

Snacks for People with Dysphagia – IDDSI.org & USA Style!

(Working document of suggestions only; Primarily for adults; All items will need point of service testing due to variabilities in freshness, temperature, ripeness, etc. Use simple IDDSI Testing Methods with spoons & forks: https://ftp.iddsi.org/Documents/Testing_Methods_IDDSI_Framework_Final_31_July2019.pdf)

4

Examples of Level 4 Puree

- Pudding (moist enough to slide/plop off spoon when spoon tilted sideways, not sticky)
- Smooth Yogurt without fruit chunks, Greek yogurt, Turkish Labneh
- Hummus
- Guacamole (avocado blended smooth)
- Bean dip
- Smooth Custard
- Magic Cup (by Hormel) or similar ice cream that stays thick
- Crème Fresh
- Instant hot cereal packets without raisins or apple pieces (e.g., cream of wheat or instant oatmeal – with caution, making sure to serve it at a smooth pureed texture/extremely thick liquid consistency. Not sticky, like many types of oatmeal served in institutions. Make sure no liquid separates from the solid.)

5

Examples of Level 5 Minced & Moist (4mm/adults)

- Same as above, as there are not a lot of snacks to add due to the **4mm particle size limitations**. A Minced & Moist snack has to also be soft enough to squash easily with the IDDSI Fork Pressure Test *without* the thumb nail blanching white. The final requirement is that it has to pass the spoon tilt test, being cohesive enough to hold its shape on a spoon, while still being moist enough to slide/fall off spoon without sticking to the spoon.
- *Rice Krispies*, but with draining out the milk after the cereal is softened, so that it is NOT a mixed consistency.

6

Examples of Level 6 Soft & Bite-Sized (1.5 cm bite sizes/adults)

Same as above plus:

- Cheerios (Note: these are really a Transitional Food, so if the person does not have adequate saliva *and* has no teeth, you may need to moisten them.)
- Cheese Curls/Cheese puffs - break into 1.5 cm pieces if long cheese curls (Note: these are really a Transitional Food, so if the person does not have adequate saliva *and* has no teeth, you may need to moisten them with a dip.) Not Cheetos, as these are harder, sharper, and crunchier.
- Fruit cup with soft fruits like peaches, banana, papaya, pear (make sure they are mashable with IDDSI Fork Pressure Test) & drain excess liquid. Fruits are highly variable, and the Fork Pressure Test is needed to test individual ripeness/softness.
- Small banana chunks - ripe (1.5 cm pieces)
- Soft 1.5 cm chunks of cream filled chocolates, smooth chocolate truffles, *Reese's Peanut Butter Cups*, *Junior Mints*, or *Three Musketeers* (i.e., melt in your mouth soft without nuts/seeds; not hard/chewy)
- Very soft brownies without nuts, soft baked cookies without nuts/raisins - cut into 1.5 cm chunks (add sauce for moisture)

- Moist cakes, cut into 1.5 cm chunks (add sauce for moisture)
- Cheesecakes and Cream-filled pies (pumpkin, banana cream, Boston cream, key-lime pies) with soft graham cracker or cookie crumbled crusts
- Cottage cheese and other very soft cheeses cut into 1.5 cm pieces (make sure not sticky)
- *Baby Mum Mums* and other transitional food teething biscuits for 6-month-old range and up. Break into 1.5 cm chunks.



Examples of Level 7 - Easy to Chew

Same as above, but this list reflects how there are NO 1.5 cm bite-size limitations at this level.

- Soft – easy to chew fruits without skins and that pass the IDDSI Fork Pressure Test and/or Fork Separation Test, which easily cuts the sample with pressure from the side of a fork.
 - May hold and eat banana without cutting into chunks.
 - Avoid juicy fruits like watermelon and oranges, as managing the fibrous textures in addition to controlling the liquid may be too challenging.
- Soft cheeses, cheese slices. Avoid hard chunks of cheese.
- Chocolates that are not hard, sticky, gummy or chewy. No nuts, seeds.
- Brownies, cakes, soft muffins, soft donuts (use fork pressure test & fork separation test; add moisture to all of these as needed).
- Pennsylvania Dutch style funnel cake may be soft and thin enough (avoid the powdery sugar and cinnamon). Fried Dough of New England may be too challenging, as it is thicker and doughier.
- Cheesecakes and Cream-filled pies (pumpkin, banana cream, Boston cream, key-lime pies) with soft graham cracker or cookie crumbled crusts
- Some fruit-filled pies if no skins and graham cracker crust. Avoid harder pastry shell crusts.
- Pringles? - if cleared by SLP (May try these if the person has adequate saliva and some tongue pressure, as these are almost a transitional food item, as they start dissolving when you suck on them.) Similarly, the SLP can test out the baked puffed snacks like “veggie straws” and “puffed snap peas.” These should also be close to a transitional food and melt in the mouth with adequate saliva and sucking on them.
- Graham crackers? – if cleared by SLP (May try these if the person has adequate saliva and some tongue pressure, as these are almost a transitional food item, as they start dissolving when you suck on them. Could use a dip to moisten. These are easier than other dry crackers, like saltines).
 - May try a cream cheese or other dips from the Level 4 Puree section on these softer items of Pringles and graham crackers

Good for all levels if the person can tolerate a thin liquid without requiring a thickener, and can handle a transitional food that starts as a solid and transitions to a liquid in the mouth:

- Ice cream without chunks
- Frozen yogurt without chunks
- Popsicles without nuts/chunks



AVOID THESE SNACKS ON ALL LEVELS BELOW LEVEL 7 REGULAR

(unless tested by clinician and approved through a doctor’s order to deviate from prescribed diet. This is not a complete list of challenging foods to avoid.)

- Bagels, baguettes, and other tough breads (highly chokable)

- Marshmallows (highly chokable, per foods to avoid in Level 7 Easy to Chew IDDSI Adult Consumer Handout, January 2019)
- Rice Krispie treats
- Tough chocolates and gummy candys like Airheads, Charleston Chews, Milk Duds and Tootsie Rolls
- Jell-o
- Nuts, seeds
- Dried fruits (dried figs, mango, pineapple, apple, cranberries, raisins, etc.)
- Fruit Roll-ups
- Hard candies (may consider a lollipop if the person has good control and judgement to hold it and suck/swallow and lick)
- Konjac jelly containing candies (Japanese)
- Rice cakes, Mochi
- Chewing gum
- Raw vegetable sticks
- Whole grapes, cherries, most berries, olives, and other items that could roll back and block the airway (the size of the opening to your airway is roughly the size of your thumbnail).
- Mango, pineapple may be too fibrous
- Popcorn, Kettle corn, Carmel corn
- Corn chips, hard/spiky potato chips (only Pringles have the potential to melt in the mouth with adequate saliva and some tongue pressure).
- Pretzels (even a traditional Philadelphia soft pretzel may be too chewy)
- Crackers (only graham crackers have the potential to melt in the mouth with adequate saliva and some tongue pressure).
- **IDDSI recommends avoiding foods with the following descriptors: “hard or dry food, tough or fibrous foods, chewy, crispy, crunchy food, sharp or spiky, pips and seeds, bone or gristle, sticky or gummy food, and stringy food.”**

The following are specifically created **snacks for people with dysphagia**. They melt in your mouth. EAT provides a sweet option, and SAVORESE gives you choices for savory snacks! (Nothing to financially disclose in making these recommendations.)

1. THE EAT BAR: <https://www.theeatbar.com>
2. SAVORESE savory snacks, for the non-sweet tooth: <https://savorease.com/>

IDDSI.org Reference:

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