Adding thicker pureed food and highly dissolvable solids to your son/daughter’s diet is a good next step in having him or her progress to new foods. This handout will explain when your son/daughter is ready to try thicker pureed food and highly dissolvable solids and provide tips on how you can offer these foods successfully. It will also explain normal behaviors while your son/daughter tries these new foods and when you should ask for help when feeding these foods to your son/daughter.

**WHEN IS MY SON/DAUGHTER READY TO TRY THICKER PUREES AND HIGHLY DISSOLVABLE SOLIDS?**

Your son/daughter is ready to try thicker purees and highly dissolvable solids when he or she:

- Can eat smooth, thinner purees successfully

**WHICH THICKER PUREES AND HIGHLY DISSOLVABLE SOLIDS ARE OKAY TO OFFER?**

You should continue feeding breast milk or formula to your son/daughter. In addition to breast milk or formula, it’s important to offer foods from all major food groups, like proteins, grains, vegetables, fruits and dairy.

If you’re buying baby food at the grocery store, these thicker purees are labeled as Stage II. You can offer your son/daughter the following foods from each food group:

- **Protein**
  - Stage II pureed meat, pureed beans, hummus
- **Grains**
  - Infant cereal fortified with iron
- **Vegetables**
  - Stage II vegetable purees, blended and smooth guacamole
- **Fruit**
  - Pureed Stage II fruits, like apples, pears, prunes or peaches.
- **Dairy**
  - If your son/daughter is at least 8 months old, you can offer whole milk yogurt, cream cheese or soft cheeses (like Laughing Cow® cheese wedges).

**WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF HIGHLY DISSOLVABLE SOLIDS?**

Here is a list of foods that are highly dissolvable solids that you can offer to your son/daughter:

- Puffs, like Gerber® puffs
- Baby cookies, like Zwieback toast or Gerber® Lil’ Biscuits
- Baby Mum-Mums® teething biscuits
- Freeze-dried fruits and vegetables
- Graham crackers
- Plain Cheerios®
- Yogurt melts
- Snapea Crisps®
- Veggie Stix®

**WHAT IS NORMAL BEHAVIOR WHILE MY SON/DAUGHTER TRIES THICKER PUrees AND SOFT SOLIDS?**

Your son/daughter might show different behaviors while you are offering thicker purees and highly dissolvable solids. The following behaviors are normal while offering soft solids:

- Playing with food or spitting out food
- Throwing some food on the floor
- Messiness
- Wanting to feed himself or herself
- Mild gagging without vomiting

**What are thicker purees and highly dissolvable solids?**

Thicker purees are purees (foods that are blended until smooth and creamy) that stay on the spoon easily. They have the same thickness as Greek yogurt or hummus.

Highly dissolvable solids are foods that melt quickly when they touch your tongue. This means your son/daughter is less likely to choke on them.
HOW CAN I SUCCESSFULLY OFFER MY SON/DAUGHTER FEED THICKER PUREES AND HIGHLY DISSOLVABLE SOLIDS?
You can successfully offer thicker purees and highly dissolvable solids to your son/daughter by following these tips:

- Try dissolvable solids yourself to test how they dissolve in your mouth. This is helpful if you're nervous about your son/daughter being able to successfully eat these foods.
- Think about offering highly dissolvable solids that are long and skinny. This will help your son/daughter feed himself or herself and help improve his or her biting skills.
- Place small pieces of foods in your son/daughter's cheek. This will help improve his or her feeding skills.
- Make sure your son/daughter takes small bites.
- Offer new foods multiple times. It might take as many as 15 times before your son/daughter shows interest in the food and eats it.
- Offer colorful foods from every major food group. This will help your son/daughter be more open to different foods and add nutrients to his or her diet.

WHEN SHOULD I ASK FOR HELP WHILE OFFERING THICKER PUREES AND HIGHLY DISSOLVABLE SOLIDS?
You should call your son/daughter's pediatrician if he/she shows any of these signs while trying these foods:

- Gagging at the sight of food or after you show him or her new foods multiple times
- Needing to be significantly distracted during meal times
- Having trouble chewing or not chewing at all
- Irritability (crankiness)
- Hiding or keeping food in his or her cheeks
- Showing signs of acid reflux, like arching his or her back while eating or crying while eating
- Not gaining enough weight
- Gagging and vomiting after trying foods with different textures
- Signs of an allergic reaction, like unexplained diarrhea or excess mucus in stools, vomiting, rash or hives or trouble breathing

WHAT ELSE SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT FEEDING THICKER PUREES AND HIGHLY DISSOLVABLE SOLIDS TO MY SON/DAUGHTER?
Here is some helpful information about your son/daughter's nutrition while he or she is trying pureed foods, like the importance of iron and cautions about nitrates:

Iron
It's important that your son/daughter gets enough iron so he or she can grow properly and be healthy. Babies who were born full-term can have low iron levels by the time they're 6 months old. Babies who were born pre-term can have low iron levels by the time they're 2-3 months old.

If you're breastfeeding, it's important that you continue to take prenatal vitamins so your son/daughter gets enough iron.

Protein foods, like meat and beans, are good sources of iron. You can try offering pureed meat or beans to your son/daughter so he/she has iron in his/her diet.

Nitrates
Nitrates, a preservative in certain foods, can be harmful to your son/daughter's health. This is especially true with some homemade foods because vegetables naturally collect nitrates as they grow in soil. Make sure to rinse off vegetables before pureeing them.

Nitrates are not a concern with jarred baby foods. This is because jarred baby foods are tested for safe nitrate levels before they are sold in stores.

Did you know?
Your son/daughter doesn’t need juice in his/her diet. He/she can fill up on juice before eating more nutritious foods. It can also cause your son/daughter to have diarrhea, a rash or gain extra weight.