



**SPEECH
PATHOLOGY**

IDDSI in Paediatrics

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What is IDDSI?

The International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative (IDDSI) is a global framework for describing texture modified foods and thickened fluids for individuals with dysphagia (swallowing difficulties). This framework has been specifically developed to be appropriate for people of all ages.

Why do children need IDDSI?

Some children have difficulty with eating and drinking, including gathering the food in the mouth, preparing the food for swallowing, sucking, chewing and the process of swallowing.

Research shows that 20–50% of typically developing children will have a feeding disorder at some point of their development. In addition, 70–89% of children with developmental disabilities will experience a feeding disorder.

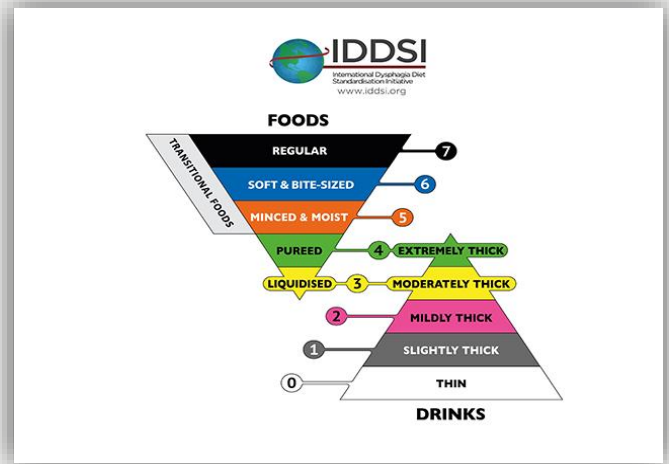
After a comprehensive assessment by a Speech Pathologist, children with feeding difficulties may be recommended a modified diet or thickened fluids represented by an IDDSI level. It is important to remember that despite the IDDSI level a child is recommended by their Speech Pathologist they must still be provided developmentally appropriate foods.



Medical conditions that can impact eating and drinking

- Reflux
- Gastrointestinal issues
- Respiratory or cardiac difficulties
- Structural abnormalities e.g. cleft palate or tongue tie
- Neurological conditions
- Allergies or intolerances
- Tracheostomy
- Prematurity





Signs of a Paediatric Feeding Disorder

- Avoiding foods or restricting food intake
- Refusing age-appropriate or developmentally appropriate foods or drinks
- Displaying disruptive or inappropriate mealtime behaviours
- Unable to independently feed when expected and unable to use age-appropriate utensils or devices
- Difficulty swallowing, which may be shown by coughing, breathing changes, wet sounding breathing or regurgitation
- Spitting out food
- Crying during mealtimes
- Excessive drooling
- Frequent respiratory tract infections

What is IDDSI?

IDDSI is a global framework for describing texture modified foods and thickened fluids. IDDSI can be used for all ages, care settings and cultures.

As shown in the diagram above, the IDDSI framework is comprised of two triangles, one for foods and one for drinks. IDDSI spans across 8 levels from Level 7: Regular to Level 0: Thin with each level being represented by a text label, number and colour. Each level of IDDSI has specific descriptors and testing methods to ensure it is prepared consistently.

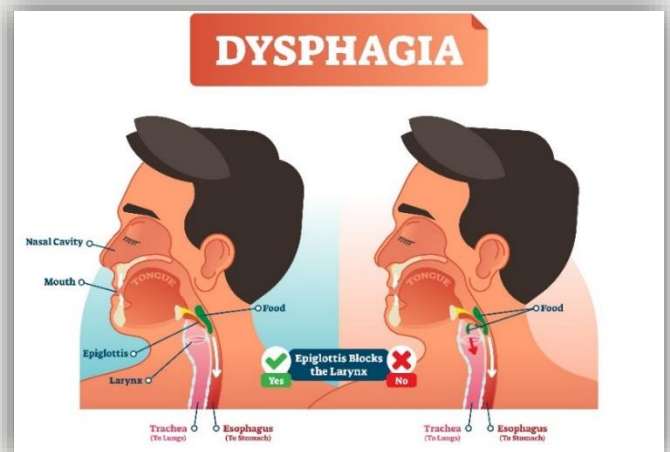
Prevalence of Dysphagia

25–45% of a typically developing children will have dysphagia at some point in their childhood

31–99% of children with cerebral palsy

70–89% of children with developmental disabilities will have a feeding disorder

26–40% of infants born prematurely will have dysphagia



IDDSI for children

The IDDSI framework differs between adults and children to account for the anatomical differences as we age. Paediatric IDDSI recommends smaller food pieces of food as children's airways are smaller than those of an adult. Dependent on size and growth, children may transition to using the adult IDDSI recommendations post puberty.



Summary

IDDSI is a global framework for people and children with dysphagia or feeding difficulties.

Children with feeding disorders may require diet modification or thickened fluids to make their mealtimes safer. These modifications will be described using the International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative (IDDSI).

For any further information on IDDSI, please visit the IDDSI website (<https://iddsi.org>).

If you think you or someone you care for may have Dysphagia:

- Consult with your GP
- Discuss concerns with your Maternal and Child Health Nurse
- Get a referral to a Speech Pathologist
- You may also require a referral to a specialist such as an Ears, Nose & Throat Specialist



Need assistance supporting someone with Dysphagia?

To consult with OSCAR Care Group's Speech Pathologist, Delaney Sadler, please use our contact details below.



References

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