Pureed Diet

What is a pureed diet?
A pureed diet is needed for people who have trouble chewing or swallowing.

Pureed foods are soft, moist, and smooth. They have the look and texture of a pudding or mousse and they hold together. Pureed foods should not be lumpy, thin, or runny.

Eating well
Canada’s Food Guide recommends choosing a variety of foods from all four food groups each day. This includes Vegetables and Fruit, Grain Products, Milk and Alternatives, and Meat and Alternatives.

Vegetables and Fruit

Adults (over 18 years) - 7 to 10 servings a day
Teens (14 to 18 years) - 7 to 8 servings a day
Children (2 to 13 years) - 4 to 6 servings a day

Examples of 1 serving before pureeing:
- 1 medium size vegetable or fruit
- ½ cup (125 mL) fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables or fruit
- ½ cup (125 mL) vegetable or fruit juice

Foods to choose:
- pureed soft cooked or canned vegetables
- pureed soft skinless fruit
- strain pureed vegetables and fruits before eating if there are pieces of skin or small seeds (such as in strawberries, corn, blueberries, tomato sauce, smoothie)
- pureed stewed pitted prunes
- smooth mashed potatoes or squash
- jarred baby food, strained vegetables or fruit
- commercially prepared fruit sauces (such as Fruitsations®)
- vegetable or fruit juice

Foods to avoid:
- vegetables and fruits that do not puree well because of skin or seeds (such as raspberries, blackberries)
- all forms of pineapple
- dried fruit (such as coconut, raisins)

Grain Products

Adults (over 18 years) - 6 to 8 servings a day
Teens (14 to 18 years) - 6 to 7 servings a day
Children (2 to 13 years) - 3 to 6 servings a day

Examples of 1 serving before pureeing:
- ¾ cup (175 mL) hot cereal
- 1 slice of bread
- ½ cup (125 mL) cooked pasta or rice

Foods to choose:
- pureed breads, buns, pitas, bagels, or toast
- pureed baked items (such as biscuits, polenta, muffins, loafs)
- pureed pancakes, waffles, or French toast
- pureed bread pudding or bread stuffing
- pureed pasta
- pureed rice, couscous, or barley
- pureed crackers
- all smooth cooked cereals (such as oatmeal, cream of wheat or rice, oat bran, cornmeal)
- infant cereal

Foods to avoid:
- grain product with chocolate chips, nuts, seeds, dried fruit, or any hard particles (such as multigrain bread with seeds)
- large flake oatmeal, Sunny Boy® or Red River® hot cereals
- dry cereals
- hard or chewy granola, or cereal bars
- dry, loose rice (steamed, wild, brown)
An idea for making bread products the right texture—make a slurry

A slurry is made from liquid and commercial thickener. It is used to soak a bread product (such as bread, cookies, muffins, or pancakes) to help soften the food to the right texture. Bread product slurries feel like pudding in the mouth.

Recipe: Mix together 1 Tbsp (15 mL) commercial thickener and ½ cup (125 mL) hot milk (or use hot juice, water or nutritional supplement). Mix until smooth. Use it to soak a bread product. The bread product will soften.

Milk and Alternatives

Adults (over 18 years) - 2 to 3 servings a day
Teens (14 to 18 years) - 3 to 4 servings a day
Children (2 to 13 years) - 2 to 4 servings a day

Examples of 1 serving:
- 1 cup (250 mL) milk or fortified soy beverage
- ½ cup (125 mL) pudding or custard (made with milk or fortified soy beverage)
- ½ oz. (50 gram) cheese
- 1 cup (250 mL) cottage cheese

Foods to choose:
- plain or flavoured milk, buttermilk, soy milk, milkshake
- smooth milk pudding, custard, or yogurt
- smooth ice cream or frozen yogurt
- melted cheese in a pureed food
- pureed cottage cheese

Foods to avoid:
- milk products with chocolate chips, nuts, seeds, dried fruit or any hard particles like granola or rice in them
- crispy cheese topping

Meat and Alternatives

Adults (over 18 years) - 2 to 3 servings a day
Teens (14 to 18 years) - 2 to 3 servings a day
Children (2 to 13 years) - 1 to 2 servings a day

Examples of 1 serving before pureeing:
- 2½ oz. (75 gram) or ½ cup (125 mL) cooked meat, poultry, fish
- 2 eggs
- 2 Tbsp (30 mL) peanut or nut butter
- ¾ cup (175 mL) cooked beans or lentils
- ¾ cup (175 mL) tofu

