

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	<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	<input type="checkbox"/> Teaspoon <input type="checkbox"/> Tablespoon
Fluids	<input type="checkbox"/> Thin <input type="checkbox"/> Slightly thick <input type="checkbox"/> Mildly thick <input type="checkbox"/> Moderately thick <input type="checkbox"/> Extremely thick	<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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Scan the QR Code with your smart phone  
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<https://nhghealth.com.sg>



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