

Comparison of Alberta Health Services (AHS) and the International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative (IDDSI) Diets (for Supportive Living)

What is the IDDSI framework?

The IDDSI framework provides an evidence-based global standardized framework with terminology and descriptors for the dysphagia diet. It is applicable to all ages, in all care settings, and for all cultures.¹⁸ By standardizing terminology and diet criteria, the IDDSI framework has the potential to improve patient safety, communication between patients and health care providers, and provides a reference point for research innovation.

To access the IDDSI framework and supporting documentation refer to <http://iddsi.org/>

As AHS has a safe, effective, and evidence informed process for the provision of dysphagia diets with more similarities than differences with the IDDSI framework, there are no immediate plans to completely transition to the IDDSI framework. Some IDDSI changes will be implemented as commercially prepared foods and fluids are reformulated to meet the IDDSI framework. Over time, opportunities may exist to learn from other jurisdictions that proceed with implementation of the IDDSI.

AHS texture modified diets and thick fluids were structured to be flexible to provide the least restrictive diet possible while minimizing safety risks, promoting oral intake and reducing harmful outcomes such as malnutrition and decreased quality of life. They are also used for patients who do not have dysphagia.











AHS is continuing to analyze current literature and review implementation experiences with the IDDSI framework in other jurisdictions.



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Diet Name	AHS	IDDSI (identified by name, number and colour)	Differences/Comments
Fluid Consistencies	Regular	Thin (Level 0) Not Thickened 	AHS and IDDSI are the same
		Slightly Thick (Level 1) 	Not commercially available or served in AHS
	Mildly Thick (Nectar)	Mildly Thick (Level 2) 	AHS and IDDSI are the same. Presently products can be labelled with IDDSI only or with the dual labels shown under the AHS column.
	Moderately Thick (Honey)	Moderately Thick (Level 3) 	
	Extremely Thick (Pudding)	Extremely Thick (Level 4) 	
	Balanced Fluids (may not be available at all AHS sites)	Liquidised (Level 3) 	AHS Balanced Fluids is most similar to IDDSI Liquidised Level 3. AHS Balanced Fluids provides fluids at thin and mildly thick level. IDDSI Liquidised Level 3 provides fluids and thinned pureed at moderately thick level.
Solid Food Textures	Pureed	Pureed 	AHS and IDDSI are the same
	Minced	Minced & Moist 	Within facilities with an AHS food service , the Minced diet order is the standard. This provides a particle size the same as IDDSI (4 mm and no longer than 15 mm in length) which is the IDDSI particle size for adults. (The IDDSI pediatric particle size of 2 mm x 8 mm is not served.) Soft moist bread products and mixed consistencies are allowed. At facilities without an AHS food service , IDDSI orders may be received. If Minced & Moist is ordered, the particle size is the same, but pureed bread products (and no regular bread) will be served. Foods with mixed consistencies are not allowed. In both situations , adjustments can be made for individual need.
	Dysphagia Soft	Soft & Bite-Sized 	Within facilities with an AHS food service , the Dysphagia Soft diet order is the standard. This provides a particle size of 1 cm x 1 cm smaller than the IDDSI recommendation of no larger than 1.5 x 1.5 cm for adults. (The IDDSI pediatric particle size of 8 mm x 8 mm is not served.) Soft moist bread products and mixed consistencies are allowed. At facilities without an AHS food service , IDDSI orders may be received. If Soft & Bite Sized is ordered, the particle size should be no larger than 1.5 x 1.5 cm for adults and 8 mm x 8 mm for pediatrics. Pureed bread products (and no regular bread) will be served. Foods with mixed consistencies are not allowed. In both situations , adjustments can be made for individual need.
	Easy to Chew/ Regular	Easy to Chew/Regular 	AHS and IDDSI are the same