

Liquid Consistency

What does liquid consistency mean?

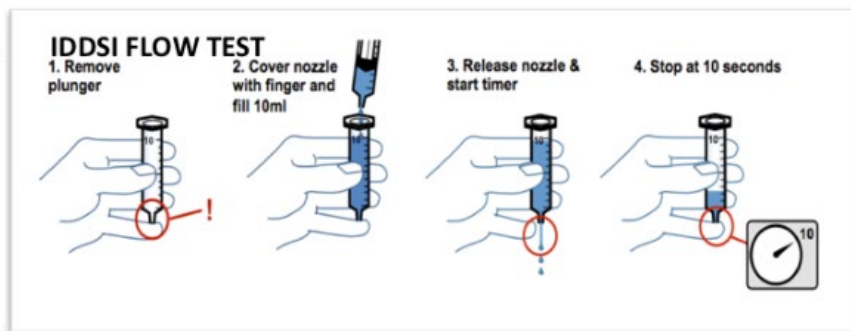
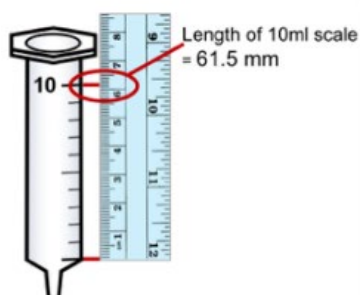
It refers to thickness of a liquid. Liquids that are thickened may be called slightly thick, mildly thick or moderately thick. Please refer to the table below to learn about the different liquids.

Why does it matter how thick or thin the liquids I have are?

You may not be able to swallow thin liquids safely. Drinking a liquid that is thicker may help prevent fluid from going into your lungs (also known as aspiration).

Liquids	Safe Liquids	Liquids to Avoid
Thin Liquids A liquid that is thin and easy to pour such as water.	Water, all juices, broth, milk, coffee, tea, cocoa, carbonated drinks, alcoholic drinks, gelatin, frozen desserts, nutritional supplements, ice chips, soups.	None unless you are told to avoid some.
Slightly Thick Liquids Comparable to half nectar thick.	All liquid that is slightly thick. 1-4 mL will be left in the syringe after doing the flow test.	Any thin liquids.
Mildly Thick Liquids A liquid that is easy to pour yet thicker than water, closer to a heavy syrup. Requires effort to drink this thickness through standard straw. Comparable to nectar thick.	All liquid that is mildly thick or moderately thick. 4-8 mL will be left in the syringe after doing the flow test.	Any liquid that has not been thickened, gelatin, milkshakes, and frozen desserts. Avoid juices that separate such as, pineapple juice, tomato juice, apricot nectar, orange juice that has pulp.
Moderately Thick Liquids A liquid that is thicker and drizzles from a bowl or cup like honey. Requires some effort to drink this thickness through a standard or wide straw. Can be drunk from a cup or eaten with a spoon. Comparable to honey thick.	All liquid that is moderately thick. 8-10 mL will be left in the syringe after doing the flow test.	Any liquid that has not been thickened, gelatin, milkshakes, and frozen desserts.

No Liquids No liquids are allowed.	No Liquids allowed.	Water, all juices, broth, milk, coffee, tea, cocoa, carbonated drinks, alcoholic drinks, gelatin, frozen desserts, nutritional supplements.
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The International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative 2016 @<https://iddsi.org/framework/>

Tips

- Your speech pathologist can teach you the correct way to thicken your liquids.
- Do not eat anything that melts.
- Do not add ice to thickened liquids.
- You may need to avoid juicy foods such as watermelon, apples and oranges.
- Drain the juice off canned fruits.
- Hot drinks that have been thickened tend to become thicker as they cool.
- If you mix a drink in advance and let it sit for a long period of time it will continue to thicken.
- You can buy thickeners at the drug store or order online.
- You can buy pre-thickened juices and milk.
- Puree in a blender or strain to remove chunks then thicken with flour, cornstarch, potato flakes, or other thickeners.

Who to Call

If you are a UW Health patient and have more questions, please contact UW Health at one of the phone numbers listed below. You can also visit our website at www.uwhealth.org/nutrition

Nutrition clinics for UW Hospital and Clinics (UWHC) and American Family Children's Hospital (AFCH) can be reached at: **(608) 890-5500.**

Nutrition clinics for UW Medical Foundation (UWMF) can be reached at: **(608) 287-2770.**

If you are a patient receiving care at UnityPoint – Meriter, Swedish American or a health system outside of UW Health, please use the phone numbers provided in your discharge instructions for any questions or concerns.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 10/2019 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#468