

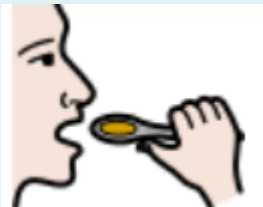
Eating and drinking difficulties

Treating paediatric dysphagia

Information for parents and carers



Key points



Dysphagia means having problems with eating and swallowing.

Paediatric Dysphagia is difficulty with eating and / or drinking in children. It may involve difficulty with chewing, co-ordinating lip and tongue movements, or swallowing.

If we think your child has paediatric dysphagia then there are a number of ways that we can help.

How we can help your child?

Treatment varies greatly depending on the cause and symptoms of the swallowing and eating problem.

After the feeding and swallowing assessment the Speech and Language Therapist will work with other team members (including Paediatrician, Dietician, Occupational Therapist, and Physiotherapist) and may recommend any of the following:

- Medical intervention (e.g. medicine for reflux)
- Direct feeding therapy designed to meet individual needs
- Nutritional changes (e.g. different foods, adding calories to food)
- Increasing acceptance of new foods or textures
- Food temperature and texture changes
- Postural or positioning changes (e.g. different seating)
- Behaviour management techniques
- Referral to other professionals






Speech and Language Therapists can help children to eat and swallow.



Sometimes we ask other experts to help you with your child's eating and swallowing.

 You can contact us for advice on:
0300 300 2019

If feeding therapy with a Speech and Language Therapist is recommended we may work with your child to:

- Make the muscles of the mouth stronger
- Increase tongue movement
- Improve chewing
- Increase acceptance of different foods and liquids
- Improve sucking and or drinking ability
- Coordinate the suck-swallow-breath pattern (for infants)
- Alter food textures and liquid thickness to ensure safe swallowing.

Family members or caregivers are encouraged to:

- Ask questions to understand problems in feeding and swallowing.
- Make sure they understand the treatment plan
- Follow recommended techniques at home and nursery/school
- Talk with everyone who works with the child about the feeding and swallowing issues and treatment plan
- Provide feedback to the speech and language therapist or feeding team about what is or is not working at home or nursery or school.


Please tell us how you feel about the services we provide.

If you have a compliment, concern or complaint please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison (PALS) and Complaints Services on **0800 013 2319** or **Snhs.solentfeedback@nhs.net**
Alternatively, visit: **www.solent.nhs.uk/contact-us**

www.solent.nhs.uk

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