

## About IDDSI Liquids

### International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative

The International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative (IDDSI) is a global project that gives standardized terms, definitions, and testing methods for modified foods and liquids that could be recommended for a person with dysphagia. IDDSI is used across ages, cultures, and places around the world.

**IDDSI Levels:** IDDSI [Liquid Levels](#) are described in [Levels 0-4](#), with Level 3 & 4 overlapping with liquid levels.

Level 7: Regular

Level 6: Soft and Bite-Sized

Level 4: Pureed / Extremely Thick

Level 2: Mildly Thick

Level 7: Easy-to-chew, Regular

Level 5: Minced + Moist

Level 3: Liquidised / Moderately Thick

Level 1: Slightly Thick

Level 0: Thin

**Understanding Your Liquid Level:** Your speech-language pathologist is part of the care team that gives input on what liquid level would be best for your nutrition and safety. Your SLP can help you understand:

- ✓ What liquids you can have
- ✓ How to test a liquid to see if it fits at that level
- ✓ What to avoid
- ✓ Why this liquid level is recommended

Want to learn more?

- ✓ [IDDSI Patient Handouts](#)

Reference: The International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative 2019 @ <https://iddsi.org/framework>.

These are NOT official IDDSI resources, educational materials or education programs and they are NOT meant to replace materials and resources on [www.IDDSI.org](http://www.IDDSI.org)

## IDDSI Liquid Levels

These are the different **liquid** levels within the International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative (IDDSI) framework. The best way to know if your liquid is the appropriate level is to see how quickly it leaves a syringe - this is called the flow rate. Thicker levels will move more slowly. You will know it moves slowly because more of the liquid will be left in the syringe after 10 seconds.

Syringe Test **Level 0: Thin**  
10mL will drain in 7 seconds



Syringe Test **Level 1: Slightly Thick**  
After 10 seconds, 1-4mL will be left in the 10mL syringe.



Syringe Test **Level 2: Mildly Thick**  
After 10 seconds, 4-8mL will be left in the 10mL syringe.



Syringe Test **Level 3: Moderately Thick**  
After 10 seconds, 8+mL will be left in the 10mL syringe.



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## About Thickeners

The International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative (IDDSI) is a global project that gives standardized terms, definitions, and testing methods for modified foods and liquids that could be recommended for a person with dysphagia.

**IDDSI Levels 1, 2, 3, or 4 may need thickeners added in order to make the liquid consistent with that level.**

Level 7: Regular

Level 6: Soft and Bite-Sized

Level 4: Pureed / Extremely Thick

Level 2: Mildly Thick

Level 7: Easy-to-chew, Regular

Level 5: Minced + Moist

Level 3: Liquidised / Moderately Thick

Level 1: Slightly Thick

Level 0: Thin

What are thickeners?

Thickeners are products that can be added to liquids (water, coffee, juices, etc.) in order to change the texture - or thickness - of the liquid.

What form do thickeners come in?

Commercial thickeners come in gel or powder forms. Gel-based thickeners are a top choice because they remain consistent over time and unaffected by temperature.

Natural ingredients such as applesauce may be used, but the results are more variable with these products than with commercial thickeners.

What are some examples of commercial thickeners?

- ✓ [simply thick®](#)
- ✓ [Thick-it®](#)
- ✓ [ThickenUp®](#)

Where do you get thickeners?

Thickeners can be purchased from company websites, select pharmacies and stores.

Does insurance cover the cost of thickeners?

It's possible. It depends on your insurance coverage and the thickener. Check the website of the thickener you choose to learn more. See also:

- ✓ [Dysphagia Outreach Project](#)

## How To Thicken Liquids

The thickener brand you choose will give directions about the amount of thickener that needs to be added for a certain amount of liquid, and how to prepare the drink. Depending on the thickener used, liquids may thicken with time and thickness may vary depending on the nature of liquid used.

What IDDSI Level are you using?

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What thickener will you be using?

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What are the thickening instructions for your IDDSI Level?

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How can you test a drink to know that it is the correct IDDSI Level?

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### Learn More

- ✓ [How to Thicken Liquids from the Swallowing Disorders Foundation](#)
- ✓ [Preparing simply thick®](#)
- ✓ [ThickenUp® Dosage Chart](#)