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# How to Puree Foods



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Pureed foods are easy to swallow. Almost any food can be pureed with the right ingredients and equipment. Pureed foods can taste great and do not need to be bland or boring.

Some people need to eat pureed foods that are a certain thickness. Your food should be as thick as

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## **Safety first!**

**When you puree foods, there is a greater risk of bacterial growth.**

- Cleanliness is very important when handling food. Make sure your work area is clean. Wash your equipment with soap and hot water after each use.
- Keep eggs, meat and milk products in the fridge until you are ready to use them.
- Leftover foods such as soups and casseroles should be cooled quickly and kept in the fridge for up to 48 hours before pureeing.
- Once pureed, use food right away or store in the fridge for no more than 24 hours. You can freeze these foods for up to 2 months.

## How to puree

- Cook meat and vegetables until well done. DO NOT overcook. Overcooked meat may be stringy or tough. Overcooked vegetables will be soggy.
- Use the **guide to making puree** on the next page as a guide. Measure out the amount of food that you want to puree. Place food in blender or processor.
- Add liquid, starting with the smallest amount shown on the chart.
- Cover and pulse on-off until the food is coarse. Then puree until the food is smooth. Add more liquid if needed. Do not add more liquid than is shown on the chart.

## Guide to making puree

<b>Amount of Food</b>	<b>Amount of Liquid</b>
½ cup cooked chicken or turkey breast (125 mL)	4-6 tablespoons (Tbsp) (60-90 mL)
½ cup cooked moist beef (125mL)	3-5 Tbsp (45-75 mL)
½ cup casserole (125mL)	2-4 Tbsp (30-60 mL)
½ cup cooked fish (125mL)	2-4 Tbsp (30-60 mL)
½ cup cooked ham (125mL)	3-4 Tbsp (45-60 mL)
7 ½ ounces canned fish (225mL)	2-3 Tbsp (30-45mL)
½ cup cottage cheese (125mL)	0-2 Tbsp (0-30mL)
1 cup carrots, parsnip, peas (250mL)	2-3 Tbsp (30-45mL)
1 cup broccoli, spinach (250mL)	0-2 Tbsp (0-30mL)
1 cup drained canned fruit (250mL)	0-2 Tbsp (0-30mL)

# Helpful hints

## Meats and entrees

- Puree meat until SMOOTH. Gradually add liquid.
- Use a variety of liquids or sauces to change the flavor such as:
- Beef: gravy, cranberry sauce, soup, fruit juice, ketchup, horseradish.
  - › Chicken: gravy, cream sauces, pineapple, fruit juices, teriyaki sauce.
  - › Lamb: mint jelly, apple jelly, gravy, soup.
  - › Fish: cheese sauce, white sauce, tartar sauce, mayonnaise, lemon juice.
  - › Pork: gravy, soup, apple juice, applesauce.
  - › Most casseroles can be pureed. Examples are: macaroni and cheese, lasagna, spaghetti, and pizza.
- **Avoid:**
  - › Stringy, tough or dried meats
  - › Chicken skin

## Grain products

- Cook pasta until very soft, then puree. Use sauces such as tomato, cheese, or cream sauce with pasta.
- You can puree cooked pasta with meat and/or vegetables.
- Fine couscous requires little pureeing, if well

cooked and mixed with sauce.

- Add pureed fruit, or milk or cream to hot cereal.
- **Avoid:**
  - › Bread (all types), sweet biscuits
  - › Rice

## Soups

- Strain out vegetables, meat and noodles then puree solids. Add saved broth as needed to reach puree thickness.
- If needed, thicken with crushed croutons, crackers instant potato flakes or mashed potato.

## Vegetables

- Puree all types of potatoes. If liquid is needed, use warm milk, margarine, butter, sour cream, cooking water, broth, or gravy.
- Steam or boil vegetables until tender. Drain well and save liquid. Puree with cooking water or warm sauces.
- Many vegetables taste good pureed together. For example: carrots and turnip, broccoli and cauliflower.
- Some vegetables with skins should be pureed carefully. There may be large pieces of skin left. Some vegetables with skins do not puree well.
- **Avoid:**
  - › Raw vegetables, vegetable skins, seeds

## Fruits

- Drain canned fruit and puree.
- Save the juice and use the liquid if needed.
- Mix pureed fruit with yogurt, custard or pudding.
  - › Puree fruit with cottage cheese.
- **Avoid:**
  - › Raw fruit, skins, seeds
  - › Pineapple
  - › Dried fruit

## Desserts

- Use yogurt, custard, pudding, smooth pie filling, flavored ricotta cheese and pureed fruit.
- If drinking regular liquids, also try sherbet, ice cream, or Jell-O®.
- Some baked goods are soft and moist such as:
  - › Cake mixed with pudding, melted ice cream or yogurt
  - › Ginger bread with lemon sauce
- Some baked goods can be pureed with added liquid such as:
  - › Bread pudding with milk or custard
  - › Cheesecake with milk or fruit sauce
- **Avoid:**
  - › Pies, cookies, and pastry products
  - › Dry crumbly baked goods
  - › Nuts, seeds, dried fruits

## Other tips

- When you can, use the same food that the rest of the family is eating as this will reduce cooking.
- Use foods of different colours to make the plate look appealing.
- Try different herbs, spices and sauces to add flavor.
- Use an ice cream scoop to serve puree.
- To increase the thickness of a puree, add:
  - › Instant mashed potato flakes
  - › Cracker crumbs
  - › Baby food cereal
  - › Skim milk powder
  - › Commercial thickener
- If puree is too thick, slowly add more liquid.

## Ways to add calories

- Add oil, butter or margarine to vegetables and in cooking. Try high fat salad dressings.
- Use cream or sour cream instead of milk.
- Use high fat dairy products instead of low fat.
- Honey, jelly, or syrup can be blended into other foods for extra flavor and calories.
- Add whipped cream to pudding and pureed fruit.



## **Ways to add protein**

- Use milk-based sauces for liquid instead of broth or tomato-based sauces.
- Puree soft tofu into desserts, casseroles or soups.
- Puree baked beans or other soft legumes into soups or casseroles.
- Add skim milk powder to casseroles, puddings and sauces.

## **If constipation is a problem**

This diet is low in fiber. If you become constipated, you can:

- Try pureed prunes.
- Add prune juice instead of other juices.
- Consume more fluids.
- Use natural bran in your soups, cereals, casseroles. Start by adding 1 tablespoon (15mL) per meal and slowly add more.
- Eat very high fiber cereal like All Bran®, 100% Bran or Bran Buds softened with milk and mashed smooth to the correct texture.
- Increase your activity if possible.
- Use blended fruits, vegetables and/or whole grain noodles in your recipes.

If you can drink regular liquids, try Ensure with Fiber® or Boost with Fiber®. These are nutritional drinks containing fiber. You can buy them at the drugstore.

If you are drinking thickened liquids, try thickening these drinks with a commercial thickener.



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