

## Disposable Chew-Pockets

Product Insert by Cecilia Cruse, MS, OTR/L

### Introduction

The kid friendly and therapist approved Disposable Chew Pocket is the perfect solution when working with children on biting/chewing skills and/or introduction to food textures. The fine gage mesh can safely hold food as it is introduced into the child's mouth, and clean-up is a breeze as you discard when through. Children with sensory processing disorders and any child that is a "picky eater" may allow for more food textures to be introduced via this single use Disposable Chew- Pocket.



### Product Use

Place a small bite or sample of the food texture inside the mesh bag and pull shut. Have the child open his/her mouth and place the bag to the side of the mouth over the teeth/gum area. Encourage the child to close down over the mesh bag to bite the food. Remove the bag from the mouth once the child has chewed the food successfully or if gagging, coughing or choking occurs, you can immediately withdraw the food sample from the mouth by pulling out the mesh bag. If a bite reflex occurs, use your thumb and index finger to press on either side of the jaw at the temporomandibular joint (TMJ) to release the bite. Soft or harder food can be used, depending on the child's current oral motor skill level and/or sensory preferences.

Here are a few tips when working with children who have oral defensiveness and/or feeding issues:

Introduce textures of one consistency such as mashed potatoes or a piece of soft cheese. Mixed foods such as vegetable soup or chunky baby foods often have several different textures blended together which is harder for the child to process and handle orally.

When using the Disposable Chew-Pocket bag, place the food to the side of the tongue over the side teeth (molar area) encourage chewing and avoid gag reflex.

When feeding a child by spoon, place the spoon bowl on the tongue and apply gently pressure downward to help encourage proper lip closure and decrease the gag reflex. Avoid scraping food off the spoon on the roof of the mouth.

To help reduce negative behaviors associated with eating, make mealtimes a neutral experience. You may need to set a time limit for the child, such as 30 minutes. Make sure the child is clear on the allowed mealtime, such as using a timer if needed. Once the allotted time is up, the food is removed and the child is not allowed to eat until the next designated meal/snack time but allow for liquids. Avoid playing "games" with food, (such as "here comes the spoon airplane, open wide!") as children may begin to associate mealtime with playtime. Avoid placing any excessive positive or negative rewards with eating (excessive praise for taking a bite, loss of privileges for not eating etc.) as it increases the emotional/behavioral component associated with eating. The goal is to encourage children to eat well, enjoy the food and social camaraderie associated with mealtime without excessive negative or positive connotations for eating.

### Care & Safety

Simply dispose of your Chew-Pocket bag when the oral motor session is complete. Consult a therapist before using the Disposable Chew-Pockets if the child has a history of reflux, or significant oral motor delays which may put the child at risk for aspiration. The Disposable Chew-Pockets should always be used with adult supervision.

### Recommended Products

Try these other great Abilitations oral motor products:

- Jiggler line of oral facial massagers
- MegaChewlery
- Chewlery Necklace and Chewlery Bracelets
- ChewEase and ChewEase Pencil Toppers

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