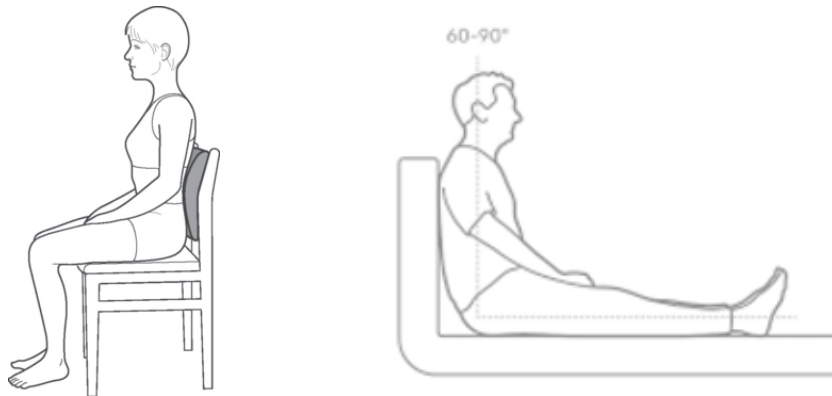


Safer Swallowing Advice

Information for patients, relatives and carers

When eating and/or drinking -

- Sit upright, ideally out of bed. Remain upright for 30 minutes after a meal if possible/comfortable to do so.



- Follow a regular mouthcare routine (e.g. brush teeth twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste)
- Ensure you are alert
- Reduce distractions
- Ensure your mouth is clear before eating/drinking
- Take your time
- Do not mix food and fluids in the same mouthful
- A sip of fluid between mouthfuls of food may be helpful to clear residue
- Use an open cup where possible

If you are helping someone to eat and drink, these strategies may help -

- Verbal prompts to swallow (e.g. "Swallow now")
- Support to load spoon/fork
- Hand-over-hand feeding
 - Place your hand over the person's hand which is holding the fork or spoon
 - Guide their hand towards their mouth
- Adapted cutlery and crockery

High Risk Food Textures

Certain foods are more likely to result in choking due to their texture and shape.
For example -

	Dry or hard foods Crackers, nuts, raw vegetables (e.g. carrots, broccoli)
	Crumbly Foods Biscuits, pie crust...
	Hard foods Boiled sweets, nuts...
	Tough or chewy foods Steak, bacon, harder vegetables...
	Crispy or crunchy foods Crisps, flaky pastry...
	Stringy or fibrous foods Pineapple, celery...
	Pips, seeds, pith/inside skin. No skins or outer shells Peas, grapes, fruit skins, husks e.g. sweetcorn
	Skin bone or gristle
	Round or long shaped foods Sausages, grapes, sweets. Hard chunks e.g. pieces of apple..
	Juicy food where the juice separates off in the mouth Melon...
	Floppy foods Lettuce, thinly sliced cucumber, spinach...
	Sticky foods Some cheese, marshmallows...
	Mixing solid food with liquid Cereal, fruit salad with juice, soups with food pieces...

Difficulty Swallowing Tablets

If you have difficulty swallowing tablets, speak to your pharmacist or GP. They may be able to prescribe alternative forms of the medication.

Reflux Symptom Index (RSI)

Reflux can present as swallowing difficulties. If possible, please complete this questionnaire and if the score is 13 or over, contact your GP to request a review.

Within the last month, how did the following problems affect you?
(0-5 rating scale with 0 = No problem and 5 = Severe)

1. Hoarseness or a problem with your voice	0	1	2	3	4	5
2. Clearing your throat	0	1	2	3	4	5
3. Excess throat mucous or postnasal drip*	0	1	2	3	4	5
4. Difficulty swallowing food, liquids or pills	0	1	2	3	4	5
5. Coughing after you ate or after lying down	0	1	2	3	4	5
6. Breathing difficulties or choking episodes	0	1	2	3	4	5
7. Troublesome or annoying cough	0	1	2	3	4	5
8. Sensations of something sticking in your throat	0	1	2	3	4	5
9. Heart burn, chest pain, indigestion, or stomach acid coming up	0	1	2	3	4	5

TOTAL: _____

*Postnasal drip – when mucus drips down the back of the nose, into the throat

Information taken from:

Strategies for safer swallowing - First Line Management of Dysphagia, Rotherham Doncaster & South Humber Foundation NHS Trust

'I have difficulty swallowing food or drink' webpage, Dorset Healthcare University NHS Foundation Trust

[dysphagia-in-care-homes.pdf \(rcslt.org\)](https://www.rcslt.org/dysphagia-in-care-homes.pdf)

Belafsky PC, Postma GN, Koufman JA. **Validity and reliability of the reflux symptom index (RSI).** 2002. J Voice, 16(2), 274-277

If you have any comments about this leaflet or the service you have received you can contact :

Telephone: 01484 343818

www.cht.nhs.uk

If you would like this information in another format or language contact the above.

Potřebujete-li tyto informace v jiném formátu nebo jazyce, obraťte se prosím na výše uvedené oddělení

Jeżeli są Państwo zainteresowani otrzymaniem tych informacji w innym formacie lub wersji językowej, prosimy skontaktować się z nami, korzystając z ww. danych kontaktowych

ਚ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਪ੍ਰਾਚੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ,
ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਵਿਭਾਗ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور فارمیٹ کی زبان میں درکار ہوں، تو
برائے مہربانی مندرجہ بالا شعبے میں ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

"إذا احتجت الحصول على هذه المعلومة بشكل مغاير أو مترجمة إلى لغة مختلفة فيرجى منك الاتصال بالقسم
المذكور أعلاه"