

Thickened Liquids

Your doctor and speech pathologist have found that it is safer for you to drink thickened liquids. This helps the fluids go through your mouth and throat more slowly. This should lower the risk of liquids going into your lungs or causing you to cough.

Basic Tips

- Do not eat anything that melts.
- Do not add ice cubes to thickened liquids.
- You may need to avoid juicy foods like watermelon, apples or oranges.
- Drain the juice off canned fruit.
- You can buy thickeners at the drug store or order online.
- You can buy pre-thickened juices and milk.
- Your speech pathologist will teach you the correct way to thicken your liquids.
- Dairy products, like milk, take longer to thicken.
- 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 time it will keep getting thicker.
- Soups may be pureed in a blender or strained to remove chunks or lumps then thickened with flour, cornstarch, potato flakes, or store-bought thickeners to the right thickness.

Mildly Thick Choices (Available at UW Health)

Pre-packaged mildly thick:

- Apple juice
- Orange juice
- Cranberry juice
- 2% milk
- Water
- Novasource Renal[®] Nutrition Supplement
- Magic Cup[®] (chocolate, vanilla, orange, wild berry)
- Prosource[®] Gelatein Plus (pineapple)

Kitchen will thicken on request:

- Lactaid[®] milk
- Diet lemonade
- Grape juice
- Iced tea (regular or decaf)
- Coffee (decaf)
- Hot cocoa

Moderately Thick Choices (Available at UW Health)

Pre-packaged moderately thick:

- Apple juice
- Orange juice
- Cranberry juice
- 2% milk
- Water
- Magic Cup[®] (chocolate, vanilla, orange, wild berry)
- Prosource[®] Gelatein Plus (pineapple)

Kitchen will thicken on request:

- Lactaid[®] milk
- Lemonade
- Grape juice
- Iced tea (regular or decaf)
- Coffee (decaf)
- Hot cocoa

Liquids

Some thin liquids are safe on thickened liquid diets if they are thickened. Other types of liquids you need to avoid because they cannot be thickened safely.

Safe If Thickened

- Soda
- Milk
- Tea (hot or cold)
- Fruit juice
- Water
- Nutrition supplements (Boost[®], Ensure[®])
- Coffee
- Broth
- Soups
- Vegetable juice
- Lemonade

Avoid

- Gelatin
- Jell-O[®]
- Frozen yogurt
- Popsicles
- Sherbet/sorbet
- Hard candy
- Milkshakes
- Malts
- Italian ice
- Ice cream
- Fruit smoothies

Who to Call

If you have more questions, please contact UW Health at one of the phone number 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**.

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 © 10/2023 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing HF#472