Foods to choose:
- pureed moist meat, poultry, or boneless fish
- pureed sausages or wiener without the casing
- pureed cooked eggs and egg substitutes
- pureed mixed meals (such as sandwiches, casseroles with allowed ingredients)
- pureed soft cooked peas, beans, or lentils (such as hummus, baked beans)
- pureed tofu
- pureed soups
- jarred baby food, strained meat, poultry, or fish
- smooth nut butters (such as peanut butter) used in cooking

Foods to avoid:
- deep fried, crispy or battered meats, fish, or poultry
- all nuts or seeds
- crunchy nut butters or smooth nut butters spread on food
Desserts and Snacks

Foods to choose:
- ice cream, sherbet, popsicles
- Jell-O® and Bavarians
- pureed baked desserts (cakes, cookies)

Foods to avoid:
- chocolates, hard candy, toffee, licorice, gum
- baked desserts with chocolate chips, nuts, seeds, dried fruit, or any hard particles
- cheese puffs, popcorn twists, chips, popcorn, pretzels, or Cheezies®
- all pickles, olives

Condiments, Sauces, and Dressings

Foods to choose:
- sugar, sugar substitutes, syrup, or jelly
- honey used in cooking
- finely ground seasonings, herbs, or spices
- smooth condiments (such as ketchup, mustard, BBQ sauce, soy sauce, cranberry jelly, mayonnaise)
- non-hydrogenated margarine, butter, mayonnaise, salad dressing, sour cream
- smooth gravies or strained sauces (such as white sauce, cheese, hollandaise sauce)
- cream cheese and cheese spread used in cooking

Foods to avoid:
- jam or marmalade
- herbs, spices, and seasonings with hard seeds (such as coriander, whole pepper)
- chunky condiments (such as horseradish, chutney, relish, salsa, tartar sauce, cranberry sauce)
- spreads, gravies, or sauces that are not smooth (such as mushroom gravy)

Making pureed food

Use a mini chopper, food processor, or blender to puree all foods.

Grain Products

1. Take one serving and break into small pieces if needed.
2. Add 1 Tbsp (15 mL) of liquid. Liquids such as milk, juice, broth, melted butter, or margarine may be used to puree your foods.
3. Blend together until smooth and moist, like a pudding or mousse.
4. You may need extra liquid to make your grain product smooth and moist. Add 1 Tbsp of liquid at a time.

*You can also use the slurry recipe on page 2.

Vegetables and Fruit

1. Drain vegetables or fruit before pureeing.
2. Cut into small pieces.
3. Blend until smooth, like a pudding or mousse.
4. Most vegetables and fruits do not need liquid added when pureeing. If liquid is needed, use vegetable or fruit juice or the juice from canned fruit; add 1 Tbsp (15 mL) at a time.
5. Use a strainer to remove any skins or seeds as needed.

Meat, Poultry, or Fish

1. Take one serving and cut into small pieces.
2. Add 1 Tbsp (15 mL) of liquid. Liquids such as broth, gravy, sauces, melted butter, or margarine may be used to puree your foods.
3. Blend together until smooth and moist, like a pudding or mousse.
4. You may need extra liquid to make your meat product smooth and moist. Add 1 Tbsp of liquid at a time.
If the pureed food is too thin:
- Add more of the food being pureed or add breadcrumbs, mashed potato flakes, infant cereal, or commercial thickener to thicken. After adding the ingredient, puree the food again.
- You may need to add more thickening ingredients to get the right texture.
- You can buy commercial thickener, like Resource® ThickenUp®, at a pharmacy.

What to do with leftovers:
- Freeze the extra portions right away, using ice cube trays, muffin tins or on baking sheets.
- Once frozen, put in freezer bags, label, and store in freezer for later use.
- When thawing food items, make sure to stir the food well to mix in any liquid that may have separated.

Sample meal plan

Breakfast:
- Hot cereal
- Blended bread pudding
- Milk
- Juice or soft cooked fruit, pureed

Lunch:
- Soup, blended or strained
- Boneless fish, pureed
- Bread, pureed
- Milk
- Soft cooked fruit, pureed

Supper:
- Meat, pureed
- Mashed potatoes
- Smooth gravy or sauce
- Soft cooked vegetables, pureed
- Smooth milk pudding
- Juice

Snack ideas for anytime:
- Muffin, pureed
- Blended bread pudding
- Soft cooked or canned fruit, pureed
- Ripe banana, pureed
- Smooth yogurt or pudding