

DYSPHAGIA

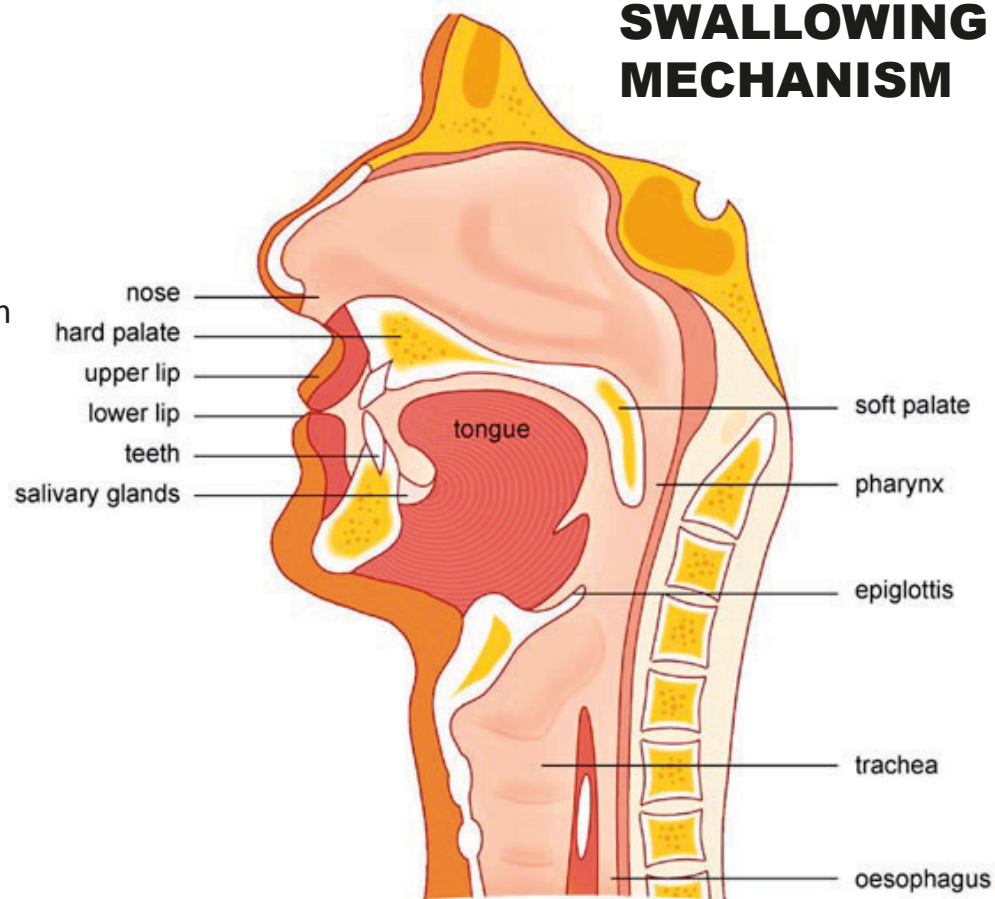
Signs & Symptoms of Swallowing Disorders:

- Coughing during or right after eating or drinking
- Wet or gurgly sounding voice during or after eating or drinking
- Extra effort or time needed to chew or swallow
- Food or liquid leaking from the mouth or getting stuck in mouth
- Recurring pneumonia or chest congestion after eating
- Weight loss or dehydration from not being able to eat enough

Are They Aspirating?

- Eyes watering
- Changes in respiration rate
- Change in lung sounds
- Facial grimacing
- Gagging
- Chest pain
- Weight loss
- Dehydration
- Pneumonia or history of pneumonia
- Reddening of the face
- Difficulty breathing
- Audible breathing
- Coughing

SWALLOWING MECHANISM



The Result of Swallowing Disorders...

Poor nutrition or dehydration

Risk of aspiration (food or liquid entering the airway), which can lead to pneumonia

What are Swallowing Disorders?

Swallowing disorders, also called dysphagia (dis-FAY-juh), can occur at different stages in the swallowing process.

- **Oral Phase (preparatory & initiation)**- sucking, chewing and moving food or liquid into the throat
- **Pharyngeal phase**-starting with the swallowing reflex, squeezing food down the throat, and closing off the airway to prevent food or liquid from entering the airway (aspiration) or to prevent choking
- **Esophageal phase**- relaxing and tightening the openings at the top and bottom of the feeding tube in the throat (esophagus) and squeezing food through the esophagus into the stomach

Swallowing Revealed

Oral Preparatory Phase

- Eating is anticipated
- Food is brought to the mouth
 - Bitten off
 - Taken from utensil
- Food is mixed with saliva and chewed when needed
- Liquids are sucked or sipped through a cup or straw
- Involuntary coordination of sucking, swallowing and breathing

Oral Initiation Phase

- The food or liquid is collected
- Sealed between the roof of the mouth and the tongue
- The swallow allows the liquid to fall from mouth into pharynx
- Food is swallowed as the tongue moves toward the back of the throat (pharynx) with a stripping wave
- This begins the actual reflexive swallow

Pharyngeal Phase

- Soft palate elevates to keep food from nose
- Tongue moves back
- Larynx moves up
- Epiglottis tilts down to guide the food past the airway
- Breathing stops
- Vocal folds come together
- Muscles of pharynx contract
- Upper esophageal sphincter relaxes

Esophageal Phase

- Peristalsis (a wave of contraction) moved the food through the esophagus
- The lower esophageal sphincter relaxes to allow the food to pass into the stomach
- The lower esophageal sphincter then returns to a closed 'tonic' state to prevent regurgitation

Common Causes of Swallowing Disorders

Several diseases, conditions or surgical interventions can result in swallowing problems.

- CVA/Stroke
- Cancer: lung cancer, esophageal cancer throat and mouth cancer
- History of pneumonia (especially right lower lobe)
- COPD
- Any degenerative disease (Parkinson's, Huntington's, Dementia, Alzheimer's, Muscular Sclerosis)
- Congestive Heart Failure
- Head Trauma

DID YOU KNOW?

With the aspiration of food, as many as 100,000,000 bacteria may enter the lungs

70% of patients with pneumonia aspirated during their sleep.

Effective oral care can decrease mortality due to pneumonia by 50%

Residents who are weak or temporarily sedated are at risk for aspiration of bacteria, yeast, etc.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

1. Recognize signs & symptoms of aspiration
2. Practice good oral care
3. Brush before meals to cut back on germs in saliva
4. Head of bed up after meals
5. Perform oral care 3 times a day