

Food First in Care Homes: IDDSI Level 4 Pureed diet

A level 4 Pureed diet may have been advised by a Speech and Language Therapist due to difficulties with eating, drinking, and swallowing. This resource sheet outlines how to ensure the correct texture of a level 4 Pureed diet can be achieved, and offers tips for boosting the nutritional content of meals.

What is Level 4 food? A Level 4 pureed food should:

- Usually be eaten with a spoon or teaspoon
- Have a smooth texture with no lumps
- Hold shape on a spoon
- Fall off a spoon in a single spoonful when tilted
- Should **not** contain any liquids (like sauces) that separate from solids
- Should **not** be sticky

How can I make sure the food I prepare is level 4?

It is safest to test Pureed Food using the IDDSI Fork Drip Test and the IDDSI Spoon Tilt Test

Fork Drip Test:

Food does not dollop, or drip continuously through the fork prongs



Spoon Tilt Test:

A sample of pureed food holds its shape on the spoon and falls off fairly easily if the spoon is tilted or lightly flicked. Food should not be firm or sticky.

See videos of the IDDSI Fork Drip Test and IDDSI Spoon Tilt Test at:

<https://www.iddsi.org/framework/food-testing-methods>

Examples of suitable Level 4 foods and textures

<p style="text-align: center;">Meat</p> <p>All meats can be cooked and then pureed. Tougher meats might be better minced before cooking e.g. pork. Remove any gristle or bones before pureeing.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Fish</p> <p>All fresh or tinned fish can be pureed. Remove skin and bones before blending. Drain well before blending if using tinned fish.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Eggs</p> <p>Scrambled eggs are suitable or blend boiled eggs/ omelette/ fried eggs. Add butter/ mayonnaise/ cream when blending for extra calories.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Cheese</p> <p>Foods with cheese sauce can puree well e.g. cauliflower cheese, macaroni cheese. Cheese can be melted onto potatoes or pasta before blending.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Beans and pulses</p> <p>Tinned or cooked beans and lentils can be pureed (drain first). Any tough skins may need to be removed after blending. Red lentils have no skins and blend well.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Pasta</p> <p>Pasta can be blended down if well cooked and has enough sauce e.g. cheese sauce, tomato sauce.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Potatoes</p> <p>All cooked potatoes can be blended. Remove skin first.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Cereals</p> <p>Porridge, Ready Brek, Weetabix soaked in milk – should all be blended down.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Fruit</p> <p>Pureed fresh or cooked fruit (no skins or seeds unless sieved). Tinned fruit must be drained before pureeing.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Desserts</p> <p>Choose smooth desserts such as chocolate/ fruit mousses, Greek yoghurt, fromage frais, Angel Delight, crème caramel (do not require blending). Soft moist desserts with lumps e.g. rice pudding, trifle, sponge and custard can blend well. Jelly may not be suitable if resident is on thickened fluids as it melts to water in the mouth. Check any need for fluid thickening.</p>

Fortified Recipes

Level 4 foods can be lower in calories and protein than normal diets as liquids are often added when blending down. Adding 'boosters' will improve the nutritional content.

Porridge:

Porridge made with water = 80 Kcal and 2g protein

Add full cream milk, 1 tablespoon of milk powder and 1 tablespoon of butter or margarine when blending = 300 Kcal and 7g protein



Minced Meat:

1 serving of minced meat mixed with some stock / water = 160 Kcal and 16g protein

Add 1 tablespoon butter / margarine = 260 Kcal and 16g protein

Red lentil and vegetable hot pot:

1 serving blended with some vegetable stock = 150 Kcal and 3g protein

Add 2 heaped tablespoons grated cheese and 1 tablespoon butter / margarine = 320 Kcal and 13g protein. NB if using other beans (e.g. kidney, haricot), these may need to be blended and strained prior to using, to remove any tough skin.

Blended mixed vegetables

1 portion mixed vegetables blended with a little water / stock = 24 Kcal and 1g protein

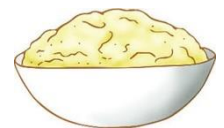
Add 1 tablespoon butter / margarine per portion when blending = 124 kcal and 1g protein

Mashed Potato:

1 portion of mashed potato = 200 Kcal and 2g protein

Add 1 tablespoon butter / margarine per portion = 315 Kcal and 4g protein

Add 1 tablespoon butter plus 1 tablespoon milk powder per portion = 315 Kcal and 4g protein



Rice Pudding or Custard:

1 bowl rice pudding = 110 Kcal and 3g protein

Add 2 tablespoons full / double cream per portion = 310 Kcal and 4g protein

Add 2 tablespoons cream & 1 tablespoon milk powder per portion = 365 Kcal and 7g protein

