

## Improving Mealtime Experiences for Frail Nursing Home Residents with Duchesse, a Tasty Alternative to Regular Pureed Diets: A Pilot Study

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** Texture-modified diets often have a negative impact on mealtime experiences. People on a dysphagia pureed diet and their caregivers complain about visual presentation, flavor and grainy meat substances. Duchesse was developed as a substitute for regular pureed diets and currently exists of 9 smooth and homogenous meals, including pasta, rice and fish. The purpose of this study was to test Duchesse in a frail and challenged nursing home population. Pureed diets are frequently advised for dysphagic residents with cognitive and communicative restrictions due to dementia and/or stroke.

**Method:** Two explorative studies were conducted: 1) 10 nursing home residents with dysphagia and limited abilities tried Duchesse for 1 week. Experiences of the residents and staff were observed through qualitative reports, questionnaires and tasting sessions, and 2) another study followed 24 more dysphagic patients. There were 5 observations of the regular pureed diet and 15 observations of Duchesse. Since the majority of the residents were not able to give (adequate) feedback, the mealtime-duration, food-intake and waste was registered together with proxy reports and information from medical records.

**Results:** There were no major changes in duration and intake, but there was significantly less waste (7% vs. 20%;  $p < 0.05$ ). The 5 verbally fluent residents and the proxies all expressed a strong preference for Duchesse, since it was tastier and easier to process.

**Conclusion:** Preliminary data suggest that Duchesse is a tasty alternative to regular pureed diets and has no negative effects. Future studies will investigate the long-term impact on nutritional status and well-being in different populations.

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