



FlexiLearnHub

Knowledge Hub

Professional Resources for Care, Catering & Hospitality

FREE PROFESSIONAL RESOURCE

Texture-Modified Food Awareness

A Professional Awareness Guide for Care Staff

Knowledge Hub Resource 005

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About This Resource

Texture-Modified Food Awareness

A Professional Awareness Guide for Care Staff

Supporting Safe, Dignified and Enjoyable Mealtimes

Texture-modified foods play an important role in supporting individuals who have been assessed as requiring modified food textures due to swallowing difficulties or other eating-related needs. When prepared and presented correctly, these meals can help promote safer eating while maintaining dignity, choice and enjoyment at mealtimes.

This guide has been developed by **FlexiLearnHub** to provide care staff with a professional awareness of texture-modified foods, their purpose and the importance of following individual care plans and the IDDSI Framework where applicable.

It is designed to complement workplace training and should be used alongside organisational policies, individual care plans and guidance from appropriately qualified healthcare professionals.

Purpose of this Resource

This guide has been designed to help readers:

- ✓ Understand what texture-modified foods are.
 - ✓ Recognise why modified food textures may be required.
 - ✓ Appreciate the importance of food presentation and dignity.
 - ✓ Understand the importance of following agreed care plans.
 - ✓ Promote safer, person-centred mealtime support.
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Suitable For

- Care Assistants
 - Senior Carers
 - Nurses
 - Care Home Managers
 - Support Workers
 - Catering Teams
 - Chefs and Cooks
 - Healthcare Assistants
 - Family Carers
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Important Information

This guide provides professional awareness only. Texture-modified foods should always be prepared, served and provided in accordance with an individual's assessed needs, documented care plan and current IDDSI recommendations where applicable. Care staff should never alter food textures without appropriate authorisation and guidance.

Continue Learning

Expand your understanding through the **FlexiLearnHub Dysphagia Awareness & IDDSI Framework Training** and our **Advanced IDDSI Level 4 Professional Purée Presentation & Plating Training**.

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What Are Texture-Modified Foods?

Understanding Texture-Modified Foods

Texture-modified foods are meals that have been specially prepared to make them easier and safer to eat for individuals who have difficulty chewing or swallowing. These foods may be recommended following an assessment by appropriately qualified healthcare professionals and should always be provided in accordance with an individual's documented care plan.

The aim of texture modification is to help individuals enjoy meals while supporting safer eating, good nutrition and hydration.



Why Might Someone Need Texture-Modified Foods?

Some individuals may require modified food textures because of:

- Swallowing difficulties (dysphagia).
- Medical conditions affecting chewing or swallowing.
- Recovery following illness or injury.
- Age-related changes that affect eating safely.

Every individual's needs are different, which is why it is essential to follow their agreed care plan at all times.

The Importance of the IDDSI Framework

Many health and social care organisations use the **International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative (IDDSI) Framework** to describe food textures and drink consistencies.

The IDDSI Framework provides a consistent approach that helps healthcare professionals, care staff and catering teams work together to support safer eating and drinking.

Good Practice

Care staff should:

- ✓ Follow the individual's documented care plan.
 - ✓ Check that the correct meal has been provided.
 - ✓ Understand that different individuals may require different food textures.
 - ✓ Report any concerns in accordance with local procedures.
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Remember

Texture-modified foods are not simply softer meals. They are specially prepared to meet an individual's assessed needs and should always be provided exactly as documented within their care plan.

Good Practice Reminder

Every meal should aim to balance:

 **Safety**

 **Dignity**

 **Enjoyment**

 **Person-Centred Care**

Why Presentation and Consistency Matter

Supporting Dignity Through Mealtime Presentation

For many people, mealtimes are an important part of everyday life, providing enjoyment, comfort and opportunities for social interaction. Individuals who require texture-modified foods should still be offered meals that look appealing, are recognisable and encourage a positive dining experience.

Good presentation helps reinforce dignity and demonstrates the same care and respect that would be given to any other meal.

The Importance of Consistency

Texture-modified meals should always be prepared and served in accordance with the individual's documented care plan and any applicable IDDSI recommendations.

Providing the correct consistency helps support safer eating and drinking while reducing the risk of confusion or inconsistency between different members of the care team.

Consistency also helps ensure that everyone involved in preparing and serving meals is working to the same agreed standard.

