7 REGULAR *EASY TO CHEW*

IDDSI
International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative
www.iddsi.org

Level 7 Regular *Easy to Chew* for Adults

What is this food texture level?

Level 7 – Regular *Easy to Chew* Foods:

- ✓ Normal, everyday foods* of soft/tender texture
- ✓ Any method may be used to eat these foods (e.g. fingers, fork, spoon, chopsticks etc.)
- ✓ Food piece size is not restricted in Level 7, therefore foods may be a range of sizes. Food pieces can be smaller or bigger than 1.5cm x 1.5cm
- ✓ **Do not use foods that are:** hard, tough, chewy, fibrous, have stringy textures, pips/seeds, bones or gristle
- ✓ You should be able to 'bite off' pieces of soft and tender food and choose bite-sizes that are safe to chew and swallow
- ✓ You should be able to chew pieces of soft and tender food, so they are safe to swallow without tiring easily
- ✓ Your tongue should be able to move food for chewing and apply pressure until the food is soft and moist enough to be easily swallowed
- ✓ You should be able to remove bone, gristle or other hard pieces that cannot be swallowed safely from your mouth without help or direction from others

*May include 'mixed thin and thick texture' food and liquids together – ask your clinician for direction on this.

Why is this food texture level used for adults?

Level 7 – Regular Easy to Chew food may be used if you have strong enough chewing ability to break down soft/tender foods into pieces without help, you have no increased risk of choking and do not have swallowing problems. This texture may be right for you if you usually choose to eat soft food, have weaker chewing muscles for hard/firm textures, but can chew soft and tender food without tiring easily. It may also be a good choice if you have been sick and are recovering strength. Your clinician might recommend this texture if they are teaching you advanced chewing skills.

Who should not have this texture level?

This level is not intended for people where there is an identified increased risk of choking. **People who are unsafe to eat without supervision are not considered suitable for this texture level.** People can be unsafe to eat without supervision because of chewing and swallowing problems and/or unsafe mealtime behaviours. Examples of unsafe mealtime behaviours include: not chewing very much, putting too much food into the mouth, eating too fast or swallowing large mouthfuls of food. Always consult with your health professional for specific advice for your needs, requests and requirements for supervision. *Where mealtime supervision is needed, this level should only be used under the strict recommendation and written guidance of a qualified health professional.

Intended for general information only. Please consult with your health care professional for specific advice for your needs

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Serve food as normal. If you notice the food pieces are not being chewed well enough, please contact your clinician to make sure you are on the correct food texture. See local guidelines for what to do in case of choking.

How do I test my food to make sure it is Level 7 Regular *Easy to Chew*?

Foods should be able to be cut or broken apart with the side of a fork or spoon. It is then safest to test Regular *Easy to Chew* food using the IDDSI Fork Pressure test.

See videos of the IDDSI Fork Pressure Test at
www.IDDSI.org/framework/food-testing-methods/

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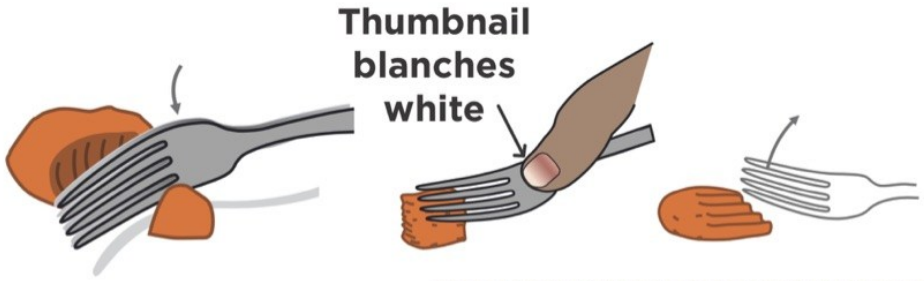

Must be able to break food apart easily with the side of a fork or spoon

Easy to Chew foods must break apart easily and pass Fork Pressure Test!

IDDSI Fork Pressure Test

To make sure the food is soft enough, press down on the fork until the thumbnail blanches to white, then lift the fork to see that the food is completely squashed and does not regain its shape

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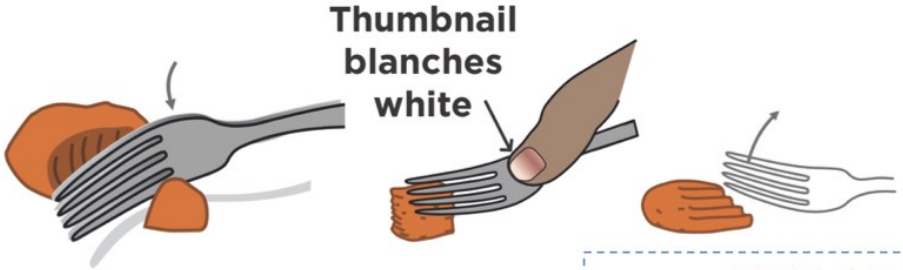
EXAMPLES of Level 7 Regular *Easy to Chew* food for Adults

* **Meat** cooked until tender. If you cannot serve soft and tender, serve as Minced and Moist
* **Fish** cooked soft enough to break apart easily with the side of a fork or spoon
* **Fruit** are soft enough to break apart into smaller pieces with the side of a fork or spoon (drain any excess liquid). Do not use the fibrous parts of fruit (for example, the white parts of an orange). Be careful when eating fruit with a high water content, where the juice separates from the solid in the mouth during chewing (for example, fruits like watermelon or other melons)
* **Vegetables** are steamed or boiled until tender. Stir fried vegetables may be too firm for this level
* **Cereal** is served with texture softened. Drain excess liquid before serving
* **Check with your clinician for direction about bread and sandwiches (and appropriate sandwich fillings)**
* **Rice** does not have any special cooking requirements at this level

See videos of the IDDSI Fork Pressure Test at
www.IDDSI.org/framework/food-testing-methods/



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Avoid these food textures for adults who choose Level 7 Regular *Easy to Chew*

Food characteristic to AVOID	Examples of foods to AVOID
Hard or dry food	Nuts, raw vegetables (e.g. carrot, cauliflower, broccoli), dry cakes, bread, dry cereal
Tough or fibrous foods	Steak, pineapple
Chewy	Lollies/candies/sweets, cheese chunks, marshmallows, chewing gum, sticky mashed potato, dried fruits, sticky foods
Crispy	Crackling, crisp bacon, cornflakes
Crunchy food	Raw carrot, raw apple, popcorn
Sharp or spiky	Corn chips/crisps
Pips, seeds	Apple seeds, pumpkin seeds, white of orange
Bone or gristle	Chicken bones, fish bones, other bones, meat with gristle
Sticky or gummy food	Edible gelatin, konjac containing jelly, sticky rice cakes
Stringy food	Beans, rhubarb
Extra Clinician notes	

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