

吞嚥障礙 Dysphagia



What is ...



Dysphagia is a swallowing disorder involving the oral cavity, pharynx, esophagus, or gastroesophageal junction.

There is a wide range of **potential causes** of dysphagia, such as:

Stroke, brain tumor, traumatic brain injury, degenerative diseases (for example, Parkinson's disease, myasthenia gravis), head and neck cancer, cerebral palsy, cleft palate, aging

Consequences of dysphagia include dehydration, malnutrition, aspiration pneumonia, choking and even death.

Characteristics

- Coughing, throat clearing, shortness of breath, wet voice during or after eating or drinking
- Complaints of food "sticking" or complaints of a "fullness" in the neck (globus sensation)
- Acute or recurring aspiration pneumonia/respiratory infection and/or fever
- Oral retention, or extra time needed to chew or swallow
- Food or liquid remaining in the oral cavity after the swallow
- Nasal regurgitation
- Drooling and poor oral management of secretions and/or bolus



Assessment

Speech therapists carry out bedside swallowing assessment. If further evaluation is necessary, fiberoptic endoscopic evaluation of swallowing (FEES) or videofluoroscopic swallowing study (VFSS) may be administered.

Intervention

Each individual's overall status and prognosis are taken into account for treatment planning, such as:

- Compensatory techniques (e.g. appropriate sitting posture or swallowing method)
- Modifications to diet consistency, in order to raise swallowing safety
- Oral motor and/ or swallowing exercises, in order to improve swallowing function



Suggestions

- ✓ Maintain appropriate posture while eating
- ✓ Avoid talking while eating
- ✓ Control bolus size using appropriate cutlery while feeding
- ✓ Avoid food of mixed consistency (e.g. rice in soup)
- ✓ Slowing down at mealtimes

