

Department of
Speech Therapy and Nursing

Supervised Feeding



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What Is Supervised Feeding and Why Do We Need It?

Supervised feeding means having a trained person watch and help your loved one while they eat or drink.

This helps reduce the risk of choking when your loved one has dysphagia.

What is Dysphagia?

Dysphagia refers to having difficulties with swallowing. It means you have trouble swallowing food or drinks safely.

You may have problems with:

- Chewing of food properly.
- Moving food or water from the mouth to the stomach.

This may cause:

- Choking
- Chest infection/ Pneumonia (lung infection)

Types of Diet & Fluids Recommended

	Type	Amount
Diet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Regular<input type="checkbox"/> Easy to chew<input type="checkbox"/> Soft and bite-sized<input type="checkbox"/> Minced and moist<input type="checkbox"/> Pureed<input type="checkbox"/> Liquidised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Teaspoon<input type="checkbox"/> Tablespoon
Fluids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Thin<input type="checkbox"/> Slightly thick<input type="checkbox"/> Mildly thick<input type="checkbox"/> Moderately thick<input type="checkbox"/> Extremely thick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Teaspoon<input type="checkbox"/> Tablespoon<input type="checkbox"/> Straw<input type="checkbox"/> Cup

Please refer to Modified Consistencies for Swallowing Brochure for details of diet and fluid textures.

Safe Feeding Precautions

Prior to feeding, do ensure that your loved one is:

- Sitting upright and not slouching or sliding down the bed or chair
- Fully awake and alert for feeding

Do also ensure that you have the following prepared:

- The correct diet and fluid consistency as advised by the Speech Therapist
- The correct mode of feeding required e.g. teaspoon/tablespoon/cup or straw as advised by the Speech Therapist

During the feeding, do ensure that:

- You palpate or feel for the swallows at all times.
- You use the correct feeding strategy that was recommended by the Speech Therapist

Remember: Stay with your loved one for the ENTIRE meal.

Feeding Strategies

Cyclic ingestion

- Feed your loved one with _____ spoon of food
- Then give your loved one ____ sip/spoon of drink

Empty spoon cue

- If your loved one is holding food in the mouth and not swallowing:
 - Feed your loved one with an empty spoon
 - Press your loved one's tongue lightly with spoon
 - Ask your loved one to swallow

Feeding Strategies

Minimising distractions

- Draw the curtains
- Switch off TV/radio
- Ask your loved one to stop talking
- Tell your loved one it is mealtime and to focus on eating

Modified supraglottic swallow

- Tell your loved one to:
 - Swallow the food/water
 - Cough
 - Then swallow their saliva

Feeding Strategies

Multiple swallows

- Feed your loved one with food/drink
- Palpate/Feel for the swallow (place your finger on their throat)
- After your loved one has swallowed, ask them to swallow saliva (__ times)
- Feed your loved one the next spoon

Slow paced feeding

- Feed your loved one one spoon or allow your loved one to self-feed one spoon
- If your loved one tries to take next spoon immediately, stop them gently
- Ask your loved one to take a break and then continue feeding

3-second preparation

- Give your loved one a sip of drink
- Ask them to hold it in their mouth
- Count 1, 2, 3 then ask your loved one to swallow

When to Stop Feeding?

Stop feeding when your loved one:

- Starts to get sleepy or less alert
- Starts to get more aggressive or agitated when you try to feed them
- Shows signs of aspiration
 - Throat clearing
 - Coughing
 - Shortness of breath
 - Wet or gurgly (phlegm-sounding) voice post swallow

What to do if your loved one shows signs of aspiration?

- Stop feeding immediately.
- Let your loved one continue coughing to clear their throat
- Allow your loved one to rest until they feel better
- Try feeding again carefully
- If they start coughing again or show other signs of aspiration, stop feeding and get help from a healthcare professional

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