- make sure its thick and fully absorbed sauce Aloo Chaat (just potatoes, no extra toppings- 1.5x1.5cm)
Jamaican	Ackee and salt fish Oxtail (no skin and off bone) cut into 1.5 cm x 1.5 cm pieces and not chewy
Chinese	Ma Po Tofu (extra sauce drained) cut into 1.5 cm x 1.5 cm pieces Char Siu (no skin) and not chewy cut into 1.5 cm x 1.5 cm pieces Congee
Japanese	Marinated Firm Tofu cut into 1.5 cm x 1.5 cm pieces Yakitori (no skin and not chewy) cut into 1.5 cm x 1.5 cm pieces Tamagoyaki (omelette) cut into 1.5 cm x 1.5 cm pieces Chawanmushi (Egg custard inside only)
Mexican	Guacamole Carne Asada (no skin and not chewy) cut into 1.5 cm x 1.5 cm pieces Chile Verde (excess sauce drained) cut into 1.5 cm x 1.5 cm pieces Salsa Verde Refried Beans
Mediterranean	Tagine meat cut into 1.5 cm x 1.5 cm pieces (soft and not chewy) Ratatouille (Skin off vegetables and excess sauce drained) cut into 1.5 cm x 1.5 cm pieces Spanish omelette cut into 1.5 cm x 1.5 cm pieces Risotto

What foods are difficult

These foods can be especially hard to chew or swallow so need to be avoided or specially prepared so that they are soft to eat. Please discuss them with your SLT.

Dry Food Crackers, cake, bread

Crumbly foods Biscuits, pie crust, wheat

Hard foods Boiled sweets, nuts.

Tough or chewy foods Steak, bacon, harder vegetables.

Crispy or crunchy foods Crisps, flaky pastry.

Stringy or fibrous foods Pineapple, celery

Pips, seeds, pith/inside skin. No skin or outer shells Peas, grapes, fruit skins or husks like sweetcorn

Skin, bone or gristle

Round or long shaped foods Sausages, grapes, sweets, hard chunks, pieces of apple.

Juicy food where juice separates off in the mouth Melon

Floppy foods Lettuce, thinly sliced cucumber, spinach

Sticky foods Some cheeses, marshmallows

Mixing solid with liquid Hard cereal with milk fruit salad with juice and soup with food pieces

If you require a high calorie diet for weight gain here is some advice on how to fortify your foods and drinks

Tips

- Eat 3 small meals and 3 snacks each day
- Have milky drinks in-between meals such as: 'all-milk' coffee, hot chocolate, Horlicks or milkshakes

Adding extra calories

- Fortify 1 pint of full fat milk with 2 – 4 tablespoons of skimmed milk powder and use throughout the day for all drinks (including milkshakes) and puddings
- Use full fat dairy products such as full fat milk, creamy yoghurts and cheese
- Add 1 tablespoon of skimmed milk powder to foods like porridge or puddings
- Add cream, butter, cheese or mayonnaise to foods like mashed potato or on top of vegetables before blending
- Add extra sugar, syrup or honey to puddings, cereal or into drinks

100 calorie boosters

These add 100 calories when added to foods:

- 1 tablespoon of mayonnaise or oil
- A small handful of grated cheese
- 2 tablespoons of salad cream
- 2 tablespoons of honey, lemon curd or golden syrup



Suggested Meal Ideas (high calorie)

Breakfast

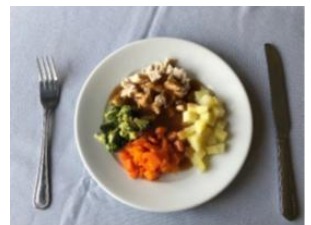
- Cereal (no bigger than 1.5cm x 1.5cm) soaked in milk (drain excess milk) e.g.: Rice Krispies, Cheerio's or Cornflakes
- Weetabix soaked in milk until thick
- Scrambled, poached eggs or an omelette (1.5cm x 1.5cm) with grated cheese
- Thick and smooth porridge or Ready brek served with fruit juice
- Fromage frais and canned soft fruit drained e.g.: pears or peaches (1.5cm x 1.5cm)

Light meals

- Scrambled eggs (thick, smooth and creamy),
- poached egg or omelette (1.5cm x 1.5cm) with
- grated cheese and chopped tinned tomatoes
- Thick smooth soup
- Well-cooked cauliflower cheese or Cheese soufflé

Main meals (served with mashed/soft vegetables)

- Jacket potato (no skin) with grated cheese & baked beans
- Fine minced Shepherd's pie
- Tender meat (1.5cm x 1.5cm) & well-cooked rice in a thick creamy curry sauce
- Flaked fish in a thick creamy sauce, mashed potatoes and mushy peas
- Tuna mayonnaise mixed into small (1.5cm x 1.5cm) pasta shapes
- Skinless sausages (1.5cm x 1.5cm) buttery mashed potato and baked beans
- Lentil dhal, risotto, macaroni cheese, ravioli in sauce



Snacks

- Egg custard (inside only) or a thick and creamy yoghurt
- Thick smooth dips or smooth hummus or smooth pate

Desserts

- Cheesecake (without base), Tiramisu, Crème caramel or mousse
- Chopped banana (1.5cm x 1.5cm) in custard or a smooth fruit fool
- Thick semolina or rice pudding with fruit puree or seedless jam
- Sponge mashed into custard or cream



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For more information about IDDSI please visit the following website: <https://iddsi.org/>

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- **Telephone:** 0800 088 4449
 - **Email:** eec.pals@nhs.net.
 - **Opening hours:** Monday to Friday, 9am–5pm
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Produced by: East of England Community Health & Care NHS Trust
Date of publication: August 2026
Leaflet review date: August 2027 **Version:** 1

