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Finger Foods for Alzheimer's Patients

January 19, 2008 by [Mary Emma Allen](#)
Filed under [Diseases & Conditions](#)

[14 Comments](#)

[AlzheimersNotes.com](#)

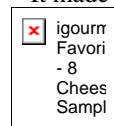
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When Alzheimer's patients no longer can feed themselves by using utensils, try some [finger foods](#). I found that Mother still could pick up bite size pieces and realize they should go into her mouth. (We just had to be careful the items she was picking up were edibles.)

As I read Kendra James' post at Diabetes Notes today, [Fruit Kabobs Were The Highlight of My Day](#), I recalled the appeal of finger foods for Mother when she had Alzheimer's. Kendra tells of the fruit kabobs she had for lunch.

Fruit and cheese kabobs that my 7 year old made. They were really good, just chunks of cheese and berries, bananas, apples and grapes on a bamboo stick. She had fun making them too!

It made me hungry reading about them.



What can you think about for your Alzheimer's patient to eat for meals and [snacks](#) that are nourishing and easy to pick up with the fingers?



How do you solve the eating problem when they have difficulty feeding themselves?

(c)2008 Mary Emma Allen

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Comments

14 Responses to "Finger Foods for Alzheimer's Patients"



1. *Katy* says:
[February 28, 2008 at 4:02 pm](#)

I am a diet tech at a nursing facility and I am facing the issue of some of my Alzheimer's residents not eating—finger foods seems to be the option we're trying to explore. We do not technically have a "finger foods" diet, but I am encouraging the staff to be creative in their thinking. They can make just about any slice of meat (turkey/chicken, meatloaf, cooked ham, sausage patties) into a sandwich. I would encourage people to use mayo or some other "binding" substance to help hold sandwiches together. Also, cut up fruit or vegetables. Drain fruit thoroughly if it's canned. Things like pudding, ice cream, or yogurt could be served in an ice cream cone. Also, there are always the normal finger foods to choose from like cookies, chips, popcorn, cheese cubes/chunks, and cereal bars/granola bars. For difficulty with drinking fluids, use juice boxes or pour liquids into a sippy cup that has handles, making it easier to hold on to. I am sure there are multiple other options, but those are the ones I can think of off the top of my head. Hope this helped!

[Reply](#)



2. *Mary Emma Allen* says:
[February 29, 2008 at 4:22 pm](#)

Katy, thank you for visiting Alzheimer's Notes and sharing your experiences with "finger foods" for Alzheimer's residents. You have many good suggestions that I'm sure will be helpful for our readers to incorporate into finding foods for their patients/family members.

[Reply](#)



3. *Cyndi L* says:
[June 6, 2008 at 10:57 am](#)

All these suggestions are so helpful, both from your post and from Katy's comments. Thank you!

[Reply](#)



4. *Eileen* says:
[June 7, 2008 at 7:48 am](#)

My sister's mother-in-law loved those little snack sausages. It was one of the last things that seemed to give her pleasure.

Along those lines, I bet many prepackaged hors d'oeuvres might be good, especially for the many caregivers who are sandwiched between two generations needing their attention and also holding down outside jobs.

[Reply](#)

5. *Sharon* says:
[June 11, 2008 at 6:11 pm](#)

My fater in law is in the 2nd to last stage of alzheimers. He is very canterous. Hw will only eat Oatmeal (Maple and brown sugar flavor). Anything else he turns his nose up at. We also give him at least 2 ensures a day. (Vanilla) and he always wants a least 2 glasses of coca cola a day. We have tried all kinds of food. He has limited teeth to chew whit, which I am sure is part of the problem. Does anyone else have diet problems with their loved ones?

Sharon

[Reply](#)

6. *cheryl* says:
[October 25, 2008 at 10:54 am](#)

My father is also in the same stage, he no longer uses utensils while eating. In order to give him his dignity we are starting finger foods, I should say the home he is residing in suggested this. He loves to eat!! I was wondering if anyone has any suggestions for some hot meal fingerfoods.

Thank you, Cheryl from Naugatuck, CT

[Reply](#)

7. *Dee* says:
[November 3, 2008 at 7:41 pm](#)

Finger Foods are great for continuing independence at meal time. If you choose to use a utensil — only put one choice. Ideas for fingerfoods are only limited by your imagination. Have a child help you with ideas — they LOVE helping, and can come up with some super ideas for solving many problems.

