

# Soft & Bite-Sized (IDDSI Level 6)- menu

This is a version of your Week 1 meal plan, adapted for elderly residents in assisted living facilities while ensuring all foods are soft, tender, moist, and bite-sized (pieces no larger than 1.5cm x 1.5cm for adults), with minimal chewing required and safe for swallowing difficulties (dysphagia). This

follows guidelines from sources like IDDSI, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, and dysphagia

resources: prepare foods to be easily mashed with a fork (no resistance), avoid dry or sticky textures, and ensure moisture throughout to prevent choking risks.

## **Test with the Fork Pressure Test**

(food mashes easily under fork pressure without crumbling) and Flow Test (no liquid separation).

## **For elderly nutrition:**

- Keep portions balanced (~300-500 kcal breakfast, ~500-700 kcal lunch as main meal, ~200-400 kcal dinner/light) using portion control to support energy without overload.
- Prioritize nutrient-dense options: include lean proteins for muscle health, soft veggies/fruits for fiber/vitamins, and whole-grain bases where possible (softened) to aid digestion.
- Use low-sodium seasonings; moisten with low-fat gravy, broth, or yogurt to enhance flavor and safety.
- Boost nutrition/calories if needed (e.g., add soft-cooked eggs, pureed nut butters, or olive oil drizzle) while monitoring for allergies—consult your doctor/dietitian.
- Season with herbs, spices, low-sodium bouillon, garlic, or lemon for flavor.

## **Preparation Tips**

- Cook foods first (e.g., boil/steam/bake until very tender), then cut into bite-sized pieces.
- Add moisture: low-sodium broth for savory, unsweetened milk/alternative or thinned yogurt for sweet.
- Avoid: Hard breads (use soft/soaked), tough meats/veggies, seeds/nuts (unless ground smooth), dry items.
- If too dry: Moisten with gravy, broth, or sauce; use commercial thickeners if liquids need adjustment.
- Serve warm/room temp; small frequent meals if appetite is low.

## Monday

- Breakfast (moderate): Scrambled eggs (soft, moist) + soft toast (soaked in milk if needed, bite-sized) + soft fruit (e.g., mashed berries or soft banana pieces). Beverages: Coffee/tea (black or with limited unsweetened milk), no juice.

- Lunch (main, largest): Ground chicken with low-fat gravy (moist, bite-sized) + mashed potatoes + soft steamed green beans (cut small). (Boost volume with extra ground chicken/veggies for satiety.)
- Dinner (light): Egg salad sandwich (soft bread, mashed filling, bite-sized) + soft cooked carrots (small pieces). Beverages: Water, decaf.

## Tuesday

- Breakfast (moderate): Soft yogurt parfait (plain Greek yogurt with soft fruit layers + soaked soft toast pieces). Beverages: Coffee/tea, limited unsweetened milk (no juice).
- Lunch (main, largest): Ground turkey with herb gravy (moist, bite-sized) + soft mashed sweet potatoes + soft steamed zucchini (cut small) + soft veggie soup (broth-based, no chunks). Dessert: Soft sugar-free gelatin (bite-sized).
- Dinner (light): Soft scrambled eggs (moist) + soft cooked broccoli (small tender pieces). Beverages: Herbal tea, water.

## Wednesday

- Breakfast (moderate): Soft pancakes (whole-grain if possible, soaked soft) + soft fruit topping (mashed). Beverages: Coffee/tea, limited unsweetened milk (no juice).
- Lunch (main, largest): Ground fish (e.g., cod, moist with lemon) + soft quinoa (well-cooked) + soft steamed cauliflower (bite-sized) + soft side salad (mashed greens with dressing).
- Dinner (light): Soft ground pork (lean, moistened) + soft peas (mashed if needed). Beverages: Limited milk, water.

## Thursday

- Breakfast (moderate): Soft cereal (high-fiber, low-sugar soaked in milk) + soft scrambled eggs + soft pear pieces. Beverages: Coffee/tea, limited juice (diluted or skip).
- Lunch (main, largest): Egg salad (mashed, moist) on soft bread (bite-sized sandwich) + soft fruit (mashed) + soft side salad (tender greens, small pieces).
- Dinner (light): Soft pasta with marinara (well-cooked noodles, bite-sized) + small soft meatball (ground meat). (Skip bread or use a very soft soaked portion.) Beverages: Tea, water.

## Friday

- Breakfast (moderate): Soft French toast (whole-grain bread soaked soft) + soft berries (mashed). Beverages: Coffee/tea, limited unsweetened milk (no juice).
- Lunch (main, largest): Ground beef patty (lean, moist with gravy) + soft mashed potatoes + soft corn (mashed) + soft steamed veggies (bite-sized).
- Dinner (light): Soft chicken stew (ground chicken, moist, small pieces). Beverages: Herbal tea, water.

## Saturday

- Breakfast (moderate): Soft omelet (with soft veggies, moist) + soft toast (bite-sized) + soft fruit.  
Beverages: Coffee/tea, limited unsweetened milk (no juice).
- Lunch (main, largest): Soft pizza (thin soft crust, mashed toppings, bite-sized) + soft salad + soft soup (broth-based).
- Dinner (light): Soft ham (lean, moistened, bite-sized) + soft asparagus (tender pieces).  
Beverages: Limited milk, water.

## Sunday

- Breakfast (moderate): Soft waffles (whole-grain, soaked soft) + soft fruit + scrambled eggs.  
Beverages: Coffee/tea, limited unsweetened milk (no juice).
- Lunch (main, largest): Soft soup & half sandwich (broth soup + soft bread with ground protein, bite-sized) + soft mashed potatoes + soft carrots (small pieces).
- Dinner (light): Soft roast beef (ground lean, moist) + soft veggies (e.g., broccoli/zucchini, bite-sized).  
Beverages: Tea, water.

This maintains the large lunch focus for better energy distribution while making everything safe and swallowable. Soft & bite-sized foods can taste great with added flavors, experiment! If appetite/calories are low, enrich with soft yogurt or olive oil drizzle (smooth). Track intake and consult your healthcare team (SLP, dietitian, doctor) for exact texture/moisture adjustments.