



Occupational Therapy Services for **Swallowing**

Signs of dysphagia (problems with swallowing) include coughing, choking, and food going down the “wrong pipe”.

Parkinson’s disease, stroke, traumatic brain injury, and acid reflux are some of the medical conditions that place people at risk for problems with swallowing.

If untreated, swallowing difficulties can lead to a form of pneumonia.

People with trouble swallowing can be evaluated for and receive occupational therapy services to help with eating and drinking safely.

Occupational therapy practitioners work with clients to:

- Teach safe swallowing techniques
- Modify food textures and beverage consistencies
- Learn ways to decrease the risk of pneumonia
- Learn exercises to strengthen swallowing muscles
- Recommend tools and tips to make eating and drinking easier
- Reduce distractions for safer eating and drinking

What You Can Do



Consider whether you or a loved one is having difficulty swallowing



Ask your care provider for occupational therapy services

[Reference: American Occupational Therapy Association. \(2017\). Position Statement- The practice of occupational therapy in feeding, eating, and swallowing. American Journal of Occupational Therapy, 71\(Suppl. 2\), 7112410015p1-7112410015p13. https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2017.716S04](#)