
Tips for Chewing and Swallowing

Cancer treatments and/or surgery can make it hard to safely swallow food and liquids. If you have difficulty chewing and/or swallowing, there are several things you can do to make eating and drinking easier and safer.

- Choose soft, moist foods such as:
 - Scrambled eggs
 - Macaroni and cheese
 - Soups and stews
 - Ice cream, custard, and puddings
 - Mashed potatoes and gravy
 - Cooked cereal without lumps such as oatmeal
 - Yogurt or gelatin made with canned fruit
 - Cottage cheese
 - Cooked vegetables
- Chop, puree or blenderize foods you have difficulty chewing or swallowing.
- Add gravy, sauces, broth, butter, margarine, mayonnaise, or sour cream to soften and moisten foods.
- Soften hard foods such as toast by dunking it in milk, cocoa, coffee, or tea.
- Cut food into small bites and eat slowly. Chew well and swallow your food before taking another bite.
- Keep mealtime relaxed.
- Sit as upright as possible when you eat and remain that way 2 hours after the meal.
- Do not talk and swallow at the same time.
- Take a small sip of liquid after each bite of food, but do not try to wash down solids with sips of liquids. Be sure to follow any guidelines provided the speech therapist.
- Contact your healthcare provider, dietitian, or speech pathologist if your swallowing gets worse, if you cough when eating or drinking, or if you are losing weight.