

Department of
Nursing

Carer Onboard:
Introduction to Feeding Your Loved Ones



Introduction

Feeding is a big part of caring for your loved one, and it may feel daunting to you.

This booklet will serve as an introduction to feeding your loved one during hospitalisation. The topics will include these areas:

1. Types of Diet Consistencies
2. Modes of Feeding
3. Simple Feeding Techniques
4. Ways to Maintain Good Dental and Oral Hygiene for Your Loved one

Do seek help from trained staff if you have any enquires or concerns.

This reading resource is adapted from "Modified Consistencies for Swallowing Problems" by Department of Speech Therapy

Diet Consistencies

Your loved ones may be receiving any of the following types of diet consistency, depending on their chewing and swallowing functions. Do check in with the trained staff to identify the correct consistency for your loved one.

Regular

- Food that can be in large pieces, and can be hard, crunchy, dry, chewy, or fibrous in texture
- Biting is required to break bigger pieces of food apart
- Chewing is needed to mash food before swallowing
- Requires no special preparation and may contain bones, seeds, skin
- Examples: Wholemeal bread, nasi lemak, biscuits



Regular diet

Soft & bite-sized Porridge Rice

- Food that is soft, tender and moist in texture
- Easily broken apart by a fork/ spoon/ chopsticks
- Some chewing is needed to mash food before swallowing
- Prepared as small bite-sized pieces (no larger than 1.5cm x 1.5cm)
- Examples: Bite-sized steamed fish, chopped soft cabbage, cut-up steamed egg



Soft & bite-sized diet

Minced & moist

- Food that is soft, moist, and finely minced
- Requires minimal chewing
- Food pieces appear in small lumps (no larger than 4mm x 4mm pieces)
- Examples: Oats, softened/ crushed biscuits



Minced & moist diet

Diet Consistencies

Pureed

- Food that is smooth and lump-free
- Does not require any chewing
- Usually prepared with a blender
- Equivalent to extremely thick fluids



Pureed diet

- **Examples:** Black sesame paste, mousse, mashed potatoes

Modes of Feeding



Teaspoon



Tablespoon

Take Note

Does your loved one have the “Supervised Feeding” sign on their headboard?

This sign means that a trained staff is required to assist in feeding to closely monitor your loved one for any risk of choking.

If you see this sign, please allow our trained staff to feed your loved one. Do check in with our healthcare team if you have any questions.

Name	Discipline	Language / Dialect		
Diet		Denture	Hearing Aid	
		<input type="checkbox"/> U <input type="checkbox"/> L	<input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> R	
NBM	Functional Status		Oral Hygiene	
	<input type="checkbox"/> A (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> A (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> BD	<input type="checkbox"/> TDS <input type="checkbox"/> QDS
Supervised Feeding	Care Bundle <input type="checkbox"/>			
Fluid Restriction	A	P	N	
	7S	3R	11R	
	9R	5S	1S	
	11S	7L	3L	
	1L	9S	5R	

Patient's headboard
(found on the wall at head of bed)

Simple Feeding Techniques

Use these techniques when feeding your loved ones. Check in with the trained staff if you are unsure.

- Feed only when your loved one is alert
- Feed slowly
- Monitor swallows by placing your fingers on their throat
- Ensure your loved one swallows before feeding next spoonful
 - Remind/prompt for him/her to swallow (verbally / empty spoon)
- Minimise distractions and talking during feeding
- Allow rest breaks during feeding if he/she appears breathless
- Avoid mixed consistencies (i.e. fluids and food in the same mouthful)
- Stop feeding if you notice your loved ones coughing. Seek advice from trained staff.
- Reflux precautions:
 - Sit your loved one upright after meals and do not lie them down immediately
 - Take small frequent meals

Facing Difficulty?

Do seek help from our trained staff if you are unsure or have any concern such as:

- Difficulty feeding your loved ones
- Refusal to eat
- Taking a longer time than usual to swallow their food
- Coughing / breathlessness
- A different diet consistency from the previous meal

How to Maintain Good Dental and Oral Hygiene?

Interesting Fact

Did you know that maintaining good oral hygiene and dental care helps to reduce incidence of pneumonia in patients who have difficulty swallowing (dysphagia) by 20% ? (Sørensen et. al, 2013)

Oral Care

Good oral hygiene is important for eating because it keeps teeth and gums healthy, making chewing easier. When teeth and gums are clean, it reduces the chance of dental issues like cavities and gum disease, which can make eating uncomfortable. It also helps with proper digestion, leading to better overall health.



Bring your loved one's toothbrush and toothpaste to continue their oral care routine during hospitalization. Check in with our trained staff before carrying out your loved one's oral care routine.

If your loved one cannot brush their teeth, here are other methods to help them maintain good oral hygiene/health:

- Antiseptic mouth wash
- Oral swabs with/without alcohol-free products
- Non-foaming toothpastes to clean the tongue and roof of mouth
- Oral moisturisers to keep the oral cavity moist to prevent dry mouth (xerostomia)



Common oral care products

Tan Tock Seng Hospital

Contact:

6357 7000 (Central Hotline)



Scan the QR Code with your smart phone to
access the information online or visit
<http://bit.ly/TTSHHealth-Library>

Was this information helpful?
Please feel free to email us if you have
any feedback regarding what you have
just read at
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