

A grayscale photograph of a hand holding a spoon over a cup of yogurt. The hand is positioned as if about to scoop or stir the yogurt. The background is slightly blurred, focusing attention on the hand and the spoon. The overall tone is professional and informative.

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Finding Solutions
Changing Lives

Adaptive cutlery, crockery and cups can offer a child or adult a range of solutions to help them eat and drink. Many people may have trouble with eating and drinking due to a wide range of conditions such as a reduced grip, restricted movement, lack of muscle control or sensory issues.

Everyone is different so it is important to match their personal needs to the right equipment and think about what items would be most useful to them as well as their carer. The right equipment can make eating and drinking easier and allow a person to achieve more independence.

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Eating & Drinking



Built-in-Straw Cup

- **Cups with valves** are good for people who are drinking from a reclining position. The drink can be sipped from anywhere around the rim of the cup. The valve also means the cup can be spill proof, making it ideal for nighttime use.
- **Brightly coloured cups** can help a person with limited vision focus on and locate their cup.

- **Two-handed cups** are helpful for those with a reduced grip, lack of muscle control or poor hand sensation. Handles allow the cup to be grasped in both hands, giving more control with drinking. Some cups have larger handles, again making the cup easier to grasp.

- **Spouts or Teats** are ideal for controlling the flow of the liquid to the mouth. Especially helpful if a person has weak muscles around the mouth and lips which makes drinking from a cup rim hard. Cups with lids and spouts can also prevent spills.

- **Angled cups** are good for anyone who lacks mobility in the neck. The angle of the cup means that it does not have to be tipped so far up in order for the person to drink. These enable the user or carer to control the flow of liquid to the mouth without the need to raise head or shoulders.

- **Flexible cups** are made of a flexible material, which allows the cup to be squeezed into a spout or shaped to allow the gentle flow of liquid into the mouth. Ideal for a person with limited mobility, they also often have a cutaway back. The cutaway at the back means that the nose is clear of the cup when the cup is raised for drinking.

Drinking

There are a variety of cups designs available, which come in a range of different shapes and sizes. Ridged sides for example can help with grip while clear cups enable the user to check the level of the drink left in the cup - especially useful as some people can find a full cup heavy. Think about what you need in a cup: does it need to be dishwasher proof? Can it be used in the microwave? Does it need to be strong? What shape or size would be best?

Cutlery

Some people find standard cutlery difficult to use. They may have a weak grip, stiffness in their joints and hands, muscle spasms, a lack of sensation in the hands or the use of only one hand for instance.

Using different sized cutlery or cutlery, which has been adapted, can make feeding easier and encourage independent eating. Changing the grip on the cutlery by adding foam tubing or a hand strap can assist those with a painful or weak grip, while cutlery with moulded/shaped handles can also make holding the cutlery more comfortable. Angled cutlery can also be very beneficial.

The advice of a health professional should be sought if you have any queries, as they can suggest solutions tailored to suit the individual child.

- **Cutlery with moulded handles** available in adult or child sizes these have moulded plastic handles designed to fit the hand comfortably. Some designs have contoured dimples to fit the thumb and a raised hilt to stop the fingers slipping forward toward the head of the cutlery.

- **Cutlery with large grips** becomes easier and less painful to hold for those with a weak grip or poor sensation in the hands. The fingers do not need to wrap around the whole handle to maintain a grip.
- **Angled cutlery** is available in a range of different designs. The head is set at an angle to the handle. The angle allows the food to be brought up to the mouth with less movement from the hands or arms. These come in either left or right handed versions and may be brought as a set or individually.
- **Coated or plastic cutlery.** If a person is inclined to bite on their cutlery or is likely to bash the head of the cutlery against their mouth when feeding, coated or plastic spoons can help protect the teeth from damage. Helpful if the person has a strong bite reflex.
- **Utensil holder/hand straps** hold the cutlery in a strap, which attaches around the users hand, giving them much more stability and grip.
- **Weighted cutlery.** People with unsteady hands or spasms can find cutlery with more weight easier to use as the extra weight can help suppress unwanted movements.



Crockery

There are different type of plates and bowls designed to make feeding easier. These include weighted plates, which will not slip so easily, and plates with non-slip bases. There are also plates and bowls, which have raised sides, which make pushing the food onto a fork or spoon less difficult. While non-slip mats can stop plates and dishes slipping away from the person as they eat.

- **Scoop dishes** with raised edge at one side help the person push the food to the back of the plate and on to a fork or spoon. The higher side prevents the food being pushed off the plate.
- **Higher sided plates** will stop food from falling off the dish.
- **Coloured plates** which contrast the table and surroundings as well as the food on the plate, can help those with a visual impairment.

- **Partitioned dishes** have different compartments - ideal for people who do not like different foods to touch.
- **Keep warm dishes/Insulated bowls.** Some crockery is available with a water reservoir which allows hot water to be added. This will keep the food on the dish warmer for longer. This is useful if a person needs more time to finish their meal. Alternatively, they can be used with cold water to keep food such as ice cream cooler.
- **Non-slip placemats** such as the Dycem version have a tacky textured surface on to which a plate or dish can be placed during meal times. This will prevent the plate from being pushed away or slipping across the table while the person eats.

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Fledglings has a large range of cutlery, cups and eating solutions available to purchase.

Our helpline staff will be happy to help if you have any queries.



Fledglings 2017
Registered Charity No. 111 2618