



Nutrition Session 5

Soft Food Diets

What to Eat When Chewing and Swallowing are Hard



Welcome

- Ayanna Smart, RD
- Work with seniors
- Many have had chewing and swallowing concerns



Ayanna Smart

Registered Dietitian



Today's Session

- Why you might need a soft diet
 - What a soft diet might look like
- How to make a soft diet
- How to make a pureed diet
- What a healthy, balanced diet looks like when you need soft foods



Difficulty Chewing



Dental Work

- Tooth extractions, fillings, or oral surgery
 - Dentist may tell you to eat softer foods



Tooth loss

- Lost teeth
 - Chewing might be harder, and softer food helpful
- With age, more likely to have lost teeth
 - People with tooth loss have a 21% greater chance of malnourishment than people with functional dentition
 - This includes people with dentures!



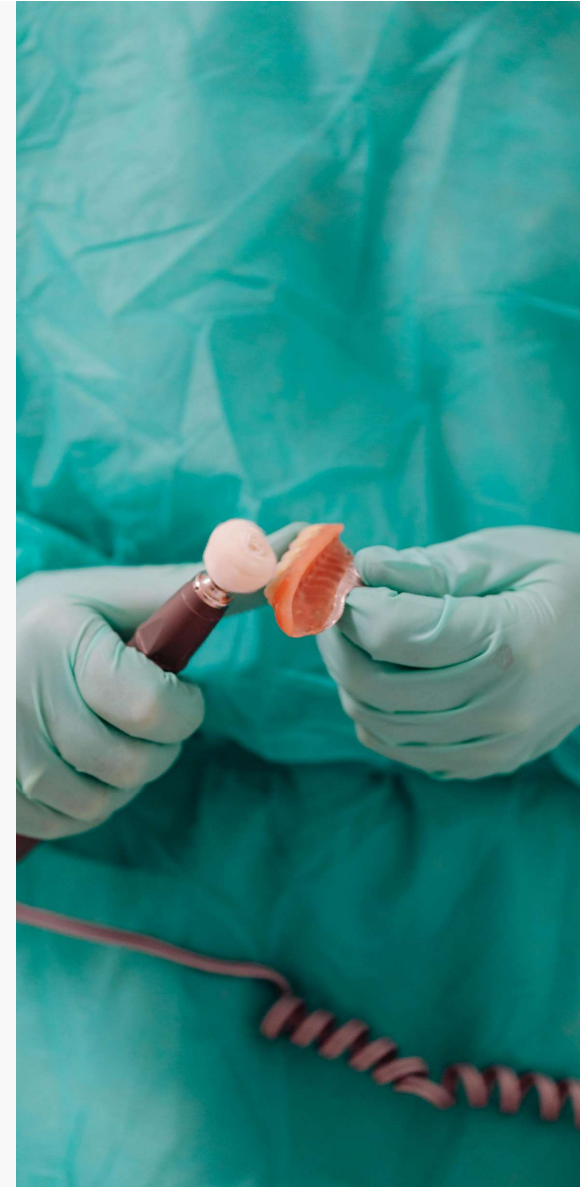
Dentures

- Dentures that fit help with chewing foods
- If dentures do not fit well
 - Less comfortable
 - Can make it hard to chew
 - Food can get caught between the denture and the gums



Dentures

- Dentures last about ten to fifteen years
- May not fit well if weight has changed
 - Can extend lifetime by relining or rebasing them



Difficulty Swallowing



Dry mouth

- Need moisture to swallow comfortably and safely
- Some meds lead to dry mouth
 - Antihistamines
 - Some antidepressants
 - Some blood pressure medications
 - Anti-seizure drugs

Health conditions

- Some conditions make it harder to swallow foods
- Neurological conditions
 - Stroke
 - Traumatic Brain Injury
 - Parkinsons

What are Soft Foods?



