

Talking about Swallowing Problems with your Family Doctor

PREPARING FOR YOUR VISIT

Your family doctor can help you to understand if your swallowing difficulties are a condition called dysphagia. The following tips are meant to help prepare you for your visit.

BEFORE YOUR VISIT

1. Complete the EAT-10 swallowing assessment tool (page 2) and plan to share your results with your doctor.
2. Circle any of the symptoms you are having below and share them during your visit.

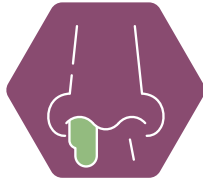
WHAT IS DYSPHAGIA?
Dysphagia is the medical term for swallowing difficulties. It is important to talk with your doctor about your swallowing challenges to help determine if you may have dysphagia.



Difficulty starting a swallow or needing several attempts to swallow a mouthful



Choking or coughing while eating or drinking



Foods or drinks going into your nose or windpipe



Foods or drinks leaking out of your mouth when eating or drinking



Troubles swallowing saliva, possibly leading to drooling



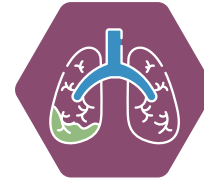
Food is often left in your mouth or throat after swallowing



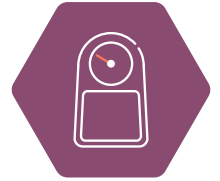
Gurgly or wet-sounding voice when you talk after swallowing foods or drinks



Swallowing is painful



Frequent chest infections or pneumonia



Weight loss related to eating and drinking less

DURING YOUR VISIT

Your doctor will want to understand what types of symptoms you are experiencing. Share the above symptoms with them.

YOU MAY HAVE LOTS OF QUESTIONS FOR YOUR DOCTOR, IT'S OK TO ASK:

- What do you think could be causing my swallowing challenges?
- Who can help me manage my swallowing challenges?
- What can I do to help manage my swallowing challenges at home?
- Where can I go to learn more about dysphagia/swallowing challenges?



If you are having trouble drinking regular liquids such as water, coffee, tea, juice, ask your doctor if ThickenUp® Clear, an instant drink and food thickener, may be right for you.

To learn more visit www.nestlehealthscience.ca/en/thickenupclear

EAT-10: A Swallowing Assessment Tool

LAST NAME

FIRST NAME

SEX

AGE

DATE

OBJECTIVE:

EAT-10 helps to measure swallowing difficulties.

It may be important for you to talk with your physician about treatment options for symptoms.

A. INSTRUCTIONS:

Answer each question by writing the number of points in the boxes.

To what extent do you experience the following problems?

1 My swallowing problem has caused me to lose weight.

0 = no problem

1

2

3

4 = severe problem

6 Swallowing is painful.

0 = no problem

1

2

3

4 = severe problem

2 My swallowing problem interferes with my ability to go out for meals.

0 = no problem

1

2

3

4 = severe problem

7 The pleasure of eating is affected by my swallowing.

0 = no problem

1

2

3

4 = severe problem

3 Swallowing liquids takes extra effort.

0 = no problem

1

2

3

4 = severe problem

8 When I swallow food sticks in my throat.

0 = no problem

1

2

3

4 = severe problem

4 Swallowing solids takes extra effort.

0 = no problem

1

2

3

4 = severe problem

9 I cough when I eat.

0 = no problem

1

2

3

4 = severe problem

5 Swallowing pills takes extra effort.

0 = no problem

1

2

3

4 = severe problem

10 Swallowing is stressful.

0 = no problem

1

2

3

4 = severe problem

B. SCORING:

Add up the number of points and write your total score in the boxes.

Total Score (max. 40 points)

C. WHAT TO DO NEXT:

If the EAT-10 score is 3 or higher, you may have problems swallowing efficiently and safely. We recommend discussing the EAT-10 results with a physician.

Reference: The validity and reliability of EAT-10 has been determined.

Belafsky PC, Mouadeb DA, Rees CJ, Pryor JC, Postma GN, Allen J, Leonard RJ. Validity and Reliability of the Eating Assessment Tool (EAT-10). Annals of Otolaryngology & Laryngology 2008;117(12):919-924.

