



Dietitians NZ

Ngā Pukenga Kai Ora o Aotearoa



“Talk with” Series

Aged Residential Care Facilities

Welcome to the 28th edition of the Dietitians NZ e-Bulletin for aged care facilities.

The information in this bulletin is of a general nature and should not take the place of a dietetic consultation. To find a Dietitian near you, visit www.dietitians.org.nz and ‘Find a Dietitian’, check the Yellow Pages or telephone the local hospital.

Dysphagia Diets – Are we all understanding each other?

Texture modified diets are commonly used in aged care facilities to manage the risk of aspiration pneumonia and choking with eating and drinking. Residents with dysphagia may be placed on a texture modified diet following assessment with a speech and language therapist. However, there are often a range of terms used for texture modified diets, and differing opinions on exactly how the diets should be prepared.

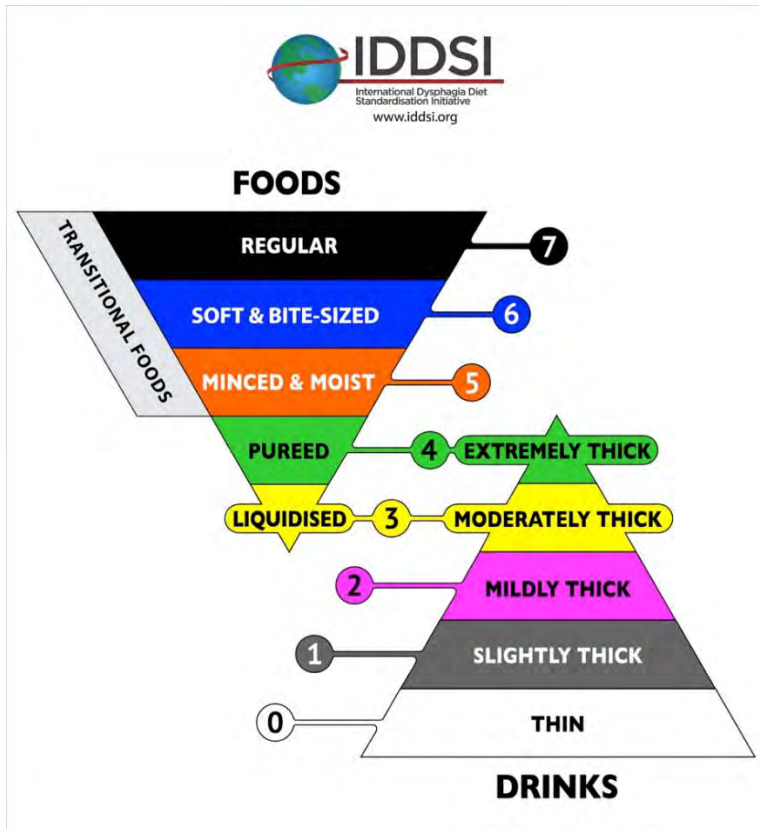
Confusion with terms, and the types of foods and fluids offered leads to increased risk of harm for the resident. This is particularly obvious when transferring from one facility to another. Information on texture modified diets is passed to the new facility who may use different terms. For example, a site may report ‘this resident requires a soft diet’ and the interpretation of this diet at the new facility is to puree all food.

The International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative (IDDSI) is a framework to standardise terminology and offer simple testing methods to check that the preparation of the food is correct. Dietitians New Zealand and Speech Language Therapists of New Zealand have endorsed in principle the IDDSI framework.

The goal is to reduce the risk of harm for our patients and residents due to miscommunication and poorly prepared texture modified diets. It is important to note that the framework relates to dysphagia diets only. Residents may be on a modified diet due to other factors not related to dysphagia. For example, a resident with no teeth may need softer foods but can actually manage sandwiches.

The good news is that for many sites, there is very little change needed as they are already using the correct terms. The diagram above shows the new terminology and the minimal change in wording;

- ‘Smooth puree’ becomes pureed (which is also extremely thick fluids)
- ‘Minced and moist’ remains unchanged
- ‘Soft diet’ becomes ‘soft & bite sized’
- Moderately thick and mildly thick remain unchanged for thickened fluids



The IDDSI framework (see left) assigns standard colours and numbers to assist with easily identifying texture modified foods and fluids. Some manufacturers of texture modified foods and fluids are looking at ways to incorporate the terms, colours and numbers onto their food packaging.

IDDSI App and Website

The IDDSI framework have developed many resources and videos to assist with the standardisation process.

Download the app

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.appdataroom.iddsi&hl=en> or go to www.IDDSI.org or ask

your dietitian and speech language therapist for more information.

Food and Fluid Preparation and Testing

The IDDSI framework offers simple tests to check that the thickness of the fluids or the size of the particles for modified foods are correct. The tests use forks, spoons, fingers or syringes – equipment that is readily available at sites.

