

# Patient information

## High risk foods for choking

Contact speech and language therapist .....

Telephone number .....

These foods may pose a risk of choking. These food textures should be avoided if you are on a texture modified diet, or have been given this information by a speech and language therapist.

These foods can be 'high risk' because they can:

- Be difficult to chew thoroughly
- Require increased levels of control in the mouth
- Cover or completely block the airway
- Contain several textures
- Leave a residue of some kind in the mouth or throat, which can drop into the airway and cause choking

Food characteristic to avoid	Examples
Mixed thin and thick textures	Soup with pieces of food, cereal that does not blend with milk
Hard or dry	Nuts, dry cakes, bread, dry cereal, raw vegetables (eg carrots, cauliflower)
Tough or fibrous	Steak, pineapple
Chewy	Sweets, cheese chunks, marshmallows, chewing gum, sticky mashed potato, dried fruits
Crispy	Crackling, crisp bacon, cornflakes

<b>Food characteristic to avoid</b>	<b>Examples</b>
Crunchy	Raw carrot, raw apple, popcorn
Sharp or spiky	Corn chips, crisps
Crumbly	Dry cake crumble, dry biscuits
Pips / seeds / white part of fruit	Apple seeds, pumpkin seeds, white of an orange
Skins or outer shells	Peas, grapes, chicken skin, salmon skin, sausage skin
Foods with husks	Corn, shredded wheat, bran
Bone or gristle	Meat or fish bones, meat with gristle
<b>Food characteristic to avoid</b>	<b>Examples</b>
Round or long shaped food	Sausage, grapes
Sticky or gummy	Nut butter, overcooked porridge, edible gelatine, sticky rice cakes, konjac containing jelly
Stringy	Beans, rhubarb
Floppy	Lettuce, cucumber, spinach leaves
Crust formed during cooking or heating	Crust or skin that forms on food during cooking or after heating eg cheese topping, on mashed potato
Juicy food	Where juice separates from the food piece in the mouth eg watermelon
Food particles present or larger than recommended size  (IDDSI levels 3 - 6)	<p><b>Level 4 puree:</b> no lumps should be present</p> <p><b>Level 5 minced and moist:</b> no food particles larger than 4mm</p> <p><b>Level 6 soft and bite-sized:</b> no food pieces larger than 1.5 x 1.5cm</p> <p><b>Level 7 easy chew:</b> there is no food size limit</p>
<p><b>Note: This list is a guide only, each person is different.</b></p> <p><b>If a food causes difficulty you should treat it as 'high risk'.</b></p>	

Avoid ice cream, lollies and jelly, unless your speech and language therapist advise that they are okay for you. Ice cream and lollies turn to a thin liquid in the mouth, and jelly breaks into small pieces that are hard to control.

**Therapists additional notes:**

*If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities please visit the hospital website [www.wsh.nhs.uk](http://www.wsh.nhs.uk) and click on the link, or visit the disabledgo website:*

*<http://www.disabledgo.com/organisations/west-suffolk-nhs-foundation-trust/main>*

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