MECHANICAL SOFT VS. MODIFIED MECHANICAL SOFT DIETS

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**Definition**

- The mechanical soft diet includes any foods that have been *mechanically* altered to aid in chewing and swallowing.
- Ways foods are prepared to become *mechanically* soft include:
  - Chopped
  - Ground
  - Pureed
  - Boiled
  - Steamed (long enough for food to become soft)
- Tools used to mechanically alter the foods include, but are not limited to:
  - Blender
  - Meat grinder
  - Knife
  - Potato Masher
  - Fork
- This diet only limits texture and consistencies
PURPOSE OF THESE DIETS

- Ensure the patient is safely and successfully swallowing foods and liquids
- Avoid aspiration
- Avoid pocketing food
- Foods on these diets require little chewing and are soft in texture
Barium Swallow Study

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ri8bBhw9msQ
IMPORTANT NOTE

- These diets can be modified for the individual patient based on the Speech Pathologist’s recommendations!
When Are These Diets Prescribed?

- Speech Pathologist (SLP) will come evaluate the patient
  - Assist patient in trialing different textures and thicknesses of foods and liquids
- Make recommendations based on the patient’s:
  - Physical ability to chew
  - Ability to safely swallow
When Do We See These Diets?

DYSPHAGIA

Head/Neck Cancer

Mouth/Throat/Neck Surgery

Patients with Minimal Teeth

Patients Without Dentures

Stroke Patients
## Key Foods Allowed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mechanical Soft</th>
<th>Modified Mechanical Soft</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meat &amp; Meat Substitutes</strong></td>
<td>Ground and tender-baked meats</td>
<td>Ground and tender-baked meats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eggs</strong></td>
<td>Scrambled, poached, or hard boiled</td>
<td>Scrambled, poached, or hard boiled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cheese</strong></td>
<td>Cottage and mild cheeses</td>
<td>Cottage and mild cheeses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peanut Butter</strong></td>
<td>Smooth</td>
<td>Smooth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lentils and Beans</strong></td>
<td>Soft-cooked lentils, beans, peas, tofu mashed by fork</td>
<td>Soft-cooked lentils, beans, peas, tofu mashed by fork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Casseroles</strong></td>
<td>All soft and moist</td>
<td>Soft and moist without stringy veggies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fruits &amp; Fruit Juices</strong></td>
<td>All juices. Soft fruits without tough skins or seeds</td>
<td>Fruit approved by SLP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vegetables &amp; Vegetable Juice</strong></td>
<td>All Juices. Well-cooked veggies able to be mashed by fork. Fresh tomato.</td>
<td>Well-cooked veggies able to be mashed by fork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Desserts</strong></td>
<td>Cakes, puddings, Jello, ice cream, cookies</td>
<td>Pudding, custard, ice cream, Jello, Katie whips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Soups</strong></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Thickened, strained, cream soups.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Foods to Avoid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mechanical Soft</th>
<th>Modified Mechanical Soft</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meat &amp; Meat Substitutes</strong></td>
<td>Meats that aren't ground</td>
<td>Those with stringy, dry, doughy components</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eggs</strong></td>
<td>Fried eggs</td>
<td>Fried eggs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cheese</strong></td>
<td>Hard cheeses &amp; cheeses containing particles that are difficult to chew</td>
<td>Hard cheeses &amp; cheeses containing particles that are difficult to chew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peanut Butter</strong></td>
<td>Crunchy nut butters</td>
<td>Crunchy nut butters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Casseroles</strong></td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Dry, doughy, crumbly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fruits &amp; Fruit Juices</strong></td>
<td>Fruits with tough skins or seeds, raw, hard fresh fruits, dried fruit, coconut</td>
<td>Fruits with tough skins, raw, hard fresh fruits, dried fruit, coconut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vegetables &amp; Vegetable Juice</strong></td>
<td>Whole kernel corn/corn on the cob, peas, lima beans, raw vegetables except fresh tomato and lettuce as liners for salads</td>
<td>Vegetable juices, peas, lima beans, whole kernel corn/corn on the cob, spinach, green beans, cooked greens, celery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Breads &amp; Other Starches</strong></td>
<td>Hard, crusty breads or rolls, English muffins, bagels, hard/coarse/dry cereals, crisply fried potatoes, fried rice, baked potato with skin</td>
<td>Dry cereals, whole wheat, coarse textured cereals, breads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fats &amp; Oils</strong></td>
<td>Nuts</td>
<td>Nuts, peanut butter, bacon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Desserts</strong></td>
<td>Any containing coconut, nuts, or dried fruit</td>
<td>Cake, cookies, pastries, pie, candy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Condiments</strong></td>
<td>Whole pickles and pickled vegetables, coarse pepper, marmalade</td>
<td>Pickles, marmalade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Soups</strong></td>
<td>Soup containing whole kernel corn or peas</td>
<td>Broth, unthickened blenderized soups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES: MODIFIED MECHANICAL SOFT

- Veggies prepared on this diet in the hospital will always be pureed
WHEN TO ADD EXTRA SAUCE AND GRAVY?

- Most modified mechanical soft foods will be prepared with added gravy or sauce
- Sometimes, SLP will assign the Slick diet in addition to the soft diets
- Patients and providers can always ask for a side of gravy to be sent on meal trays
**LIQUIDS**

- Thickened liquid consistencies:
  - Nectar-thick
  - Honey-thick
  - Pudding-thick
- The thickness of the liquid will be assigned by the SLP based on the patient’s ability to safely swallow
- Thickness of liquid is at room temperature
  - Jell-O
  - Soup
  - Milkshakes/Ice Cream
QUESTIONS?

- Speech Pathologists are now on Vocera!
  - Feel free to call them with additional questions during ‘normal business hours’
REFERENCES

- Amanda Brown, SLP. Kaiser Sunnyside Medical Center
- KP Diet Manual: Mechanical Soft Diet
- KP Diet Manual: Mechanical Soft Diet, Modified
- KP Diet Manual: Slick Diet
- KP PolicyTech: Inpatient Evaluation of Speech, Language, Cognitive, and/or Swallowing Skills