Background and Objective

The population of children with CP and other developmental delays is at high risk for feeding difficulties. Safe oral eating can, however, be achieved by modifying the texture of foods. The moist, minced category presents many challenges in understanding and preparation, and is difficult to describe effectively. Often questions arise some time after a family conference. Few resources exist to demonstrate safe piece size, cohesiveness and preparation methods. Our objective: to fill that gap with an accessible, family centred set of short videos demonstrating techniques for preparing common foods at home.

Words like “moist” and “cohesive,” are open to interpretation. Common questions are: What do you mean by minced? By moist do you mean I should add water to it? What size of pieces am I looking for? Do I have to make a separate meal for my child? Do I need to buy a blender? A need became apparent for a way to share practical advice with families when questions and concerns actually arose.

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The Result

Four short videos – Introduction, Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner.

• Commonly used foods are featured – oatmeal cereal, French toast, muffin, cold cereal, pasta with tomato sauce, couscous mixture, canned baked beans, chicken with potato and carrots, and lasagna.

• Simple tools are used – fork, mini chopper, food processor, food mill.

• Nutrition is considered as well as food consistency.

• The format is like a cooking show: food textures are modified in real time.

• Visual guide for piece size is illustrated – sesame seed (smallest) and green lentil (largest).

• Any segment can be reviewed at home as needed.

The link is posted on BC Children’s Hospital website and therefore accessible via computer, tablet, smart phone.

Significance

Families and caregivers struggle to meet their children's nutritional needs. Medical assessments and appointments alone cannot meet the need for information and support. Technology can provide us with a way of meeting these needs by being accessible, available and reinforcing the initial contact.

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“Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn.” Xunzi