

Mildly Thick (Nectar Thick) Liquids

Your Speech-Language Pathologist may recommend that you thicken your liquids if you are unable to swallow regular (thin) drinks safely. Some milkshakes and thick shakes may be mildly thick already, but most other drinks need thickener to be added.

Mildly thick drinks flow at a slower rate, just like apricot nectar. Mildly thick liquids:

- ✓ Can be sipped
- ✓ Pour quickly from a spoon but slower than water
- ✓ Need some effort to drink from a straw

How to thicken liquids:

There are many products that thicken liquids without changing the taste. Each product will have specific instructions on the label for how to thicken liquids. These directions will vary depending on which product you buy so make sure you read them carefully.

Also, make sure you are following instructions for “mildly thick” or “nectar thick” consistency only. Most products can be used to make thicker consistencies as well, which is *not* recommended. Most can be used with hot and cold liquids. You can buy them at your local pharmacy or order them online. You do not need a prescription. Below are some common choices:

1. Hormel Thick & Easy Clear:

Website: www.hormelhealthlabs.com/products/type/thickeners

- A powder to mix with liquids
- Sold as single servings or bulk servings. You can also buy pre-thickened drinks that are ready to serve.

2. SimplyThick:

Website: www.simplythick.com

- A gel to mix with liquids
- Sold as single servings, bulk servings or in a dispenser bottle with pump.

Tips to use thickening products:

1. Usually you have to wait several minutes for a liquid to thicken completely. Give it some time. Generally, it is better to over-thicken rather than risk drinking a liquid that is still too thin.
2. The thickness of your drink may change over time. Make sure you recheck that the liquid is the right thickness before you drink it. You may need to add more liquid if your drink becomes too thick.
3. Certain foods such as Jell-O, sherbet, sorbet, ice cream, and popsicles turn into thin liquids as they melt in your mouth and are not safe if you are on thickened liquids.
4. Broth-based soups are thin liquids. Do not use unless the broth is thickened to be mildly thick.
5. You are at a risk for dehydration if you are on thickened liquids so make sure you are drinking plenty of fluids. You need to drink more of thickened liquids to get the same amount of hydration.

For powder thickeners:

- Add measured thickener into empty, dry glass or container.
- Add measured liquid in separate container.
- Pour liquid over thickener quickly while stirring with whisk or fork until completely mixed.

For gel thickeners:

- Add measured thickener and measured drink into the same glass or container.
- Mix with a fork, shake, or blend.