

TOPIC:

Eating and Swallowing After Stroke



Eating and Swallowing After Stroke



Dysphagia:

- Means trouble swallowing
- Results from damage to the brain
- May require changes to food textures and liquids for safety

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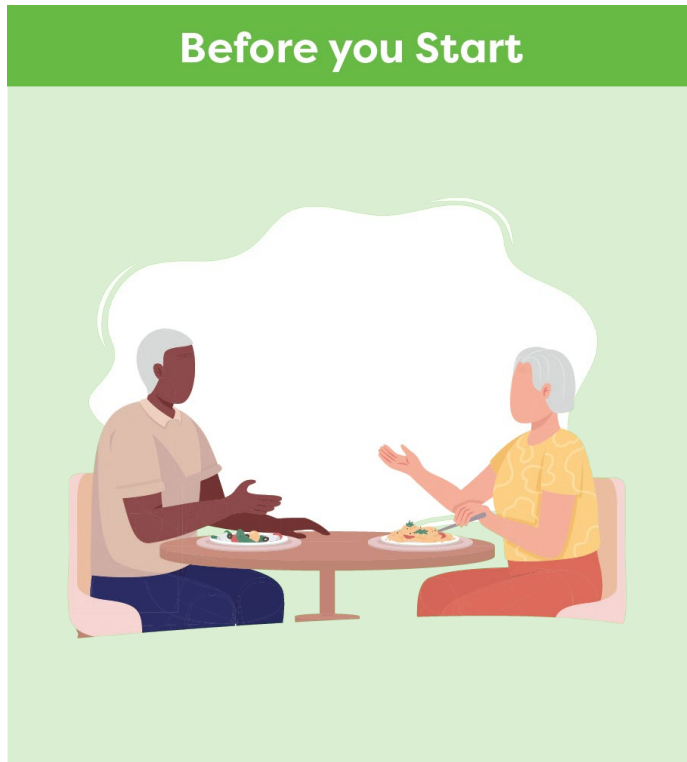
What you should know:

- ✓ Up to 65% of people will have dysphagia
- ✓ Pneumonia can occur when food or liquids “go down the wrong way”
- ✓ Oral care should be done before and after meals and at bedtime
- ✓ Poor intake can lead to weight loss and dehydration
- ✓ Social isolation can occur for many people living with dysphagia

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Smart Tips:



- Perform hand hygiene
- Ensure the person is alert
- Use assistive devices as needed
- Ensure dentures are in place and fit well

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Before you Start



- Place yourself face to face and at eye level or sit on the person's unaffected side
- Check that the person is upright for the meal
- Ask for help if you are not sure a food is right for the person

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Look and Listen for the Following



Watch for signs of trouble swallowing:

- Pocketing of food or pills
- Taking a long time to eat
- Drooling or spitting out food
- Shortness of breath after meals
- A wet or gurgly voice
- Throat-clearing
- Coughing or choking
- Person reporting issues

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During the meal



- Be patient and avoid rushing
- Avoid talking when the person is eating
- Decrease distractions
- Eat slowly
- Encourage to feed themselves when able
- Confirm the mouth is clear
- Let the person know what food they are being offered
- Be positive!

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After the meal



- Keep upright for 30 minutes after eating
- Check for pocketing of food
- Encourage good oral care
- Use a soft toothbrush

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Seek extra support

- ✓ Swallowing can change over time. If you see any changes, **report this to the team immediately**
- ✓ Registered Dietitians and Speech Language Pathologists are skilled in eating and swallowing