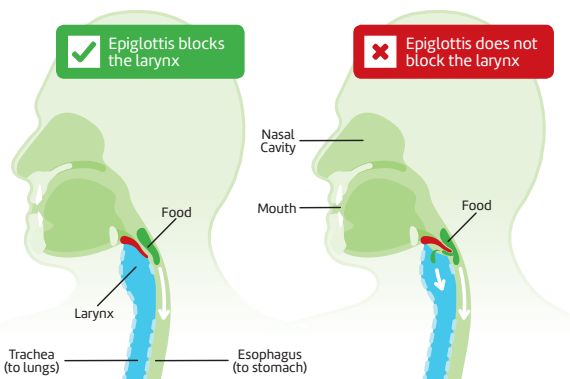


# Dysphagia

## What is Dysphagia?

Dysphagia is usually caused by medical conditions that weaken or damage the muscles and nerves used for swallowing.



## Dysphagia may result in the following problems:



Food or fluid entering the lungs



Malnutrition and dehydration



Choking

*A Speech  
Therapist will  
watch you eat to see  
what happens when  
you swallow.*



## Symptoms of Dysphagia

- ✓ Having pain while swallowing (odynophagia)
- ✓ Being unable to swallow
- ✓ The sensation of food being stuck in your throat or chest
- ✓ Drooling
- ✓ Being hoarse
- ✓ Bringing food back up (regurgitation)
- ✓ Reflux
- ✓ Unexpectedly losing weight
- ✓ Coughing or gagging when swallowing

### Testing for Swallowing Disorders

A Speech Therapist can test you to see how you eat and drink.

The Speech Therapist will:

- ✓ Ask you about your health, past illnesses, surgeries, and your swallowing problems.
- ✓ See how well your mouth muscles move.
- ✓ Watch you eat to see how you sit and feed yourself and what happens when you swallow.
- ✓ Do special tests, if needed. The Speech Therapist can watch how you swallow using:

**Modified Barium Swallow** – you eat or drink food or liquid with barium in it. Barium shows up on an x-ray so the Speech Therapist can watch where the food goes.

**Endoscopic Assessment** – the doctor or Speech Therapist puts a tube with a light on the end in your nose. This scope has a camera on it, and the Speech Therapist can watch you swallow on a screen.



For more Stroke and  
General Health Information  
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