

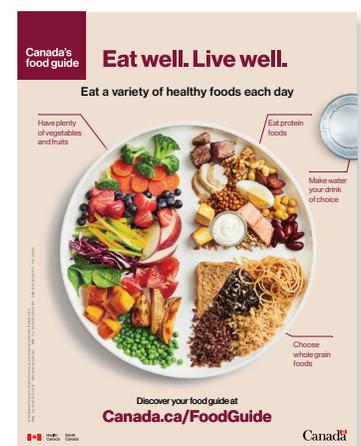


# EATING WELL

## when it's hard to chew

Recent dental work, tooth loss, poorly fitted dentures, gum disease and other dental issues can impact how and what you can eat. By making some changes to the types of foods you eat and how you prepare them, you can still enjoy eating and help your body get the nutrition it needs.

The goal is to eat a variety of vegetables and fruit, whole grains, and protein foods based on **Canada's Food Guide**. When it's hard or painful to chew, choose foods that are soft and moist. You can also mince, mash, or puree food to a texture that is easier to eat and move up to regular foods as tolerated.



**Here are examples of easy-to-eat soft foods and ways to prepare meals and snacks that can make eating more comfortable.**

TYPES OF FOOD	EXAMPLES OF SOFT-FOOD OPTIONS	
Vegetables and Fruit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vegetable soups</li> <li>• Mashed potatoes, squash or sweet potatoes</li> <li>• Soft, ripe fruit (e.g., bananas, peaches, avocados)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mashed, soft fruits</li> <li>• Unsweetened applesauce</li> <li>• Well-cooked vegetables</li> <li>• Canned fruit (packed in water)</li> </ul>
Protein foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eggs</li> <li>• Tofu</li> <li>• Hummus</li> <li>• Smooth nut butters</li> <li>• Milk</li> <li>• Fortified plant-based beverages (e.g., soy, almond)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plain yogurt</li> <li>• Cottage cheese</li> <li>• Grated cheese</li> <li>• Canned meat or fish</li> <li>• Canned or well-cooked beans with soft skins (e.g., kidney beans, black beans)</li> <li>• Ground meats and poultry</li> </ul>
Whole grain foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oatmeal</li> <li>• Soft cereals, cream of wheat</li> <li>• Rice, barley, couscous</li> <li>• Pasta and noodles</li> <li>• Soft whole wheat bread</li> </ul>	

**Tips for eating a variety of food when you have difficulty chewing:**

- Remove the skin and seeds from vegetables and fruit before eating
- Blend fresh or frozen fruit into smoothies or milkshakes
- Thaw frozen fruits to enjoy a softer and easier to eat texture
- Dice, mince or mash vegetables and fruits
- Add moisture to meat, poultry or fish with gravy, broth and sauces
- Make meat more tender by stewing, braising or adding it to soups
- Mash canned protein foods like chicken, tuna or beans
- Make a big batch of hearty soup packed with vegetables and legumes and freeze in smaller portions for an easy meal any day
- Add cereal to milk and wait a few minutes for it to become soft. Try heating your milk up to make the cereal even softer
- Drink water with your snacks and meals to moisten your food
- Eat slowly, taking small bites
- If you can't finish full meals, try eating snacks and small meals throughout the day

**NOTE:** If you are concerned you are not eating well, speak to a health professional or a Registered Dietitian for advice. Call **811** to speak to a Registered Dietitian for free.

Here are some easy and delicious easy-to-chew recipes to try.

RECIPE 1

## BROCCOLI AND CHEDDAR FRITTATA



4-6 servings



30 minutes

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 2 cups broccoli, chopped
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 red pepper, sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ tsp of salt and pepper
- 8 eggs
- ¼ cup of milk
- ½ cup of grated cheddar cheese

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a non-stick frying pan, heat oil over medium heat
2. Add broccoli, onion, red pepper, garlic, salt and pepper and sauté until vegetables are tender, about 3 minutes
3. In bowl, mix eggs with milk and pour over vegetable mixture
4. Cover and cook over medium-low heat until bottom and side are firm but top is slightly runny, about 7 minutes
5. Sprinkle with cheese. Cover and cook until centre is set, and cheese is melted, about 3 minutes

**Cooking Tip:** If cooking on a stove top and using a non-stick pan with an oven proof handle, you can finish the frittata under the broiler. Once you have sprinkled the cheese over top, broil until centre is set and cheese is melted.

## RECIPE 2

# MINISTRONE SOUP



### INGREDIENTS

- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 4 medium carrots, sliced
- 1 celery stalk, sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 6 cups vegetable broth
- 1 can (28 oz) tomatoes, diced
- ½ cup small whole wheat pasta (e.g. shell or wheels)
- ½ tsp dried basil
- ½ tsp dried oregano
- 1 can (19 oz) white kidney bean, drained and rinsed



6 servings



40 minutes

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat oil in skillet and sauté onion, carrots, celery and garlic until beginning to soften
2. Add broth and bring to a boil in the skillet over medium heat
3. Cover and simmer for 25-30 minute
4. Add tomatoes, pasta and spices; simmer, covered, 5 minutes or until pasta is al dente
5. Add kidney beans and continue to simmer until hot

Resource adapted with permission of Hastings Prince Edward Public Health, 2023. Recipes from the You're the Chef program, York Region Public Health.

**PUBLIC HEALTH**

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