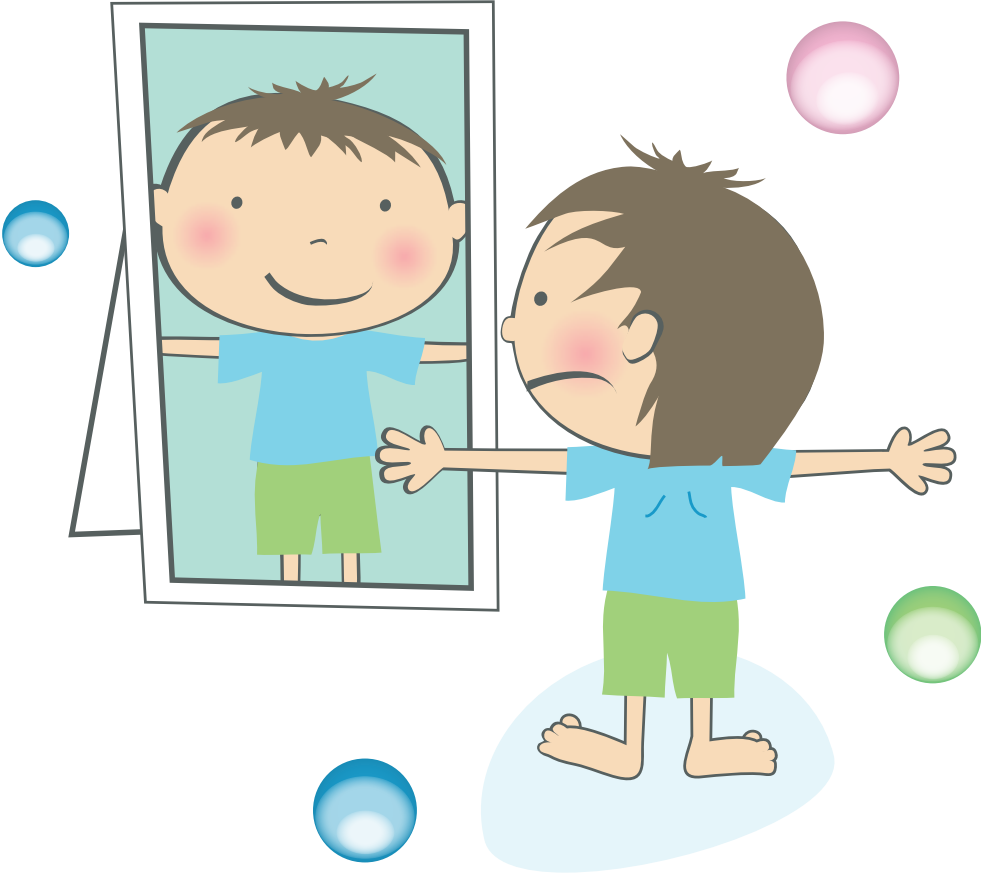


YOUR COMPLETE GUIDE TO DYSPHAGIA

Inspired by patients. Developed by experts. Delivered with care.



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INTRODUCTION

Discovering that your child has eating, drinking or swallowing difficulties (dysphagia) can be a challenging time.



This booklet has been created to support your understanding of swallowing problems and how we can help manage these difficulties.

This booklet has been created to help manage the dysphagia journey; for you, your child and other members of the family; from diagnosis to living with it in your day-to-day life.

We do not feel anyone should have to live without the joy of food and drink in their lives and so we have provided a range of resources, helpful information and useful tips just for you.

And the information doesn't stop in this booklet - we have created a website which we keep regularly updated with hints and tips that you can download and follow: www.nestlehealthscience.co.uk/dysphagia

So let's go back to the start and look at:
What exactly is dysphagia?



