

GUIDELINES FOR CONSISTENCY MODIFICATIONS OF FOODS AND LIQUIDS

1. Alterations to the consistency of foods and/ or liquids presented to the individual are made in accordance with the recommendation of an occupational therapist or speech and language pathologist and implemented according to the order of the person's primary care provider/doctor.

If an individual appears to have difficulty with the prescribed consistency of foods and/ or liquids, the caregiver should remove the food or liquid and immediately contact the Nurse for direction.

In situations that pose an immediate threat to the health and safety of the person, clinicians or nurses can direct staff to downgrade the individual's food or liquid consistency to a more restrictive one until a new order can be obtained.

2. Food consistencies are described on specific consistency forms and displayed in pictures contained in this manual. The clinician may choose to use these forms or another format that contains specific information for staff about how food is to be served to an individual. The definitions serve as general guidelines and exceptions can be documented by the clinician and prescribed by the physician.
3. Liquid consistencies are defined in this manual. The prescribed liquid consistency can be indicated on the food consistency form or in another format that specifies how liquids are to be served to the individual.
4. Some foods such as soups, cold cereal with milk, fruits that emit liquid when chewed (oranges, watermelon, etc.) and canned fruit have a dual consistency (liquids and solids in one food item). The clinician will provide information on the food consistency form or other approved regional format about any special considerations staff will need to follow when serving such foods.
5. When a thickened liquid is prescribed, the food consistency served must be **at least as thick** as the prescribed liquid.
6. Caregivers should receive specific training in the modification of foods and/ or liquids by the appropriate clinician in the region/ home before preparing a prescribed consistency.



WHOLE FOOD CONSISTENCY

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Address: _____ **Therapist:** _____

Allergies: _____

Refer to current, prescribed diet plan (i.e. regular, restricted calorie, low cholesterol) as a guide when planning the menu.

Description: Food should appear as it is served in a restaurant. Assistance may be needed with cutting.

Food Group	Allowed	Avoid	Special Notes
Milk, dairy	Any allowed by prescribed diet	None	
Fruits	Any allowed by prescribed diet	None	
Vegetables	Any allowed by prescribed diet	None	
Meat / Protein (Beef, Pork, Poultry, fish, dry beans, eggs, nuts, Peanut butter)	Any allowed by prescribed diet	None	
Starch (Bread, cereals, rice, pasta)	Any allowed by prescribed diet	None	
Fats, oils	Any allowed by prescribed diet	None	
Desserts and snacks	Any allowed by prescribed diet	None	

Liquid Consistency: _____

Dual consistency food considerations: _____

Other information: _____

WHOLE CONSISTENCY

Food should appear as it is served in a restaurant. Assistance may be needed with cutting.



CUT UP FOOD CONSISTENCY

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____ Therapist: _____

Allergies: _____

Refer to current, prescribed diet plan (i.e. regular, restricted calorie, low cholesterol) as a guide when planning the menu.

Description: All foods must be cut into pieces no larger than ½”x ½” x ½”



Food Group	Allowed	Avoid	Special Notes/ Information
Milk, dairy	Any allowed by prescribed diet	None	
Fruits	Any allowed by prescribed diet	None	Melon balls and grapes are halved
Vegetables	Any allowed by prescribed diet Olives halved	None	
Meat/ Protein (Beef, Pork, Poultry, fish, dry beans, eggs, nuts, Peanut Butter)	Any allowed by prescribed diet (Skinned or skinless hot dogs preferred; Kielbasa/sausage skinned preferred; Cut lengthwise into 4 strips; then cut into ½” pieces)	None	
Starch (Bread, cereals, rice, pasta)	Any allowed by prescribed diet	None	
Fats, oils	Any allowed by prescribed diet	None	
Desserts and snacks	Any allowed by prescribed diet	None	

Liquid consistency: _____

Dual consistency food considerations: _____

Other information: _____

Cut Up Food Consistency

All foods must be cut into pieces no larger than ½” x ½” ½”



CHOPPED FOOD CONSISTENCY

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____ Therapist: _____

Allergies: _____

Refer to current, prescribed diet plan (i.e. regular, restricted calorie, low cholesterol) as a guide when planning the menu.

Description: Foods is cut by hand or as directed to Pea size pieces 1/4" x 1/4" x 1/4"

Food Group	Allowed	Avoid	Special Notes/ Information
Milk, dairy	Any allowed by prescribed diet	Any with nuts, seeds, or other crunchy substances	
Fruits	Any allowed by prescribed diet	Fruit skin, seeds, dry fruit	Fresh fruit should be well ripened or softened in microwave
Vegetables	Any allowed by prescribed diet	Tough vegetable skin	
Meat/ Protein (Beef, Pork Poultry, fish, dry beans, eggs, nuts, Peanut butter)	Any allowed by prescribed diet ; Hot dogs/kielbasa/ sausage- remove casing	Bacon, skin, casing, nuts	Tough meat such as Pork, steak, BBQ meat, Corned Beef <u>Must Be Ground</u>
Starch (Bread, cereals, rice, pasta)	Remove crust from bread (none with nuts, seeds or dried fruit); Moisten cereal with milk- (no nuts, seeds or dry fruits in cereal) Ditalini Pasta can be used whole	Bagels, hard-crusted bread, nuts, seeds, skin	
Fats	Any allowed by prescribed diet	Bacon	
Desserts and Snacks	Any allowed by prescribed diet	Hard candy, chewy candy, Popcorn, chips, Pretzels	

Liquid Consistency: _____

Dual consistency food considerations: _____

Other information: _____

Chopped Food Consistency

Food is cut by hand or as directed to Pea size pieces $\frac{1}{4}$ " x $\frac{1}{4}$ " x $\frac{1}{4}$ ".
Food must also be moist. No "Finger Foods".