Good Practice

Care staff and catering teams should:

- ✓ Follow the individual's documented care plan.
 - ✓ Ensure the correct meal is provided.
 - ✓ Present meals in an attractive and appetising way where possible.
 - ✓ Respect individual food preferences, cultural choices and dietary requirements.
 - ✓ Communicate any concerns promptly through the appropriate channels.
-

Remember

A texture-modified meal should still look like a meal, not simply a mixture of ingredients. Attractive presentation can help support dignity, encourage enjoyment and promote a positive mealtime experience.

Good Practice Reminder

Well-presented meals help promote:

 **Dignity**

 **Enjoyment**

 **Respect**

 **Person-Centred Care**

Looking Beyond Nutrition

Texture-modified meals are about much more than meeting nutritional needs.

They also help support confidence, independence and quality of life. By taking pride in food presentation and following agreed care plans, care teams can make every mealtime a more positive experience.

Supporting Safe and Enjoyable Mealtimes

Every Mealtime Matters

Mealtimes provide more than nourishment. They are an opportunity to promote wellbeing, independence, dignity and social interaction. For individuals who require texture-modified foods, the support provided by care staff can make a significant difference to their overall mealtime experience.

By following agreed care plans and working as part of the wider care team, staff can help create a safe, positive and person-centred dining environment.

Good Practice During Mealtimes

Care staff should:

- ✓ Follow the individual's documented care plan at all times.
 - ✓ Check that the correct texture-modified meal has been provided.
 - ✓ Encourage independence wherever it is safe and appropriate.
 - ✓ Provide reassurance and support in a calm, respectful manner.
 - ✓ Observe for any changes or concerns and report them in accordance with local procedures.
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Respecting Individual Choice

Every individual has personal preferences, cultural traditions and favourite foods. Wherever possible, these should be respected while remaining consistent with their assessed dietary needs and care plan.

Supporting choice helps promote dignity, wellbeing and a more enjoyable mealtime experience.

Working Together

Providing safe mealtime support is a shared responsibility.

Care staff, catering teams, nurses, Speech and Language Therapists (SLTs), dietitians, managers and other healthcare professionals all have an important role in ensuring individuals receive appropriate support.

Good communication between the team helps maintain consistency and supports safer eating and drinking.

Remember

Well-presented texture-modified meals, combined with compassionate support and good communication, help promote safer eating while maintaining dignity and quality of life.

Good Practice Reminder

Every mealtime should aim to provide:

 **Safety**

 **Dignity**

 **Enjoyment**

 **Respect**

 **Person-Centred Care**

Looking Ahead

Supporting individuals at mealtimes is an ongoing responsibility. By remaining observant, following agreed care plans and working together as a team, care staff help create positive mealtime experiences that support both safety and wellbeing.

Continue Your Learning

Continuing Professional Development

Understanding texture-modified foods is an important part of supporting individuals who require modified diets. By continuing to develop your knowledge and following agreed care plans, care staff and catering teams can help promote safer eating, dignity and a positive mealtime experience.

Professional learning, combined with effective teamwork and person-centred care, helps ensure individuals receive the highest standard of support.

Continue Your Learning with FlexiLearnHub

Expand your knowledge with our growing range of CPD-accredited and CQC-aligned online training courses, including:

- ✓ Dysphagia Awareness & the IDDSI Framework
- ✓ Advanced IDDSI Level 4 Professional Purée Presentation & Plating
- ✓ Nutrition & Hydration in Care Settings
- ✓ Food Safety & Hygiene Level 2
- ✓ HACCP Level 2
- ✓ Infection Prevention & Control
- ✓ Dementia Awareness
- ✓ End of Life Care Awareness

Designed to support continuous professional development, workplace compliance and excellence in care and catering.

Related Knowledge Hub Resources

Continue exploring the **FlexiLearnHub Dysphagia & IDDSI Awareness Series**:

Available Now



Resource 002

Understanding the IDDSI Framework – A Quick Reference Guide for Care Staff



Resource 003

Recognising the Signs of Dysphagia – A Professional Awareness Guide for Care Staff



Resource 004

Supporting Safe Mealtimes for People with Dysphagia – A Good Practice Guide for Care Staff



Resource 005

Texture-Modified Food Awareness – A Professional Awareness Guide for Care Staff

Our Knowledge Hub continues to grow with free professional resources designed to support best practice across the care, catering and hospitality sectors.

Visit FlexiLearnHub

Explore our free professional resources and CPD-accredited online training at:

www.flexilearnhub.com

About FlexiLearnHub

FlexiLearnHub provides professional online training, downloadable workplace resources and practical awareness guides for the care, catering and hospitality sectors.

Our mission is to make high-quality learning accessible, practical and affordable while supporting safer workplaces, continuous professional development and person-centred care.



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