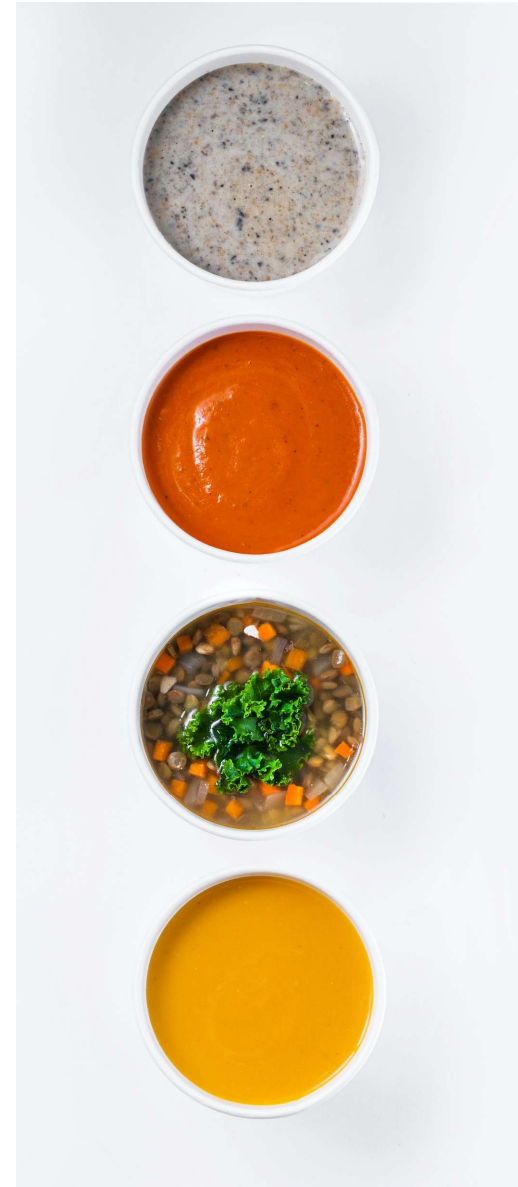
What a soft diet looks like

- Foods that are easy to chew and swallow
- Avoiding anything hard, crunchy, or sticky
- The most basic examples
 - Soft diet
 - Pureed foods



How to make soft foods

- Cut food into small pieces
 - No need to bite
- Cook foods until soft
 - Easy to chew
- Use broth or sauce to keep food moist
 - Easy to swallow



Soft foods demo

<https://youtube.com/clip/UgkxLwQhcKBqkiWQxRgDIYerssnB0FwAihbt?si=WKCmy6g2c9PgwQfr>



