



Swallowing Guidelines

Body Positions

- Sit upright while eating
- Remain seated for up to 30 minutes after eating

Guidelines

- Limit distractions
- Slow down and eat slowly
- Put your utensil down between bites
- Take small bites and sips
- Finish what you have in your mouth before taking another bite
- Alternate food with small sips of liquid
- Swallow two times
- Check for pocketing and clear food with tongue or finger
- Throat clear

Signs of Swallowing Difficulties

- Coughing and/or choking during, or shortly, after a meal
- Wet or gurgley voice after swallowing
- Flushed face or watery eyes during eating and/or drinking
- Temperature spike one hour after a meal (contact Doctor if fever persists)
- Feeling that food is stuck in your throat
- Increase chest congestion after finishing a meal
- Increased length of time required to eat a meal
- Increased effort required for the act of eating
- Weight loss or dehydration
- Feeling of food/liquid going down the wrong way
- Need to wash down your food
- Pneumonia

Aspiration is defined as the entry of food, or liquid into the airway below the true vocal folds. If food or liquid enter the airway, there is a risk of pneumonia. A swallowing disorder can also cause malnutrition and/or dehydration.

Penetration is defined as the entry of food or liquid into the larynx but not into the true vocal folds below the airway.

