

## Prescription Diets

1. Describe the differences in the following diets: regular, soft, modified mechanical soft, mechanical soft, and pureed.

Regular: No restrictions.

Soft:

- **For patients who have difficulty chewing tough or hard foods.**
- Tough meats, raw fruits/vegetables that are hard to chew (raw apples, oranges, celery, carrots, broccoli, etc.) are eliminated.
- Meats are not chopped. Foods should be easy to digest.
- Meats can be "chopped" if specified into cubes for patients who have difficulty cutting their meat up or have trouble chewing big pieces of meat.
- The need for chopped meat can be determined by a nurse or dietitian.

Modified mechanical soft:

- Similar to mechanical soft;
- in addition, meats are ground fine with extra gravy on the side.
- Breads (including cakes, cornbread, crackers, etc.), leafy salads, and garnish are eliminated.
- No dual consistencies (i.e., chicken noodle soup, beef stew, etc.)
- Patients receive a "Mechanical Soft" menu with the words "modified", "extra gravy", & "strained or pureed" written on the menu.

Mechanical soft:

- Raw fruits and vegetables are eliminated.
- Meat is ground to be similar to ground beef texture, gravies are usually added to ground meats.
- **Used when patients cannot chew foods due to tooth loss, dysphagia, etc.**
- Patients receive a "Mechanical Soft" menu with the word "grind" written on the menu.

Pureed:

- Food is pureed in a blender until baby-food or mashed potato consistency.
- Food is thinned with broth, milk, or water if too thick.
- Food is thickened with potato flakes, gravy mix, or thick-it if too thin.
- **Used when patients cannot swallow foods with lumps.**
- Patients receive a "Mechanical Soft" menu with the word "pureed" written by meats, most entrees, & soups with non-blended foods marked out.

2. When is it appropriate to feed each of the diets listed above?

See bold, underlined items above.