

# Eating, drinking and swallowing

A guide for carers of people living with a dementia



**I have difficulties eating,  
drinking or swallowing and might be  
at greater risk of choking.**

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## Improving experience for customers with swallowing difficulties (dysphagia)

### Top tips for hospitality

Some people have difficulty eating, drinking or swallowing. This is also known as 'dysphagia'. This can affect their quality of life as socialising in restaurants, cafes and pubs may be stressful, challenging and potentially unsafe.



Eating, drinking and swallowing difficulties can affect people with a range of medical conditions, including cancer, dementia, mental health conditions, Parkinson's and learning disabilities, and it can affect children, young people and adults. People who live with dysphagia are at higher risk of food or drink going into the airway, excessive coughing, chest infections and choking.

In the hospitality sector, you can play a vital role in improving quality of life for people who have eating, drinking and swallowing difficulties and we would like your help. When you customer has a good experience they will tell others and come back again!

**Little and Often**

Have a regular meal and snack routine - try not to miss or skip meals  
Eat small, frequent meals and snacks, and take nourishing drinks in between meals  
Have drinks separately from meals, as they can fill you up too quickly  
Have a pudding once or twice a day  
Snacks in between meals can help to boost your energy intake

**Enriching your Food**

Choose full fat/full cream foods instead of low fat / low sugar types eg. creamy yoghurts, whole milk  
Add sugar, jam, honey, milk powder or cream to porridge, breakfast cereals or puddings  
Use butter in sandwiches or with crackers or plain biscuits  
Add butter, cream and/or grated cheeses to mashed potato, vegetables and pasta dishes

**Nourishing Drinks**

Milk is full of nutrition. Try to have 1 pint of milk each day  
To make fortified milk add 4 tablespoons of milk powder to 1 pint of milk. This can be used on cereals, in sauces, to make custard and in drinks eg. Hot chocolate / Cocoa, Coffee / Cappuccinos, Malted drinks, Milkshakes / Smoothies  
Powdered supplements such as Complan, Meritene Energis, Aymes Retail and Nurishment are available from most supermarkets and pharmacies and can be used between meals. They should not be used to replace meals.

**Other Helpful Tips**

If preparing food is difficult, try ready meals, a meal delivery service or ask friends and family for help in shopping, preparing and cooking meals.

Ideas for your store cupboard

Long life milk, tinned meat or fish, tinned / packet soups, baked beans, tinned fruit and vegetables, breakfast cereals, biscuits, crackers, tinned milk puddings, hot chocolate

Ideas for your freezer / icebox

Potato waffles, oven / microwave chips, fish fingers / cakes, breaded chicken / goujons, ready to cook burgers, ready meals



# WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Moving towards Normalised Visiting in Care Homes in Northern Ireland



As we continue to deal with the challenge of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Northern Ireland it is recognised there is a need to continually review visiting in Care Homes - balancing the need for families to spend quality time together.

We want to hear what matters to you in relation to moving towards normalised visiting in and out of the Care Home.

You can access the survey at

<https://bit.ly/3sG1ula>

Or request a printed version by calling

**02895 362869** or email **10000morevoices@hsc.ni**

This project will close 9th April 2021. We want to know what is most important to you and what concerns you may have about visiting in and out of our Care Homes



## Advice for staff supporting

### **People may have trouble with eating and drinking if they develop COVID-19**

- The difficulties may present as increased
- When we eat and drink we need to be ab
- At the point of swallowing we automatical
- If a person has COVID-19 symptoms or g  
more difficulty coordinating breathing and
- This may increase the person's risk of asp
- Aspiration may increase the person's risk

### **When people are unwell during COVID-19, it can make it harder for them to eat and drink**

- Coughing or shortness of breath
- Chest infections or nasal congestion



# Hard to s

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can have a huge imp  
life. Speak to your C  
one experience any  
or after swallowing



• Chestiness with



## **Personal and Public Involvement (PPI) Involving you, improving care**



Healthy child, healthy future



Talk to your child in your own language

The best way to help your child learn to talk is to talk to him or her in the language you speak at home. This is your own language – it doesn't have to be English. That way, your child will learn to talk confidently, and will be ready to learn English when he starts at school.

- Talk to your child in your own language about what you're doing together – when you're bathing or feeding your child or changing his nappy.
- Read for with rhymes, poems and songs in your own language.
- Let your child listen to your own language. Encourage him to join in with the storytelling.
- Try to find books for your child written in your own language, or to make your own.
- Encourage your child to play with children who speak the same language as he does.
- Don't show anyone to laugh or tease your child because of his accent or if he makes mistakes.
- Talk to your child in your own language about what he did at playtime or during if he uses English words, repeat what he said using your own language. But do not correct him or make him use your own language.
- Help your child feel proud of your own language. If he speaks more than one language, teach him the names of the languages.

Information about bilingualism

**Facts**

- Bilingual speakers are in the majority in the world.
- An estimated 60–70% of speakers are bilingual.
- Learning two or more languages can be beneficial to a child's mental language and learning abilities. The child is able to think more flexibly and creatively.
- Research shows that bilingualism is a child's ability to understand a second language.

**Language development in the second language**

- Most children who learn English as a second language will begin to understand it after three months.
- Children will begin using two or three word phrases in English at 18 months; exposure and be able to hold a conversation after about two years.
- When children are first exposed to another language, they often go through a quiet period, which can last up to seven months.
- When there are two languages spoken at home, there can be different approaches:
  - Many parents speak both languages to the child.
  - One parent one language. This approach has been found to help the child separate and learn the two languages.

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