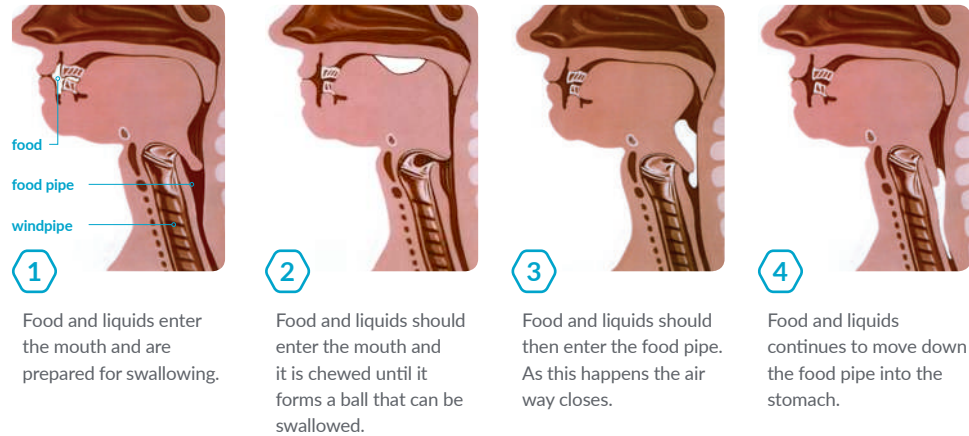
WHAT IS DYSPHAGIA?

Dysphagia, pronounced dis-fay-juh, is the medical name for swallowing difficulties.

THE SWALLOWING PROCESS

Swallowing is a complex process and involves the condition of nerves and muscles in the face, neck and food pipe (oesophagus).

STAGES OF SWALLOWING



THE SWALLOWING PROCESS WITH DYSPHAGIA

Swallowing difficulties may mean that food and drink may pass through the vocal cords in to the lungs.



THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF DYSPHAGIA YOUR CHILD MAY EXPERIENCE



THOSE WHO EXPERIENCE DYSPHAGIA.

Babies, children and young people

Sometimes dysphagia can occur in isolation, with no identified cause. However, dysphagia in babies, children and young people can be associated with a number of different conditions:

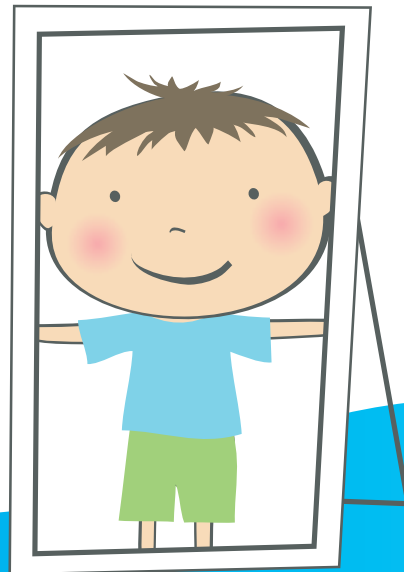
- Being born prematurely
- Neurological deficits
e.g. acquired traumatic brain injury Rett syndrome
- Oncology/tumours
- Cerebral palsy
- Infectious diseases
e.g. meningitis
- Neuromuscular disorders
e.g. muscular dystrophy
- Respiratory difficulties
e.g. chronic lung disease
- Cardiovascular disorders
e.g. congenital heart disease
- Gastrointestinal difficulties,
e.g. gastro-oesophageal reflux
- Craniofacial conditions
e.g. cleft palate, Pierre Robin sequence
- Congenital syndromes,
e.g. Prader-Willi, Down's syndrome
- Developmental delay

THE ROLE OF THE SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPIST

The speech and language therapist can help support babies, children and young people with dysphagia and feeding difficulties.

Your child may have:

- Problems with sucking, chewing or swallowing
- Problems with developing feeding skills
- Dislike to particular taste and textures
- Behavioural issues with eating, drinking during mealtimes e.g. food refusal / fussy eaters



DIAGNOSIS AND MANAGEMENT OF DYSPHAGIA

IDENTIFYING EATING, DRINKING AND SWALLOWING DIFFICULTIES

The Speech & Language Therapist will assess what is making swallowing difficult for your child and advises you on how to make your child's swallow safer, which types of food and drink are safe for your child to have. They may also provide exercises or positions to help make swallowing safer and easier for your child.

If your child is losing weight unexpectedly, you may also have some support from a dietitian who will monitor your child's weight and help them to get the right amount of calories and type of nutrition that they need. Doctors and nurses may also be involved in the care programme to help manage any symptoms of dysphagia.

The Speech and Language Therapist will talk to you about your child's eating, drinking and swallowing abilities and the difficulties they are experiencing. They will carry out an assessment which may involve:

- Asking some questions about your child's eating and drinking habits and when difficulties may arise.
- Observing eating drinking and look for signs of difficulties.

