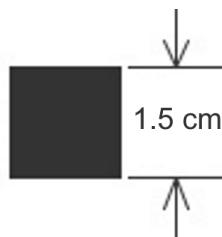**Te Whatu Ora**
Health New Zealand

Soft and bite-sized food (IDDSI level 6)

Soft and bite-sized food looks like scrambled egg.

- It is soft and tender, in bite-sized pieces.
- It has no separate thin fluids.
- It can easily be chewed before you swallow it.
- It has no pieces bigger than 1.5 cm x 1.5 cm – this big:

1.5 cm

How to check soft and bite-sized food

Soft and bite-sized food is the right consistency if it passes the Fork pressure test. Ask a carer or friend to help you with this test.

Fork pressure test
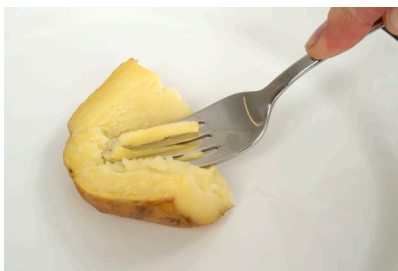
Press the fork until your thumbnail goes white. Then lift the fork to check that the food stays squashed.

See the IDDSI food test videos at
www.iddsi.org/videos

Recommended foods and foods to avoid

Bread, cereals, rice, pasta, noodles (grain foods)	
✓ Recommended foods	✕ Foods to avoid
✓ Cereal with small lumps. For example, porridge, wheat biscuits soaked in milk or rice bubbles softened with fluid. ✓ Soft pasta and noodles. ✓ Rice, quinoa or couscous with a thick, smooth, non-pouring sauce to moisten it and hold it together. ✓ Rice porridge or congee.	✕ All bread. ✕ All crackers. ✕ All pastries. ✕ All cakes. ✕ All biscuits. ✕ Crispy or dry pasta. For example, the edges of a pasta bake or lasagne. ✕ Coarse or hard cereal that does not moisten easily. For example, toasted muesli and bran cereals ✕ Cereal with nuts, seeds and dried fruit.

Vegetables	
✓ Recommended foods	✗ Foods to avoid
✓ Peeled and cooked vegetables. ✓ mashed or chopped. Mince or puree vegetables that have outer casings. For example, peas and corn.	✗ Stir-fried vegetables. ✗ Raw vegetables. For example, salads. ✗ Hard to chew or stringy vegetables that cannot be mashed with a fork. For example, green beans, broccoli stalks, asparagus, puha, watercress.

Fruit	
✓ Recommended foods	✗ Foods to avoid
✓ Peeled, soft, fresh or canned fruits. For example, bananas, mango, kiwifruit, stone fruits, some berries. ✓ Pureed fruit. ✓ Peeled and cooked hard fruits. For example, apple, pear.	✗ Dried fruit. ✗ Stringy or fibrous fruit. For example, pineapple, citrus fruit. ✗ Crunchy raw fruit. For example, apple. ✗ Fruits with an outer casing or pips. For example, citrus fruits, passionfruit, grapes, blueberries.

Meat, fish, poultry, eggs, nuts, seeds and legumes

✓ Recommended foods	✗ Foods to avoid
✓ Meat, fish and shellfish served tender and chopped.	✗ Meat with gristle or skin. For example, sausages, salami.
✓ White meats minced (as they can be stringy).	✗ Dry, tough, chewy or crispy meat. For example, bacon, crackling.
✓ Red meats are best slow cooked before chopping.	✗ Quiches and pies with pastry crusts.
✓ Fish and shellfish moist and easily broken up with the edge of a fork. For example, kina, crayfish, oysters.	✗ Nuts and seeds.
✓ Lentils or beans without skin, well-cooked. For example, red or yellow lentils, kidney beans, baked beans.	✗ All other beans and lentils.
✓ Eggs.	
✓ Crustless quiche.	
✓ Small pieces of tofu.	

Milk and milk products

✓ Recommended foods	✗ Foods to avoid
✓ Yoghurt.	✗ Grilled cheese.
✓ Cheese, cut to size.	
✓ Custard, mousse and instant pudding.	

Other	
✓ **Recommended foods**	✗ **Foods to avoid**
✓ Soup (may contain small soft lumps). ✓ Salsa, sauces and dips with small soft lumps. For example, hummus, guacamole. ✓ Sweet and savoury condiments without hard lumps of fruit or vegetables.	✗ Soup with large or hard pieces of meat or vegetables.

Notes or preparation tips

Written by speech-language therapists, Te Whatu Ora – Health New Zealand Waitaha Canterbury. Adapted by HealthInfo clinical advisers. Last reviewed July 2023.