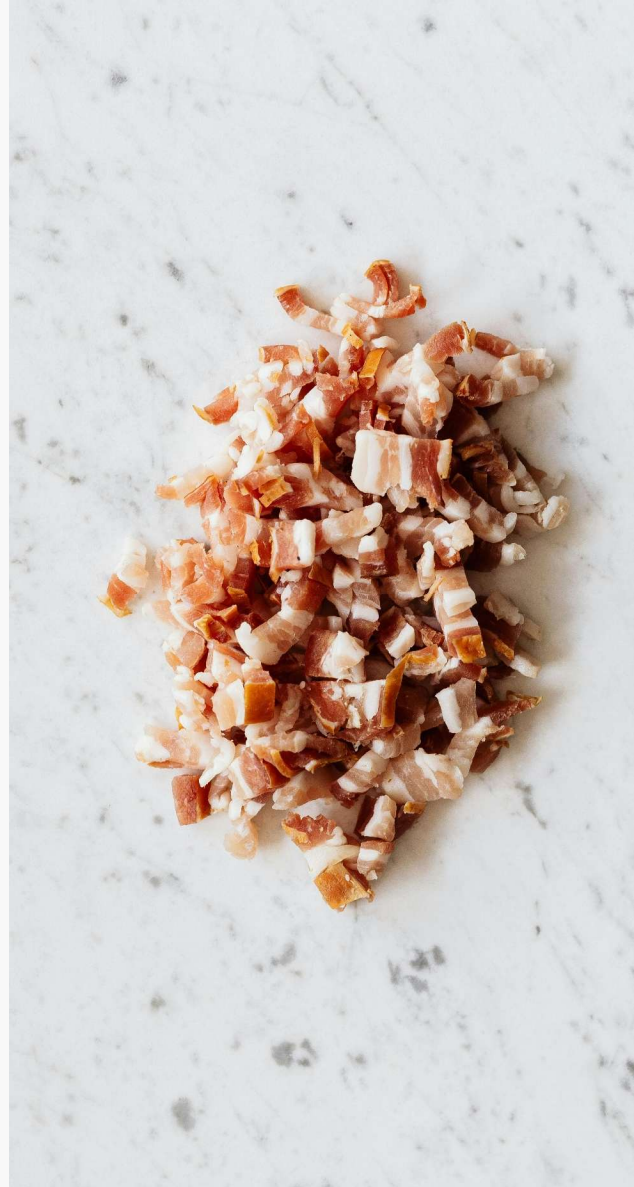
Soft Vegetables and Fruits

- Cooked and cut up vegetables
 - Carrots, squash, pumpkin
- Soft fruits
 - Bananas, watermelon, mango, guava, and canned fruit



