



6

SOFT & BITE-SIZED



Level 6 Soft & Bite-Sized for Babies and Children

What is this food texture level?

Level 6 – Soft & Bite-Sized Foods:

- ✓ Soft, tender and moist, but with no thin liquid leaking/dripping from the food
- ✓ Ability to ‘bite off’ a piece of food is *not* required
- ✓ Ability to chew ‘bite-sized’ pieces so that they are safe to swallow *is required*
- ✓ ‘Bite-sized’ pieces no bigger than 8mm x 8mm in size
- ✓ Food can be mashed/broken down with pressure from fork
- ✓ A knife is *not* required to cut this food



Why is this food texture level used for babies and children?

Level 6 – Soft & Bite-Sized food may be used if your child is not able to bite off pieces of food safely but is able to chew bite-sized pieces down into little pieces that are safe to swallow. Soft & Bite-Sized foods need a moderate amount of chewing, for the tongue to ‘collect’ the food into a ball and bring it to the back of the mouth for swallowing. The pieces are ‘bite-sized’ to reduce choking risk. If you notice the food pieces are not being chewed well though, please contact your clinician to make sure your child is on the correct food texture to reduce choking risk. Soft & Bite-Sized foods are eaten using a fork, spoon or chopsticks.

How do I test my food to make sure it is Level 6 Soft & Bite-Sized?

It is safest to test Soft & Bite-Sized food using the IDDSI Fork Pressure test.

See videos of the IDDSI Fork Pressure Test at www.IDDSI.org/framework/food-testing-methods/

IDDSI Fork Pressure Test

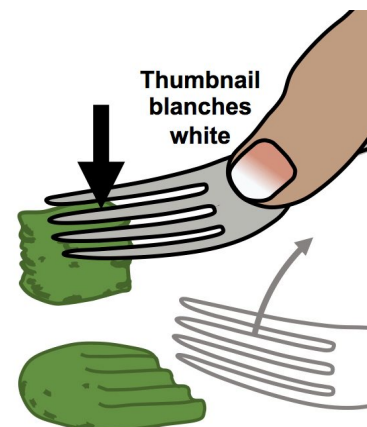
For *children* the lump size is no bigger than **8mm x 8mm**, which is about *half of the width* of a standard dinner fork.

To make sure the food is soft enough, press down on the fork until the thumbnail blanches to white, then lift the fork to see that the food is completely squashed and does not regain its shape

No bigger than 8mm x 8mm lump size for children



Soft & Bite-Sized food must pass both size and softness tests!





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EXAMPLES of Level 6 Soft & Bite-Sized Food for Babies and Children

- * **Meat** cooked tender and chopped to no bigger than 8mmx8mm lump size.
If cannot serve soft and tender, serve as Minced and Moist
- * **Fish** cooked soft enough to break and serve in pieces no bigger than 8mmx8mm
- * **Fruit** soft and chopped to pieces no bigger than 8mmx8mm pieces (drain any excess liquid). Do not use the fibrous parts of fruit (for example, the white parts of an orange). Be extra careful to watch when children are eating fruit with a high water content, where the juice separates from the solid in the mouth during chewing (for instance, fruits like watermelon or other melons)
- * **Vegetables** steamed or boiled with final cooked size of pieces no bigger than 8mmx8mm. (Stir fried vegetables are *too firm* and are *not* suitable)
- * **Cereal** served with pieces no larger than 8mmx8mm, with their texture fully softened. Drain excess liquid before serving
- * **NO REGULAR DRY BREAD** due to high choking risk!
See <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0I9FDjwJR0L5svIGCvIqHA/featured?reload=9> for instructions on how to make a Level 5 Minced & Moist sandwich, as this is also suitable for use on Soft & Bite-Sized diet
- * **Rice** requires a sauce to moisten it and hold it together. Rice should *not* be sticky or gluey and should *not* separate into individual grains when cooked and served. May require a thick, smooth, non-pouring sauce to moisten and hold the rice together



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IDDSI Fork Pressure Test

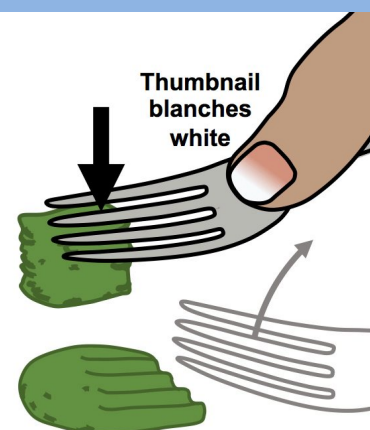
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For safety, **AVOID** these food textures that pose a choking risk for babies and children who need Level 6 Soft & Bite-Sized Food

Food characteristic to AVOID	Examples of foods to AVOID
Mixed thin + thick textures	Soup with pieces of food, cereal with milk
Hard or dry food	Nuts, raw vegetables (e.g. carrot, cauliflower, broccoli); dry cakes, bread, dry cereal
Tough or fibrous foods	Steak; pineapple
Chewy	Lollies/candies/sweets, cheese chunks, marshmallows, chewing gum, sticky mashed potato, dried fruits, sticky foods
Crispy	Crackling, crisp bacon, cornflakes
Crunchy food	Raw carrot, raw apple, popcorn
Sharp or spiky	Corn chips and crisps
Crumbly bits	Dry cake crumble, dry biscuits (add sauce to make these suitable)
Pips, seeds	Apple seeds, pumpkin seeds, white of orange
Food with skins or outer shell	Peas, grapes, chicken skin, salmon skin, sausage skin
Foods with husks	Corn, shredded wheat, bran
Bone or gristle	Chicken bones, fish bones, other bones, meat with gristle
Round, long shaped food	Sausage, grape
Sticky or gummy food	Nut butter, overcooked oatmeal/porridge, edible gelatin, konjac containing jelly, sticky rice cakes
Stringy food	Beans, rhubarb
Floppy foods	Lettuce, cucumber, uncooked baby spinach leaves
Crust formed during cooking or heating	Crust or skin that forms on food during cooking or after heating, for example, cheese topping; mashed potato
'Floppy' food	Lettuce, cucumber, baby spinach leaves
'Juicy' food	Where juice separates from the food piece in the mouth, for example watermelon
Large or hard lumps of food	Casserole pieces larger than 8mm x 8mm, fruit, vegetable, meat or pasta or other food pieces larger than 8mm x 8mm
Extra Clinician notes	

Intended for general information only. Please consult with your health care professional for specific advice for your baby or child