

## Children's Speech and Language Therapy Department Moving from Smooth to Lumpy Food

Once children can manage smooth puree foods, they can begin to practise having foods with small lumps. Usually, children begin to manage these foods from about 6-9 months old.

Examples of foods with small lumps are:

- Stage 2 or 7 month jars
- Homemade food that has been blended or mashed
- Well cooked vegetables that have been mashed with a fork
- Mashed potato
- Mashed banana
- Weetabix or porridge in milk
- Cooked fruit that has been mashed



Some children need extra help and take longer to manage lumpy foods. You may notice your child gags on lumpy foods for a while.

### Tips to help your child manage lumps

- First make smooth puree foods thicker but still smooth. You can stir in:
  - Instant mashed potato powder
  - Baby rice
  - Powdered baby food
  - Pureed lentils
  - Breadcrumbs
- Help your child put food to the side of their mouth. They will chew better and enjoy the different textures more. You can help by showing them how to do this when you eat.
- Some children can find drier foods easier for practising their chewing. You can try offering your child transitional food textures to help them (see International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative (IDDSI) Transitional Foods handout [Transitional Foods IDDSI](#))
- Let your child put their hands in the food or try feeding themselves. They will get messy but this helps them to know more about the texture of new foods offered.



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### Things to remember

- Make sure you feed your child when they are upright. This could be in a high-chair. This helps children to manage lumps and chewing better.
- Try to eat when your child is eating. If they can see you eating and enjoying food they will be happier to try.
- Your child needs lots of practice to know how to manage lumps. Offer a small amount of lumpy foods at mealtimes. Give your child lots of praise for trying the lumps. Try to end the meal before they have had enough and refuse. They will want to try again next time.

Loughborough University has a useful website [www.childfeedingguide.co.uk](http://www.childfeedingguide.co.uk)

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