Soft Proteins

- Tender, diced meat
- Soft boneless fish
- Soft cheeses



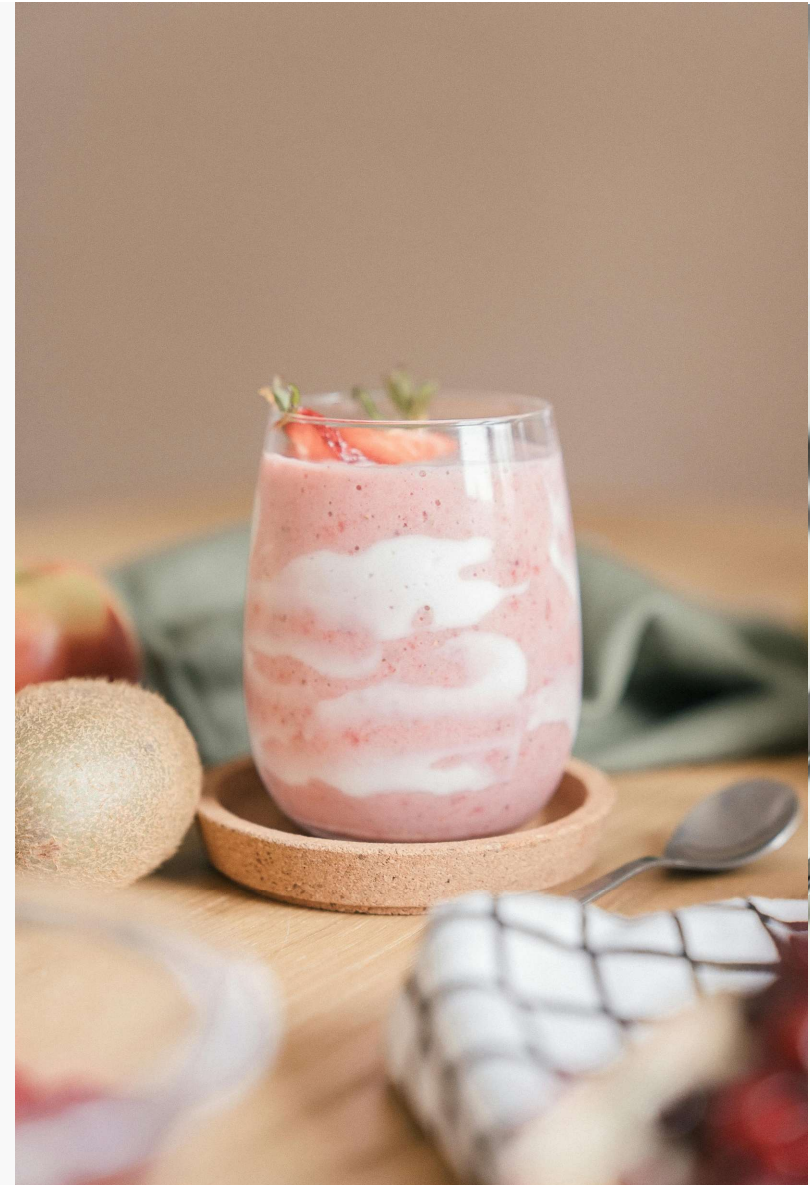
Soft Carbohydrates

- Rice (preferably with a sauce)
- Fufu
- Soft breads
- Pasta with sauce



Soft Desserts/ snacks

- Puddings
- Soft cakes
- Yogurt

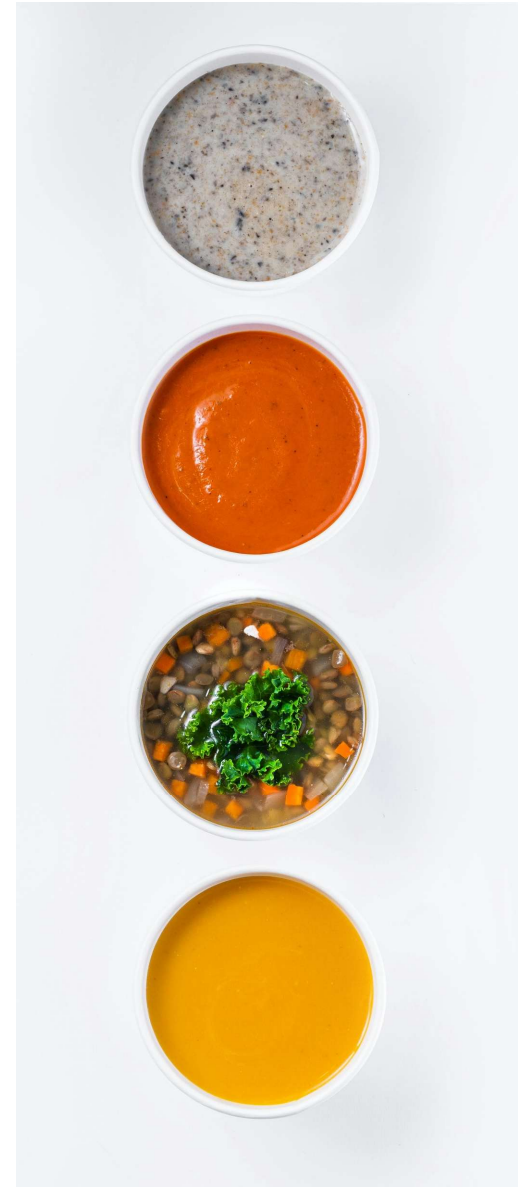


Pureed Foods



How to make pureed foods

- Use a blender or food processor to puree foods.
- Add food to blender and add liquid to food as you blend until it is moist, soft and pudding-like
- Do not use water
 - If pureeing savory foods, use stock, gravy, a bit of oil, melted butter or melted margarine
 - If pureeing fruit, try using juice or milk



How to make pureed foods

- Some Foods do not puree well
 - Avoid foods with skins (corn, grapes) or seeds
 - Cooked vegetables puree better than raw ones



Pureed foods demo

- Here is an example of someone making a pureed fish dish

<https://youtube.com/clip/Ugkx5->

[9yNUXcdcu3AzOptG0_POZfjg573JWM?si=aqyw5Fly2_PkxF4V](https://youtube.com/clip/Ugkx5-9yNUXcdcu3AzOptG0_POZfjg573JWM?si=aqyw5Fly2_PkxF4V)



