In-service: Pureed Foods

Objective:
Participants will be able to demonstrate:

- Definition of a Pureed Diet
- Where to locate the pureed recipes and how to use them
- Proper techniques for pureeing menu items
- Correct liquids and stabilizers used to puree each type of food
- Proper consistencies of the various pureed foods

Materials:

- Diet Manual, Pureed Diet section
- Pureed Recipes from Healthcare Menus Direct, LLC. Binder 1
- Handout from this In-service

Method:

- Lecture, discussion, demonstration, post-test

In-service:

- **Definitions:**
  - **Pureed Diet** - Our diet manual states: "The Pureed Diet is a regular diet that has been designed for residents who have difficulty chewing and/or swallowing. The texture of the food should be a smooth and moist consistency and able to hold its shape. Portions given will account for the addition of fluids and be specified on the spreadsheet." Reference the Pureed Diet pages within our Diet Manual for foods that are allowed, and those to avoid.

- **Pureed Recipes**
  - Recipes for Pureed Foods are in Binder 1: The pages can be found under the Misc. and Food Safety tab. Demonstrate where these recipes can be found in the book. There are numerous recipes- please have these pages and the in-service handout available for viewing or for participating staff.
    - Pureed Breads, Cakes, Cookies, Pancakes, French Toast, Sweet Rolls, Waffles, Tortillas, Sandwiches, and Other Bread Products
    - Pureed Casserole
    - Pureed Eggs
    - Pureed Fruit
    - Pureed Meats
    - Pureed Salad
    - Pureed Soup
    - Pureed Starch (Rice, Pasta, Potatoes)
    - Pureed Vegetables
  - Note that the recipes are generalized and it must be understood that the cook would need to use it as a template for the actual item on the menu to be pureed. The portion size would depend on the food being pureed. Give examples for the use of each recipe with items on recent menus.
  - The recipe is broken into portions of 6, 12, 24, and 48. Discuss how you would make a serving of 10 or 20.

- The recipe contains the type of fluid and stabilizer to be used and the range for the amounts needed. Read some of them to give the staff an idea of what kind of fluids and stabilizers are expected to be used.

- **Pureeing Process**
  - Introduce the **handout from the in-service** and explain how to read it and how it is expected to be used.
  - Pureed foods are prepared in a blender or a food processor. Foods that are naturally soft/smooth such as puddings, ice cream, applesauce, and mashed potatoes do not need to be pureed. Note: Scrambled eggs **do** need to be pureed, see the 3rd page of recipes.
  - Measure out the number of portions needed; you may want to pad this number slightly to be sure there is enough for additions. The spreadsheet will indicate the portion size of the food. If there is not a portion size specified on spreadsheet, serve the same quantity as the regular diet receives for that food.
  - Puree items on low speed until a paste consistency and add the chosen fluid gradually until smooth and the consistency of applesauce or the consistency of the diet order. The recipes give the cook a range of 1-2 oz. of fluid per serving. How much is based on the consistency desired, so start slowly adding the lowest amount of fluid given in the recipe, checking the texture as you go.
  - Use the fluid specified in each recipe. For example, Pureed Bread is milk; Pureed Casserole is milk, gravy, or low sodium broth; Pureed Rice is milk.
    - *Water is not used since it will dilute the flavors and nutrients in the food item.*
  - The temperature of the fluid is dependent on the temperature desired for the food. Warm fluids for hot foods and cold fluids for cold foods. This is important because the pureeing process can cool down hot food and warm cold food. We must reach the designated temperatures before we can serve the pureed food; 165°F for 15 seconds hot food and 41°F for cold food. The temperature of the fluids we add can influence how long this process will take. It best to allow enough time for the food to be cooled in refrigeration and heated in the oven, on the stove, or in the steamer.
  - Some items may not need extra fluid added to the pureeing process due to the high water content. Foods such as fruits, vegetables, salads made to recipe with the salad dressing on it, and soups don't usually need extra fluid, but may need stabilizers to reach the desired consistency.
  - If a pureed item is too thin, stabilizers can be used, such as instant potatoes, non-fat dry milk, bread crumbs, toast, instant cream of rice or farina cereal, commercial instant food thickener, gelatin (regular or diet). Follow the recipe as to which stabilizer is to be used for that food. Always add the stabilizer slowly, checking consistency often until you have achieved the desired consistency, using the least amount of added stabilizer as possible.
  - A technique to keep the shape of an absorbent food, such as bread, is to place a liquid or slurry on it. Baked food items such as pancakes, breads, cookies, or cakes may be soaked in milk, or syrup, until the proper consistency is reached. These items may also be slurried by soaking in a combination of liquid and food thickener. *Note that this will require practice in achieving an acceptable product and may not work for all diets if thin fluids are used.*

