



Finger Foods: Preparation Tips and Examples

What are Finger Foods?

- Finger foods are foods that can be easily picked up with the hands without falling apart.
- Finger food can improve a poor appetite and increase food intake by enabling self-feeding independence and diet adequacy.
- Finger food can also help improve intake for people who require longer to eat or older adults with motoric eating difficulties or dementia.
- Finger food can prolong independence and dignity.

Consult with the registered dietitian and the occupational therapist to create or adjust a finger food meal plan that works best for individualized needs.



Tips for Preparing Finger Food

- Use adaptive feeding devices including cups, utensils, specialized plates, and bowls
- Serve each part of the meal in individual bowls or mugs, making it easier for people to hold the food closer to their mouth and require less distance for the utensil to travel.

For example: Provide individual mugs/ bowls containing macaroni and cheese, cooked vegetable, soup, and dessert at the same meal

- When possible, cut foods into quarters or bite-sized pieces
- Serve condiments, gravies, and sauces in a small cup on the plate for dipping to eliminate the need to open packages
- Use covers, straws, cups, or other adaptive devices to decrease spillage.
For example: use cups with a cover and straws to prevent spilling
- Ensure that finger food is offered in the correct texture
- Obtain food likes and dislikes



Examples of Finger Foods

Breakfast ideas

- muffins, toast, bagels, English muffins, pancakes, waffles
- mini sausages, quiche, egg sandwich
- scrambled egg, hardboiled egg or omelet cut into small pieces
- plain cold cereal served with cup of milk on the side



Main meal ideas

Protein

- chicken nuggets, chicken tenders, chicken patties
- fish sticks/patties, salmon burger, fried fish/shrimp
- beef burger, Saulsbury steak, corned beef, hotdogs, meat balls, fajitas
- pizza or quesadillas
- tofu cubes
- bite size sandwich pieces
- spring rolls or egg rolls

Vegetables

- raw vegetables
- crips-tender texture vegetables (e.g. asparagus, snap peas, zucchini)
- corn on the cob

Starch

- potato wedges, French fries, hashbrowns, baked potato or baked sweet potato pieces
- rice balls, rice cakes
- ziti pasta, ravioli, tortellini pasta
- tortillas, rolls or buns for wraps or sandwiches

Fruits

- fresh or canned fruit-cut into bite size pieces
- whole fruit if able to bite off pieces (e.g. apple or banana)
- berries or grapes

Dessert ideas

- cookies, cake cut into pieces
- tarts, turnovers, donuts
- popsicles, ice-cream bars

Snack ideas

- Soups offered in a mug
- Cheese and fruit plate
- Peanut butter sandwich
- Chips, nuts, crackers, popcorn
- Pickles, olives
- Milk shakes
- Granola bars



References

[Nutrition Care Manual® \(NCM®\)](#). Available online by purchase/subscription.

- [Finger Foods](#)
- [Finger Food Nutrition Therapy](#)