Finger food ideas:

- * French toast - made with egg, ensure, cinnamon, and protein powder.
- * Jello delight - jello crystals, 1 small pack unflavored gelatin, 3/4 c-BOILING water to dissolve. Add vanilla ensure for the rest of the liquid the directions on the box call for. Mix thoroughly. When gelled - cut into squares. Can be picked up with fingers OR fork - and it's nutritious.
- * crackers with cream cheese spread. Spread is cream cheese and one or two of the following: ground ham, ground spinach, ground onion and cucumber, or any food taste that your loved one enjoys.
- * Puree meats and add to gelled broth cubes (made with unflavored gelatin). You can gel fresh mashed potatoes so they can be picked up. Experiment.
- * Ham or Beef chunks
- *puree beans and put into a muffin
- *Carrot bran muffins (lower the sugar, use unsweetened apple juice for the liquid or milk and protein powder - and you have something nutritious AND tasty. Make 1/2 muffins - they are not as high and easier to handle.
- *Cook carrot sticks until ALMOST soft — where they are easy to chew and still stay together.
- *long cucumber wedges. Try lemon juice and a 'little' chili pepper on them - tasty and will tingle the taste buds.
- *Egg sandwiches in hot dog buns
- *graham crackers with fruit flavored cream cheese— or for a treat—marshmallow spread and tiny chocolate chips
- *Wraps — TRY these: fresh fruit wraps (bananas lengthwise, berries, thin apples), lunchmeat and cheese, meat and cucumber sliced thinly lengthwise, and cooked (cooled) celery and carrots wrapped up with lettuce and meat. Wow - the choices are unlimited. Enjoy

Dee Mayfield, Certified Dementia Practitioner
 Trainer Mayfield Health Care Seminars
dementia.seminars@yahoo.com

[Reply](#)

8. *From Dee - for Cheryl* says:
[November 3, 2008 at 7:54 pm](#)

Hot finger foods:

- * French Toast - as described above
- * Hot meat sandwiches (hot ham and swiss, grilled cheese and thin beef lunch meat) Cut these lengthwise — each sandwich into thirds for big hands, fourths for little hands)
- * Warm onion soup can be sipped from a cup
- * Many wrap sandwiches can be heated — cheese will melt and help hold the sandwich together. OR.....
Chicken with colby jack cheese — between two large tortillas. Microwave till cheese is melted, then FRY quickly in a frying pan. Cut into 6ths — easy to handle - and yummy (you can put other things in these — drained refried beans, onions or chili peppers if he likes those... etc).

Cooked carrots or other NON-watery veggies or meats can be WRAPPED AT THE TABLE - and eaten warm. The reason to wrap them at the table - is so they don't get soggy - and fall apart.

I hope these ideas help.
All my best.

Dee Mayfield, CDP
Mayfield Health Care Seminars
dementia.seminar@yahoo.com

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1. [Foodie blogging round-up!](#) says:
[June 6, 2008 at 7:53 am](#)

[...] Finger Foods for Alzheimer's Patients Getting Alzheimer's patients to eat can be a challenge. Try "finger" foods. [...]

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2. [Weekend Foodie Links](#) says:
[June 7, 2008 at 7:11 am](#)

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3. [Suggestions for Summer Meals in an Alzheimer's Caregiver's Home](#) says:
[June 12, 2008 at 2:05 pm](#)

[...] at Alzheimer's Notes, I call your attention to Finger Foods for Alzheimer's Patients . See if these ideas will help if getting your family member to eat is a [...]

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4. [Summer Meal Suggestions for a Busy Quilter's Household](#) says:
[June 12, 2008 at 6:27 pm](#)

[...] Alzheimer's Notes, I call your attention to Finger Foods for Alzheimer's Patients . See if these ideas will help if getting your family member to eat is a [...]

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5. [Summer Meal Ideas for the Busy Home Business Owner](#) says:
[June 13, 2008 at 4:02 am](#)

[...] care of an Alzheimer's parent, too. At Alzheimer's Notes, I call your attention to Finger Foods for Alzheimer's Patients . See if these ideas will help if getting your family member to eat is a [...]

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6. [Hot Meal Finger Foods for Alzheimer's Patients](#) says:
[October 26, 2008 at 11:55 pm](#)

[...] has a question, after reading my post, Finger Foods for Alzheimer's Patients: My father is also in the same stage, he no longer uses utensils while eating. In order to give him [...]

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