

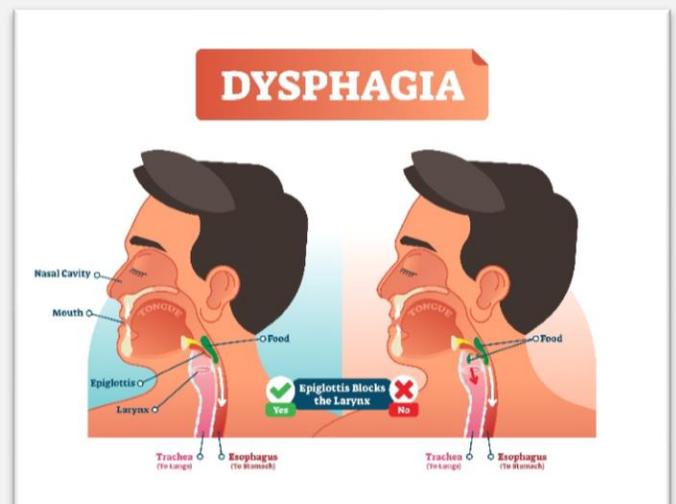
## ***What is Dysphagia & how can IDDSI help those affected?***

Dysphagia is the formal name for swallowing difficulties. These difficulties can occur at any stage of swallowing. This includes the lead up to swallowing, for example someone may have difficulty using cutlery, remembering to eat or putting too much or too little food in their mouth at one time.

OSCAR Care Group's Speech Pathologist, Delaney Sadler, says "in the oral stage of swallowing, someone with dysphagia may have difficulty chewing, controlling their saliva, keeping food within their mouth, clearing the food out of their mouth, moving the food within their mouth or transporting their food to the back of their mouth to swallow. Dysphagia can also occur when the food is in the throat as someone may have difficulty protecting their airway or controlling the food or fluid."

### ***Signs of Dysphagia***

- Feeling of food 'getting stuck' or 'going down the wrong way'
- Pain when swallowing
- History of aspiration pneumonia/recurrent chest infections
- Changes to diet that indicates avoidance of specific foods or fluids
- Increasing time required to chew & swallow foods
- Food or fluid leaking from the oral or nasal cavities during meals
- Drooling, excess saliva or dry mouth
- Residual food or fluid in mouth after swallowing
- Coughing during or after eating and drinking
- Voice quality changes during or after eating & drinking; if the voice sounds wet or gurgly
- Breathing pattern changes during a meal or difficulty coordinating breathing & swallowing



## **What Childcare chefs need to know about IDDSI**

The International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Implementation (IDDSI) has been officially in place since May 1, 2019. Further information: <https://iddsi.org>. The standardisation has been presented in a way which is easy to understand & very simple to implement across all areas where people with **Dysphagia** are affected.

### **Why the Change to IDDSI?**

1. To allow a globally accepted way of describing texture modified foods and thickened liquids.
2. To avoid confusion and miscommunication regarding diet textures and drink consistencies.
3. To meet the needs of individuals with dysphagia across their lifespan, care settings and cultural backgrounds.
4. To be more person-focused by using less jargon and including measurement techniques that are easier to use at home and are more culturally acceptable.



### **What next for Childcare Chefs**

#### **1) Understand the new framework**

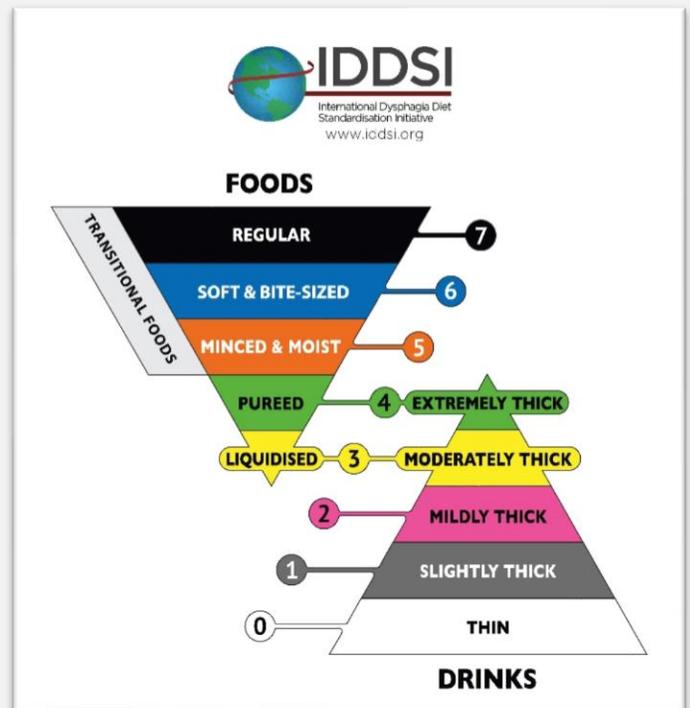
The [IDDSI website](https://iddsi.org) provides a comprehensive guide. The numbers and colours of each level of thickness have been internationally standardised so they are easy to understand at a glance.

#### **2) Modify your menus**

Update your menus and resident files to accurately reflect the changes and ensure they comply with the new standardisation. See examples below.

#### **3) Share the new framework**

Make sure your kitchen staff, service staff and nurses have all received IDDSI instructions about the new standardisation, so everyone is using the same terminology and testing methods.



## ***Examples of menu adaptations***

### **Meat**

Understanding which cut of meat produces a more tender result when cooked is important. 'Working muscles' such as chicken thighs, beef blade and lamb shanks can be texturised more easily. Slicing across the grain can help create a Level 5 Minced and Moist texture.



### **Cooking**

Moisture retention when cooking helps with the more pureed levels and can be as simple as leaving the lid on the pot while cooking so the food doesn't dry out at all.

Legumes such as lentils and chickpeas can be soaked for 30 minutes in cold water then ground down to the desired size for the texture level you wish to achieve.



### **Additional ingredients**

Adding cheese can help increase the flavour but it also tends to increase the level of stickiness in the food as well. Chefs have found Parmesan cheese to be less sticky, yet with all the flavour.

### ***References:***

*Thanks to our partners at Unilever for this information.*



### ***Need help assisting children with Dysphagia or Speech Difficulty?***

Please call or email **OSCAR Care Group** Speech Pathologist, Delaney Sadler via our contact details below.