

What is Dysphagia?

Dysphagia means swallowing difficulties. It can affect people of all ages and in different degrees, ranging from mild discomfort to a total inability to swallow.

Some signs may include:

- Frequent coughing or choking when eating/drinking
- Difficulties swallowing certain types of food/liquids
- Very slow eating
- Loss of appetite
- Loss of weight
- Breathing difficulties when eating/drinking
- Fatigues easily at meals
- Frequent fever or pneumonia (chest infection)

Who is at Risk?

- Patients who had stroke(s) before.
- Patients with other neurological disorders, for example Parkinson's disease, Multiple Sclerosis, and Motor Neuron Diseases.
- Patients who underwent any major surgeries.
- Patients who had cancer of mouth, nose or throat.
- Patients who underwent radiotherapy or surgery at the head and neck areas.
- Patients who are bed-bound or immobile.
- Patients with respiratory problems.
- Patients with vocal cord paralysis
- Patients who are drowsy.
- Premature babies.
- Babies born with syndromes, injuries or deformities at birth.



“Help I Can’t Swallow!”

The Speech and Hearing Centre at Sunway Medical Centre is pleased to offer dysphagia assessment and therapy, including instrumental assessments i.e. the Videofluoroscopy Swallowing Study (VFS) and Flexible Endoscopic Evaluation of Swallowing (FEES).

For more information, kindly contact us at:

Speech & Hearing Centre Sunway Medical Centre

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Our Audiology Clinics and Speech Therapy Clinics are located on the 2nd Floor, East Wing.

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Swallowing
Treatment
Clinic

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We can help you.

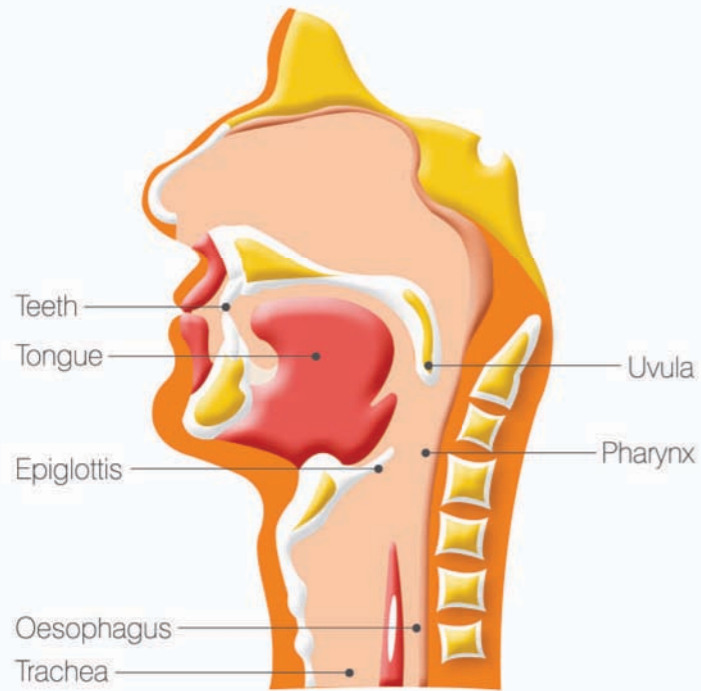




I can't swallow!

Dysphagia is a medical term that refers to any difficulty or discomfort when swallowing liquids, foods, or saliva. It can affect people of all ages and in different degrees, ranging from mild discomfort to a total inability to swallow.

We can help you.



What are the Dangers?

In severe cases, food or fluids may be swallowed to the wrong path into the lungs and cause the lungs to be infected. This condition is known as aspiration pneumonia. The patient will need hospitalisation and proper treatment. If severe, aspiration pneumonia can be fatal.

Who do you Consult if you/your family member has Dysphagia?

If you have the above symptoms, you need to see a doctor and a Speech-Language Pathologist (Speech Therapist).



Who is a Speech-Language Pathologist?

The Speech-Language Pathologist is a professional who treats patients with speech, voice, language and communication problems. Some Speech-Language Pathologists also treat swallowing problems.

What can the Speech-Language Pathologist Do for a Patient with Dysphagia?

The Speech-Language Pathologist will assess the patient and recommend the "safest diet". In life-threatening cases, the Speech-Language Pathologist will advise the patient to be fed by a tube inserted either through the nose or stomach. The patient may be taught some exercises or strategies to improve his/her swallowing ability. In many cases, tube feeding may be temporary. As the patient recovers, the Speech-Language Pathologist assesses when he/she is ready to eat by mouth safely again.

What is the Videofluoroscopy Swallowing Study (VFS)?

Videofluoroscopy Swallowing Study (VFS) is another useful procedure to assess swallowing disorders. In this radiographic study, the patient is fed with different food and fluid consistencies. As the patient swallows, X-ray pictures will appear on the monitor. The Speech-Language Pathologist will observe the patient's swallowing ability to confirm the diagnosis and make suitable recommendations.

What is the Flexible Endoscopic Evaluation of Swallowing (FEES)?

Flexible Endoscopic Evaluation of Swallowing (FEES) is an effective procedure to assess swallowing disorders. The Speech-Language Pathologist inserts a flexible laryngoscope from the patient's nose into his/her throat. Then the patient is fed with different food and fluid consistencies. As the patient swallows, pictures will appear on the monitor. The Speech-Language Pathologist will study the patient's swallowing function to confirm if the patient can swallow safely.