

Dietary Guidelines: MOIST DIET

Your Speech Pathologist has determined that you have difficulty swallowing and may be at risk for aspirating certain foods which may then enter your lungs, placing you at risk for infection and/or choking. Your Speech Pathologist has determined that limiting your diet to soft foods may help to reduce your risk of aspirating. As such, it is important to closely follow these guidelines.

What is a moist diet? Being on a moist diet means that the foods you eat will need to be soft enough to easily cut with a fork. In addition, these foods should also have a great deal of moisture in them or added to them before you attempt to swallow. Foods made with sauces, gravies, as well as pastas and casseroles are examples of some common moist food items. Tougher meats such as steak and chicken should be avoided unless they are very tender. In some cases, it may be better to avoid these meats completely but your Speech Pathologist will discuss this with you.

Helpful Hints If you have been prescribed this diet, it will always be easier to eat foods when they are well moistened. You may like to use extra sauces, gravies and syrups to moisten your foods. This can be especially helpful to request in restaurants. If you need to use thickened liquids, be sure to follow the guidelines for how thick these items should be.

Try to avoid anything crunchy. Often, soft casseroles will have a crunchy topping that may be difficult to manage for someone on a moist diet. Other soft foods such as French toast or pancakes may develop hard crusts. These should be softened by soaking in a liquid such as syrup or removed entirely before eating.

Using sips of liquid can also be very helpful to someone following a moist diet. Taking frequent sips of liquid can assist with providing the extra needed moisture/lubrication to the swallow. It is very easy, however, to become full quickly when you take in lots of fluid simultaneously. If this happens, you should be sure the liquid you are drinking has good nutritional value, such as Boost or Ensure.

Foods to AVOID Some foods will always be difficult to swallow safely if you are on a moist diet. The following items should be avoided:

- Jell-O
- Nuts and Seeds
- Crisp Bacon
- Bread
- Tortillas
- Raw vegetables
- Crisp fruits
- Dried fruits
- Corn, popcorn
- Chips and other crunchy foods
- Dry cereals

If there are certain foods you know you have a difficult time swallowing, you should always avoid them, even if you do not see those items listed above.

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