What is Dysphagia?
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Dysphagia Overview

Dysphagia = Swallowing Problem

Muscles in the **mouth** and/or **throat** are **not** working correctly

Dysphagia can lead to:

- Food and drinks falling into the airway
- Pneumonia
- Dehydration
- Lack of proper nutrients
- Pain or Discomfort
Causes of Dysphagia

Common causes of dysphagia listed below:

- Stroke
- Head Injury
- Neurological disease (Parkinson’s, ALS)
- Breathing Difficulty
- Obstruction in the throat
- Damage to the throat
Evaluating and Treating Dysphagia

A speech pathologist will come see you to...

1. Look at the muscles in your face, mouth, and throat

2. Give you food and liquid to swallow

3. Watch and listen

If there is a swallowing problem, then your speech pathologist will recommend an instrumental swallow study
An instrumental swallow study looks inside your throat with either...

1. An XRAY called Videofluoroscopic Swallow Study (VFSS)
2. A **Camera** called Fiberoptic Endoscopic Evaluation of Swallowing (FEES)

If you **need** one of these tests, you will be **given more information**.
Diet Recommendations

Diet recommendations are based on instrumental swallow study results.

Diet Recommendations = the food and liquids you can safely eat and drink.

If nothing is safe to eat or drink, the speech pathologist will refer you to a doctor for other nutrition options.
Signs and Symptoms of Dysphagia

☐ Coughing or choking when eating

☐ Coughing or choking when drinking

☐ Wet/gurgly voice

☐ Drooling and increased saliva

☐ Holding food in mouth and not swallowing

☐ Multiple swallows for one bite or sip

☐ Feeling like food/liquid is stuck in throat

☐ Pneumonia
Aspiration

Aspiration = when food or liquid falls into your airway

In photo below:
Airway = Trachea

<table>
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<th>Normal Swallow</th>
<th>Aspiration</th>
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<td>Air to lungs</td>
<td>Food enters trachea by mistake</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food to stomach</td>
<td>Trachea or windpipe</td>
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