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# IDDSI Level 1 Slightly Thick Fluids



## Fluids

If you have been advised to thicken your drinks it is important to follow the recommendations of the SLT. Aim to drink 6-8 cups of fluid a day to avoid dehydration. Include fruit juice daily for Vitamin C.

Pre-thickened juice drinks are available on prescription.

**Patient Name:** .....

**Date:** .....

**Dietitian:** .....

**Contact details:** .....

**Speech & Language Therapist:** .....

**Contact details:** .....

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## Further Information

We endeavour to provide an excellent service at all times, but should you have any concerns please, in the first instance, raise these with the Matron, Senior Nurse or Manager on duty.

If they cannot resolve your concern, please contact our Patient Experience Team on 01932 723553 or email [asp-tr.patient.advice@nhs.net](mailto:asp-tr.patient.advice@nhs.net). If you remain concerned, the team can also advise upon how to make a formal complaint.

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## General Advice

### Cold Drinks

- If plain thickened water is unpalatable - try flavouring it with squash or cordial
- Drinks with a sharper flavour tend to be more pleasant once thickened. Try lime cordial, cranberry, grapefruit, blackcurrant or fruit and barley squashes
- Thickened milkshakes work well - add thickening powder as required.

### Hot Drinks

- Hot milky drinks thicken well - for example, Horlicks, hot chocolate, Ovaltine
- Tea and coffee may also be thickened.

### For a Savoury Drink

- Try thickening Bovril, Marmite or soups
- Choose the 'cream of' soup varieties such as tomato or asparagus
- Do not have watery soups such as minestrone or lumpy such as vegetable (If small bits are problematic). Alternatively, you may strain or sieve soups to remove any lumps, however small.

### Alcohol

- Alcoholic drinks can also be thickened but please check with your G.P first. Spirits and wine are easier to thicken than gassy drinks like beer or cider. Liqueurs are often already syrupy thick.

## INTRODUCTION

**A Speech and Language Therapist (SLT) may suggest that you thicken your drinks to help you swallow more safely and easily. If you have any further questions, please contact the Speech and Language Therapy team on 01932 722868.**

### Thickened Fluids

If your mouth or throat muscles are weak or uncoordinated, it may be difficult to swallow. Some people may cough or splutter when drinking and this may be a sign that the drink has gone down the 'wrong way' and into the airway. Some people don't show any of these signs ('silent aspiration'), but may find they are getting recurrent chest infections. Thickened fluids are easier to swallow because they move more slowly, allowing better control of the liquid, and are therefore less likely to go down the 'wrong way'.

Thickeners (e.g. 'Nutilis Clear') are prescribed by your Doctor, often following recommendation from a Speech and Language Therapist. You can also use corn-flour, instant potato granules (e.g. Smash) or fresh, smooth mashed potato to thicken soups, gravy or savoury foods that are too runny. It is also important to ensure that foods that contain liquids are thickened to the appropriate consistency e.g. milk in cereal, sauces, gravy, etc.

## How to Thicken Your Drinks

- Pour out the drink as usual
- Stir briskly with a fork or hand whisk
- Continue to stir or whisk whilst sprinkling the correct amount of thickener from the scoop into the moving liquid
- Leave to stand for 2 minutes. Stir again. Check consistency. Serve
- For convenience, cold drinks can be thickened in large amounts in a jug and stored in the fridge until needed.

Before serving, check the thickness of the drink because it may be too thin, or it may thicken or separate over time.

Please ensure *all* drinks are thickened as follows.

Please note that the amount of thickener required will vary according to manufacturer and the size of the cup. Please follow the amount recommended by your Speech and Language Therapist, as the manufacturer's instructions can be inaccurate.

**This example refers to the use of Nutilis Clear only.** Follow the directions on the container when mixing other thickening agents.

### IDDSI Level 1 Slightly Thick Fluids

**COLD AND HOT DRINKS - Per glass/cupful (200ml)  
Add 1 scoop of Nutilis Clear**



Please note that these are general guidelines only and that temperature and viscosity of the drink may influence the quantity of thickener required.

**\*\* Please be aware foods such as Ice-cream and Jelly are not appropriate if you are on thickened fluids, as these melt to a thinner liquid consistency in the mouth and increase the risk of it going down the 'wrong way'.**