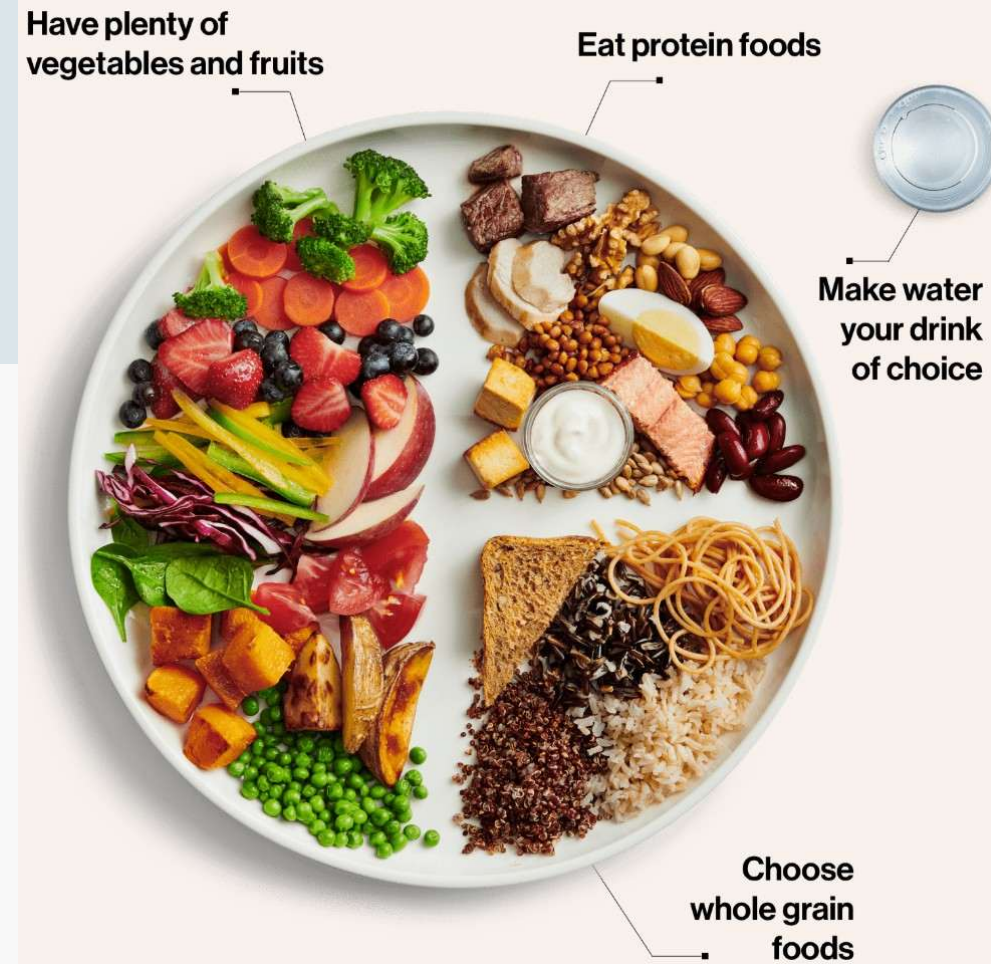
Foods that are already pureed

- Fruits
 - Applesauce, or other ready made pureed fruit sauces
- Proteins
 - Soft tofu, soft cheese, Greek yogurt
- Carbohydrates
 - Hot cereals like oatmeal and cream of wheat
- Desserts
 - Puddings, fruit smoothies



Nutrition

- Can soft or pureed foods make a nutritious meal?
- Of course!
 - The key is, as always, making sure that you have a balanced meal



Why is a balanced diet important

- Protein
 - Rebuilds tissue
- Energy
 - Enough calories from healthy fats, carbs and protein
- Vitamins & Minerals
 - Fruits, veggies
- Hydration
 - Essential for digestion, circulation, and oral comfort

Some meals are already soft and balanced!



Possible Sample Meal

Meal	Example
Breakfast	Pap with milk, banana on side
Lunch	Any soft cooked diced meat with rice and red stew
Dinner	Beef stew (meat cut up well) with fufu

Summary

- Soft foods can improve safety, nutrition, and comfort
- Provide a balance of protein, carbs, and vegetables/ fruits
- Adapt recipes and textures based on individual needs



Thank You



- Thank you for being here!
- Next session:
 - Nutrition for Cognition
 - July 16th

