




Thickened Liquids

Why thickened liquids?

If you have trouble swallowing (dysphagia) thin liquids, thick liquids may help. Thin liquids can be difficult to control while swallowing, and thickened liquids may be better controlled in the mouth. This control may help prevent liquid from getting into the lungs.

There are different levels of thickened fluids.

Thin	Nectar Thick	Honey Thick	Pudding Thick
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Thin fluids include juices, milk, water, pop, thin broth soups, coffee, tea, nutritional supplement drinks <p>Thin fluids CAN be thickened</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Can be easily pouredfruit nectarsstrained pureed cream soups <p>e.g. - peach or mango juice</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Slightly thicker and not as easy to pour as nectar <p>e.g. - liquid honey</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Holds own shapeCannot pourUsually eaten with a spoon <p>e.g. - pudding - yogurt - applesauce</p> 

Above image created by www.wrha.mb.ca

It is recommended that you use _____ liquids.

Foods and Thin Liquids to Avoid:

1–Liquid medication is a thin liquid.

2–Avoid liquids combined with solids:

- Soup with crackers
- Soup with pieces of meat, vegetables, noodles or grains (rice/barley))
- Cold cereal with milk
- Jello with fruit pieces
- Canned fruit packed in juice, watery fruits such as watermelon, oranges
- Broth–based soups

2–Avoid foods that melt in the mouth and turn into thin liquids include:

- Ice cream, frozen yogurt, sherbet, slushes/slurpees, milkshakes, popsicles, fudgesicles and Jell–O

Thickened Liquid Ideas:

1–Mix pudding with cold milk or applesauce with a little juice to make a thickened liquid. Mix with a fork or blender. Adjust the amount of milk for desired consistency.

2–Ready to eat soup can be blended in the blender to a thick, smooth consistency for purees or honey–thick liquids.

3–Naturally thick liquids/puree–

- Mashed potatoes
- Mashed sweet potatoes
- Devilled ham
- Tuna fish mixed with mayo
- Apple sauce
- Instant oatmeal
- Cream of wheat
- Grits
- Fruit smoothies

4–Natural Thickeners–comes in powder or gel

Use a whisk, fork or blender to mix these foods into thin liquids:

- mashed potato flakes, infant cereal or pureed vegetable that can be used to thicken soups
- flour or cornstarch (dissolved in a small amount of water) can be added to fluids during cooking.
- Puree fruit such as applesauce or blended banana can be added to thicken juices.

5–Commercial Thickening Products:

- Thickened hot fluids tend to get thicker as they cool.
- It is very important to follow the instructions on the label to get the best results.
- Add thickeners slowly while mixing. Over–mixing may delay the time it takes to thicken liquids.
- The liquid will reach the right thickness within 1–5 minutes. Juices will thicken the fastest, while milk and nutrition drinks (e.g. Ensure, Boost) will take longer to thicken.
- Pre–made thickened products can also be purchased at some pharmacies and online (Amazon).