Following this assessment, the Speech & Language Therapist will make recommendations on the safest food and drink consistencies for your child.

THE MANAGEMENT OF DYSPHAGIA

The Speech & Language Therapist may advise you to change the consistencies of your child's food and drink to make swallowing safer. Thickened drinks and softer food may be safer to swallow because they are easier to control in the mouth; they also move more slowly down the throat, allowing muscles time to protect the airway.

The Speech and Language Therapist may also work with the Physiotherapist and Occupational Therapist to provide advise on special manoeuvres, and techniques. They may also give advice on positioning, posture and specific adapted equipment to help (dysphagia spoons, cups that limit volume of fluids to swallow at a time).

It is important that you follow the recommendation from your child's Speech & Language Therapist.

SAFE SWALLOWING

10 TOP TIPS FOR SAFER SWALLOWING

- ✓ Ensure your child is fully alert before offering any food or drink.
- ✓ Reduce distractions around your child while eating or drinking e.g. turn off the TV or radio.
- ✓ Give your child plenty of time so that meals are not rushed.
- ✓ Provide small bites or sips of food and drink. Large mouthfuls can be difficult to swallow.
- ✓ Allow a pause between mouthfuls, making sure your child has swallowed everything in their mouth before taking another bite or sip.
- ✓ If your child finds eating and drinking tiring, it may be easier for them to have smaller meals more frequently.
- ✓ Ensure your child is seated in an upright position for meals and drinks. Lying down when eating or drinking can make swallowing difficult and unsafe.
- ✓ Offer foods that are appropriate for your child's stage of development and follow the advice given by your Speech & Language Therapist.
- ✓ Ensure your child remains upright for at least 30 minutes after eating and drinking.

DRINKING WITH DYSPHAGIA

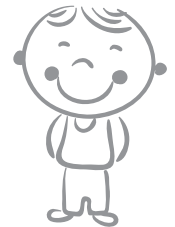
A thickening powder called Resource® ThickenUp® Clear may have been recommended by the Speech & Language Therapist. This will thicken your child's drinks to a safe consistency for swallowing - the Speech & Language Therapist will advise whether your child should have Level 1 (slightly thick), Level 2 (mildly thick), Level 3 (moderately thick) or Level 4 (extremely thick) thickened drinks.

WHAT IS RESOURCE® THICKENUP® CLEAR?

Resource® ThickenUp® Clear is a powder that when mixed with your child's drink, it thickens within minutes, giving them a safer drink to swallow. Resource® ThickenUp® Clear does not change the taste, smell, or look of the drink ensuring your child can still enjoy their favourite drink. It can be mixed with hot, cold, fizzy and still drinks.



Drinks thickened with Resource® ThickenUp® Clear retain their natural appearance*. It dissolves fully and easily without creating lumps in all types of liquids.



RESOURCE® THICKENUP® CLEAR

For children aged 3 years and over

Resource® ThickenUp® Clear is a xanthan gum (a common ingredient found in household foods) based thickener that makes the swallowing of thin liquids easier and safer.



Taste and odour free



Doesn't form lumps



Clear when mixed with water



VERY EASY TO PREPARE



Easy dilution in both hot and cold liquids



Same dosage for any type of liquids (follow recommendation by the SLT).

MIXING INSTRUCTIONS

Mixing Resource® ThickenUp® Clear with drinks is simple, however for best results ensure you follow the mixing instructions.



POWDER FIRST

Use the dosage scoop included in the tin
For best results, add the powder to a clean, dry cup, glass, or beaker



ADD LIQUID

Add the liquid to the powder



STIR

Start stirring immediately, until the powder is completely dissolved



SERVE

Leave to stand for one minute before serving

TIPS FOR MIXING RESOURCE® THICKENUP® CLEAR

- Must use a clean, dry cup or glass otherwise the powder will not work correctly
- Use a measuring jug to ensure correct amount of liquid for the powder
- Use the measuring scoop in the tin of Resource® ThickenUp® Clear to ensure correct dosage
- Keep thickened drinks refrigerated up to a maximum of 24 hours
- Once a drink has been thickened, do not add more powder
- Once tin is opened, dispose of after four weeks
- It is important to ensure your child receives adequate fluids to maintain hydration