With training and education on how to do these tests, kitchen staff and managers will be able to easily check their texture modified diets and thickened fluids are prepared correctly.

Where to From Here?

Here are some small steps to help implement the IDDSI framework at your site:

1. Do not use any terms which are not included in the framework. For example, the term 'mouli' diet is not recognised and should not be used to describe a pureed diet.
2. Download the app or look at the IDDSI website to familiarise yourself with the framework.
3. Try testing one of the textures you currently prepare. Does the 'puree diet' produced at your site pass the spoon tilt test? Does the size of the minced food for 'minced & moist diets' fit between the prongs of a fork? Is the size of meat offered for residents on the 'soft & bite size diet' the size of your thumb nail?
4. Ask your dietitian or SLT for further training on the correct testing and preparation of dysphagia diets.

Nothing beats a good sandwich!

In aged care facilities sandwiches contribute useful nutrition. Dietitians encourage the availability of protein filled sandwiches at suppertime because it is often 14 hours between the evening meal and breakfast. Indeed, it is one of the Standards of Dietitians NZ Menu Audit Tool.

As a between meal snack at any time of the day, protein filled sandwiches provide significantly more protein than a baked item or a commercial sweet biscuit. Being softer they are also more likely to suit older people because they are easier to chew than items such as cheese and crackers. A hearty soup and a good sandwich is often a resident's preference at the light meal of the day as it was what they ate at home. And as a finger food, sandwiches allow residents with dementia to remain independent eaters when they can no longer use cutlery.

What makes a good sandwich? Taste and eye appeal immediately spring to mind. Pale coloured fillings between white bread do little to excite the appetite. Skimpy fillings with little flavour will have some residents reach for the cake or biscuit instead so that the opportunity of them eating extra protein is lost.

Older people in particular, find it easier to eat moist rather than dry foods. Including spreads, chutneys, mayonnaise, hummus, etc. provides moistness as well as flavour. Cream cheese beaten with plain yoghurt provides a base on which to place fillings such as ham, cold meats and chicken.

Fillings which 'stick' together make it less likely a sandwich will fall to pieces while its being eaten. Ever tried to eat a sandwich filled with grated cheese? Use ingredients to help combine grated or mashed fillings so that they hold together. E.g. use mayonnaise to combine mashed egg and flaked tuna, pineapple juice with grated cheese.

When sandwiches are served frequently a 'fillings' menu should be developed that directs which fillings are to be used on different days. This reduces the risk of sandwich fatigue.

How well do your residents score your sandwiches? Get in ahead of them and mentally check off the following:

- Colour
- Flavour
- Moistness and the ability to hold together
- Variety

Keeping protein sandwiches safe:

After protein sandwiches are made they need to be stored in the fridge until they are served. They are safe to eat up to 4 hours after they are taken from the fridge. Any sandwiches not eaten within this time must be discarded. They should not be returned to the fridge. Protein sandwiches taken from the fridge but not eaten may only be returned to the fridge if they have been out of the fridge for less than 2 hours.



RECIPE CORNER

These are two spreads which can add moistness, flavour and help sandwiches 'stick'.

Easy to spread Cream Cheese Sandwich base

INGREDIENTS	YIELD		METHOD
	1½ cups	3 cups	
Cream cheese	1 x 250g	2 x 250g	Cream the cream cheese in a mixer.
Plain unsweetened yoghurt	¼ cup	½ cup	Add the yoghurt and mix well.
Add one of the following for flavour: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mustard• Sweet chili sauce• Chopped gherkin• Diced Spring onion• Chopped capers			Add any flavour options. Store in the fridge until used.

Some sandwich combinations to use this in:

- Ham, tomato and Cream Cheese base flavoured with mustard
- Chicken, cucumber and Cream Cheese base flavoured with Sweet Chili Sauce
- Roast beef and Cream Cheese base flavoured with diced gherkin
- Smoked salmon and cream cheese base

Roast Capsicum and Sun-Dried Tomato Hummus

INGREDIENTS	YIELD		METHOD
	1½ cups	3 cups	
Canned cannellini beans (400g)	1 x can	2 cans	Drain the beans.
2 Roasted red capsicums (from a jar or roast you own)	1	2	Blend the beans, roasted pepper, diced sun dried tomatoes and salt in a blender until smooth.
Cloves garlic	1	2	Adjust seasonings.
Sun-dried tomatoes, finely diced	¼ cup	½ cup	Store in the fridge until used.
Salt	¼ teasp	½ teasp	

Some sandwich combinations to use this in:

- Chicken, Roast capsicum and sun-dried tomato hummus with baby spinach
- Roast beef, cucumber and Roast capsicum and sun-dried tomato hummus

FUTURE ISSUES The next issue is due in February, 2018. Please email your requests for topics or questions about food and nutrition issues for older people to admin@dietitians.org.nz. To unsubscribe, email us at the same address, and put Unsubscribe SING Bulletin in the subject line.