- **Portioning**
  - Always puree food that is already prepared and portioned per the recipe to meet the need of the diet and portion size. The spreadsheet for the food item will state the portion size to serve, such as a #8 scoop, #6 scoop, 1 cup (which is 2 scoops of a #8), etc.
  - An exact way to assure proper portion size after pureeing is to measure total amount of food after it has been pureed and divide by number of portions you started with. Example: 10 servings of meat (3 oz. each) were added to processor along with correct amount (10-20 oz.) of gravy or au jus. The final product was 5 cups of pureed meat and divide by 10 (5 ÷ 10) to get ½ cup (4 oz.) per person or a #8 scoop.
  - Fruits and vegetables become denser when pureed. This is because these foods have a higher liquid content than other foods. This can make portion sizes smaller than the non-pureed food. Using the same method of determining serving size, the total pureed food will be smaller than started. If you puree 10 ½ cup portions of fruit, you may end up with 4 cups puree. The serving size would then be 0.4 cups or 3.2 oz. or a #12 scoop.
  - Pureed foods need to be served on a dinner plate for dignity and not in bowls or divided plate, unless there is an order for one. Pureed foods should not be running together on the plate. If this is the case, then stabilizer is needed so it will hold shape.

- **Demonstration:**
  - Choose a food to puree.
    - Use the pureed food recipes in Recipe Binder #1.
    - Have staff puree food items according to the recipes.
      - Portion out the number of servings needed for the food item and place in processor or blender.
      - Add the appropriate fluids (type of fluid and temp) slowly to observe texture and stop when applesauce consistency.
      - Are stabilizers needed? Remind staff to use the smallest quantity of stabilizer possible.
      - Measure the volume and determine the serving size.
      - Take the temperature and determine (through discussion) how to get to desired temperature.
  - Have staff taste completed pureed foods. Are they smooth? Do they taste like the regular food item? What ways can they be improved?

Consider offering this in-service several times within a selected time period- each time focusing on preparing 2-3 different pureed recipes.

Handout for Pureed Foods In-service

Food	Liquid	Stabilizer	Consistency	Notes
Breads	Warm milk (D) or cold milk (D) if served cold	Instant potato (?D), non-fat dry milk(D), or commercial instant food thickener(?G)	Applesauce	Serve warm or room temperature.
Casseroles	Warm milk (D), gravy(G) or low-sodium broth	Instant potato(?D), non-fat dry milk(D), bread crumbs(G), toast(G), instant cream of rice or farina(G), or commercial instant food thickener(?G)	Slightly softer than whipped topping	Puree to paste prior to adding liquid, if moist, may not need added liquid.
Eggs	Warm milk (D)	Instant potato, (?D), non-fat dry milk(D), or commercial instant food thickener(?G)	Slightly softer than whipped topping	Serve at 150-170° F
Fruit	n/a	Non-fat dry milk(D), gelatin, diet gelatin, or commercial instant food thickener(?G)	Applesauce	Drain fruit completely. Use milk for dairy-based fruit desserts only.
Meats	Warm gravy(G), or low sodium broth	Instant potato(?D), non-fat dry milk(D), bread crumbs(G), toast(G), instant cream of rice or farina, or commercial instant food thickener(?G)	Slightly softer than whipped topping	Breaded meats or casseroles may not need stabilizers. Use milk for meats in cream sauces or gravies, or meat casseroles only.
Salads	n/a for green salads Cold milk (D) for starchy salads	Instant potatoes(?D), or commercial instant food thickener(?G), bread crumbs(G) or toast(G)	Applesauce	Serve at 41° F or less Salad dressing should be on salad when pureed
Soups	n/a	Saltine crackers(G)	Thick or thin depending on the soup	Add crackers to soup prior to pureeing. Do not sprinkle puree crackers over soup.
Starches	Warm milk (D)	Instant potato(?D), non-fat dry milk(D), bread crumbs(G), toast(G), instant cream of rice or farina(G), or commercial instant food thickener(?G)	Slightly softer than whipped topping	Puree to paste prior to adding liquid, if moist, may not need added liquid.
Vegetables	n/a or if needed, warm milk (D) or low sodium broth	Instant potatoes(?D), or commercial instant food thickener(?G)	Applesauce	Drain completely. Some vegetables may not need added liquid.

D = contains dairy/milk ?D = possibly contains dairy/milk
G = contains gluten ?G = possibly contains gluten

Name _____ **Date** _____

Post Test: Pureed Foods

1. True/False (circle one): If the food processor is dirty, you can mash up soft vegetables by hand for pureed diets.

2. True/False (circle one): Always check the temperature of foods after pureeing.

3. True/False (circle one): Use warm milk to puree herb-roasted chicken.

4. True/False (circle one): Pureed food must be smooth, moist, and able to hold its shape.

5. True/False (circle one): Always use the high end of the range of liquid called for in a recipe, then thicken with stabilizers to reach the desired consistency.

Post-Test Answers:
Pureed Foods

1. False – Always use a blender or food processor to puree foods to ensure a smooth consistency. Naturally smooth foods like mashed potatoes do not need additional pureeing. Note that scrambled eggs **do** need to be pureed.

2. True – Follow temperature guidelines for all foods. Be sure hot foods are hot and cold foods are cold.

3. False- Use warm gravy or low sodium broth for roasted meats, like chicken, pork, or beef. Milk should be used for meats in that are in cream sauces, gravies, or meat casseroles only.

4. True

5. False – Many items may be moist already and do not need added liquids to reach desired consistencies.