

## 3.4 Daily Living Activities

### Activity 1 – Preparing food

This activity considers a claimant's ability to prepare a simple, cooked meal for one from fresh ingredients. It is not designed to assess a claimant's culinary skills, but to assess the impact of any impairment on their ability to perform the tasks required to prepare and cook a simple meal. It assesses ability to open packaging, peel and chop, serve food on to a plate and use a microwave oven or cooker hob to cook or heat food. Carrying items around the kitchen is not included in this activity.

#### **Notes:**

This activity considers the claimant's functional limitations in their ability to prepare food and not the claimant's lack of skill or the opportunity to learn. If an individual cannot cook at all because they have never needed to learn, consider their ability to carry out activities at or above waist height and their cognitive ability to use a stove or microwave if shown how.

Preparing food means the activities required to make food ready for cooking and eating, such as peeling and chopping.

Cooking food means heating food at or above waist height – for example, using a microwave oven or on a cooker hob. It does not consider the ability to bend down – for example, to access an oven.

Serving food means transferring food to a plate or bowl. It does not include presentation, or involve carrying food to where it will be eaten.

Where the claimant is reliant on pre-chopped vegetables, you should consider whether the claimant could peel and chop. If a person could peel and chop then, in the absence of any other relevant functional restrictions, they can prepare a simple meal unaided. If they could peel and chop with the use of an aid, they carry out preparation with aids. If the person uses pre-chopped vegetables because they couldn't peel and chop even with an aid, they need assistance to prepare a simple meal.

When considering whether a claimant requires an aid or appliance, HPs should distinguish between:

- an aid or appliance that a claimant must use or could reasonably be expected to use, in order to carry out the activity safely, reliably,

<p>repeatedly and in a timely manner; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>an aid or appliance that a claimant may be using or wish to use because it makes it easier to carry out the activity safely, reliably, repeatedly and in a timely manner.</li> </ul> <p>Descriptor advice in favour of an aid or appliance should <u>only</u> be given in the former case. An aid or appliance is <u>not required</u> in the latter.</p> <p>Where a claimant chooses <u>not</u> to use an aid or appliance that he or she could <u>reasonably be expected</u> to use and would <u>enable</u> them to carry out the activity without assistance, they should be assessed as needing an aid or appliance rather than a higher level of support.</p>		
A	Can prepare and cook a simple meal unaided.	0
<p>Within the assessment criteria, the ability to perform an activity 'unaided' means without either the use of aids or appliances; or help from another person.</p> <p>As well as claimants who can prepare and cook a simple meal unaided, this descriptor also applies to claimants who do not prepare or cook through choice; or due to a lack of cooking skills; or who have someone else prepare their meals through choice rather than necessity.</p>		
B	Needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to either prepare or cook a simple meal.	2
<p>In this activity, aids and appliances could include, for example, prostheses, perching stool, lightweight pots and pans, easy grip handles on utensils, single lever arm taps and spiked chopping boards.</p>		
C	Cannot cook a simple meal using a conventional cooker but is able to do so using a microwave.	2
<p>May apply to someone with a condition that means they cannot safely use a cooker hob, but could use a microwave oven instead - for example, a cognitively impaired person who would be likely to</p>		

	<p>leave a gas cooker on.</p> <p>Please note that this descriptor only refers to the cooking of a meal using a microwave, not the preparation of it. Ensure the claimant's ability to prepare a meal is also taken in to account when considering if this descriptor applies.</p>	
D	Needs prompting to be able to either prepare or cook a simple meal.	
	<p>'Prompting' means reminding, encouraging or explaining by another person. For example: may apply to claimants who lack motivation to prepare and cook a simple meal on the majority of days due to a mental health condition, or who need to be reminded how to prepare and cook food on the majority of days.</p>	2
E	Needs supervision or assistance to either prepare or cook a simple meal.	
	<p>For example: may apply to claimants who need supervision to safely heat or cook food using a microwave oven; or to claimants who cannot safely prepare vegetables, even with an aid or appliance. In cases of a risk of self-harm, there should be good evidence of the risk to the individual through, for example, high level involvement of community mental health services, care plan etc. This descriptor also applies to claimants who are unable to determine whether food is safe to eat – for example, that meat is properly cooked – due to sensory or cognitive impairment.</p> <p>Supervision due to significant risk of self-harm or suicide intent is also captured by descriptor E.</p>	4
F	Cannot prepare and cook food.	
	<p>This descriptor refers to the person's functional ability in relation to any impairment and their cooking skills should not be taken in to consideration for this descriptor. If a claimant cannot cook but their functional ability indicates they could undertake tasks involved in preparing and cooking food then this descriptor would not apply.</p>	8