GROUND FOOD CONSISTENCY

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____ Therapist: _____

Allergies: _____

Refer to current, prescribed diet plan (i.e. regular, restricted calorie, low cholesterol) as a guide when planning the menu.

Description: All foods must be ground in a machine to “small curd” cottage cheese consistency.
Foods must be moist and liquids may be added to get the desired consistency.

Food Group	Allowed	Avoid	Special Notes/ Information
Milk, dairy	Any allowed by prescribed diet	Any with nuts, seeds, pieces of fruit, or other crunchy substances	Small curd cottage cheese and Ricotta cheese may be served in whole form
Fruits	Any allowed by prescribed diet; Canned, cooked or fresh without skins;	Fruit skin, seeds, dry fruit(raisins, Prunes, etc.)	Fork mash bananas or fresh ripe melon (no seeds)
Vegetables	Any allowed by prescribed diet	Vegetables with tough skin or strings; seeds	Remove large seeds (e.g. winter squash, pumpkin)
Meat/ Protein (Beef, Pork, Poultry, fish, dry beans, eggs, nuts, Peanut butter)	Any allowed by prescribed diet served with extra gravy/ sauce	Bacon, skin, casing, nuts Breaded/ battered fish or meats	
Starch (Bread, cereals, rice, pasta)	Any allowed by prescribed diet ; Pastina can be used whole	Nuts, seeds, skin, potato skins	
Fats	Any allowed by prescribed diet	Bacon	
Desserts and snacks	Any allowed by prescribed diet Cakes- moistened and mashed; Jell-O- whipped;	Hard candy, chewy candy, Popcorn, chips, Pretzels, raisins	Some cookies without nuts, may be broken, moistened and mashed

Liquid Consistency: _____

Dual consistency food considerations : _____

Other Information: _____

Ground Food Consistency

All foods must be ground in a machine to “small curd” cottage cheese consistency.
Foods must be moist and liquids may be added to get the desired consistency.



PUREED FOOD CONSISTENCY

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____ Therapist: _____

Allergies: _____

Refer to current, prescribed diet plan (i.e. regular, restricted calorie, low cholesterol) as a guide when planning the menu.

Description: All foods are prepared to a smooth consistency by grinding and then pureeing them. Appearance is smooth like pudding.

Food Group	Allowed	Avoid	<i>Special Notes/ Information</i>
Milk, dairy	Any allowed by prescribed diet	Any with nuts, seeds or other crunchy substances	
Fruits	Any canned allowed by prescribed diet; Certain fresh fruit (melon, kiwi, mangos, strawberries, bananas)	Fruit skin, seeds, Other fresh fruit, Dried fruits	
Vegetables	Any allowed by prescribed diet	Vegetables with tough skin or strings;	Remove large seeds (i.e. winter squash, pumpkin) Lettuce and baby spinach may be pureed
Meat/ Protein (Beef, Pork, Poultry, fish, dry beans, eggs, nuts, Peanut butter)	Any allowed by prescribed diet Puree with extra gravy, sauce, bouillon or stock	Bacon, skin, casing, nuts Breaded/ battered fish or meats	
Starch (Bread, cereals, rice, pasta)	Any allowed by prescribed diet	Nuts, seeds, skin, potato skins,	
Fats	Any allowed by prescribed diet	Bacon;	
Desserts and snacks	Any allowed by prescribed diet; Must be moistened	Hard candy, chewy candy, Popcorn, chips, Pretzels, raisins	

Liquid Consistency: _____

Dual consistency food considerations: _____

Other information: Use only powdered spices _____

Pureed Food Consistency

All foods are prepared to a smooth consistency by grinding and then pureeing them. Appearance is smooth like pudding.



LIQUID CONSISTENCIES

The texture of the liquid an individual receives is recommended by an Occupational Therapist or Speech Pathologist and is ordered by a Doctor.

The texture of food should not be thinner than the prescribed liquid consistency.

- ❖ **Thin:** Includes all liquids, Jell-O, sherbet, Italian ice, and ice cream. This consistency is considered non-restrictive. Nothing is added .
- ❖ **Nectar:** Apricot or tomato juice consistency; some liquids will require a thickening agent to reach this consistency.
- ❖ **Honey:** Liquids can still be poured, but are very slow. Liquids will require a thickening agent to be added to achieve this consistency.
- ❖ **Pudding:** Liquids are spoonable, but, when spoon is placed upright, it will not stay upright.



Remember that all thickening agents whether commercial (Thick-It, Thick and Easy) or non- commercial food items (instant potatoes, baby fruits, baby cereal etc.) add extra calories to the foods or liquids they are added to. If the individual is on a reducing diet, these calories must be considered. The dietitian must be advised if a thickening agent is to be used.