

HEALTHY FOODS BY TEXTURE

Many children with intellectual and developmental disabilities are extra sensitive to the texture of certain foods. This can make it hard for families and caregivers to get them to try new fruits, vegetables, and other healthy foods. Children may be more willing to try new foods if they like how the foods feel. Try introducing children to new foods based on the textures they prefer.

Creamy

- Pureed fruit, such as berries, pears, or apples
- Avocado
- Creamy nut or seed butters
- Cream of wheat
- Yogurt
- Hummus
- Cooked vegetables, such as parsnips or squash

TIP: Puree vegetables together with fruit!



Crispy

- Apple varieties like Braeburn, Honey Crisp, Fuji and Gala
- Roasted red or white potatoes (with skins)
- Freeze dried apples and dried mangos
- Roasted chickpeas
- Roasted vegetables

TIP: Add a sprinkle of bread crumbs for added crispiness!



Frozen

- Frozen fruit, like berries, melon, or grapes
- Frozen vegetables, like peas, carrots, and green beans

TIP: You can freeze just about anything! If a child strongly prefers frozen foods, try freezing other foods like cheese sticks and breads.



Crunchy

- Veggie sticks, like bell peppers, carrots, jicama, and celery
- Snap peas
- Whole grain cereal with minimal added sugar
- Unsalted nuts
- Whole grain toast or crackers
- Rice cakes
- Plain popcorn

TIP: Add some flavor! Experiment with spices like cinnamon or your favorite spice or herb.



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Lumpy

- Mashed sweet potatoes
- Mashed bananas with or without yogurt
- Scrambled eggs
- Cottage cheese
- Applesauce (no sugar added)



Squishy

- Grapes
- Cherry tomatoes
- Dried fruit, like raisins and dried apricots
- Hard boiled eggs
- String cheese
- Peas
- Edamame



Presenting foods by texture can be used in food chaining, an individualized approach used to increase the number and types of food a child will eat. Food chaining can be done at a child care program, school or home. For more information on food chaining, visit: www.abilitypath.org/health-daily-care/health/growth-and-nutrition/articles/obesity/pdfs/parent_toolkit-_food_chaining.pdf.