

SWALLOWING EXERCISES¹

Patients may be referred to a speech and language therapist (SLT) for swallowing therapy. An SLT is trained to work with people with eating or swallowing difficulties and uses a range of techniques that can be tailored to a patient's specific problem, such as teaching swallowing exercises.

⚠ WARNING²

- These exercises are for informational purposes only and should not be used as a substitute for consultation with an appropriate healthcare professional, as each individual's medical situation is unique.
- It is important that you consult with your medical professional (e.g. doctor, SLT) before implementing any course of treatment.
- Exercises which are new to you should be done with the help of a care giver and when access to emergency medical care is available.

EFFORTFUL SWALLOW

Collect all the saliva in your mouth onto the centre of your tongue. Keep your lips closed and tight together. Pretend you are swallowing a grape whole in one big, hard swallow.

ISOKINETIC (DYNAMIC) SHAKER

Lie down on a flat surface. Do not use a pillow. Keep your shoulders flat and lift your chin towards your chest so you can see your toes and immediately lower your head. Repeat these steps as many times as prescribed, then rest and repeat as prescribed.

ISOMETRIC (STATIC) SHAKER

Lie down on a flat surface. Do not use a pillow. Keep your shoulders flat and lift your chin towards your chest so you can see your toes. Hold for as long as prescribed, then set your head down and rest. Repeat as prescribed.

JAW THRUST

Move your lower jaw as far forward as you can. Your lower teeth should be in front of your upper teeth. Note, patients with jaw replacement should use extra caution before performing this exercise so as not to stress the jawbone.

LOLLIPOP SWALLOWING

Place a sugarless lollipop in your mouth and lick. Lick three times and then do an effortful swallow with your lips firmly pressed together. Swallow as hard as you can.

MASAKO MANOEUVRE

Stick your tongue out of your mouth between your front teeth and gently bite down to hold it in place. Swallow while keeping your tongue gently between your teeth. You can let go of your tongue between swallows and repeat.

MENDELSON MANOEUVRE

Place your middle three fingers (index, middle, ring) on your Adam's Apple (the skin in front of your neck beneath your chin). Swallow once to practice. Feel your Adam's Apple slide upward as you swallow. Now, swallow again and when your Adam's Apple gets to its highest position in the throat, squeeze your throat muscles and hold it as high as you can for as long as your clinician has directed for this exercise (or as long as you can if you can't hold it for this length of time).

YAWN

Yawn and when you get into a big stretch, hold that position for as long as indicated.

SUPRAGLOTTIC MANOEUVRE

Perform this exercise if and only if directed by your clinician. Your clinician should also provide direction as to the position of your head (tucked, right, left, straight). Collect a small amount of saliva in your mouth. Take a deep breath and hold your breath (if the vocal folds are not closed then try to inhale and say ah, turn off your voice and hold your breath). Keep holding your breath while you swallow. Immediately after you swallow, cough. Practice with saliva prior to food or liquid.

TONGUE STRENGTH EXERCISE

Using a tongue depressor, press the tip of your tongue out against the tongue depressor. Put the tongue depressor on the tip of your tongue and push up. To exercise the middle part of your tongue, put the tongue depressor towards the middle of your tongue and push up against the roof of your mouth. To exercise the back of the tongue, say the "k" sound, then put the tongue depressor on the spot of the tongue that made contact with the roof of your mouth and push up. Next, sweep the tip of your tongue from the very front of your mouth to the back along the roof of your mouth. Lastly, lateralize your tongue from one corner of your mouth to the other.

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TONGUE RANGE OF MOTION

First, stick your tongue out as far as possible and hold as instructed. Then pull the tongue back into the mouth as far as you can. Then, lateralize the tongue tip to one corner of your mouth and hold. Then switch to the opposite side and hold. Lastly, open your mouth put your tongue tip behind your top teeth and hold the stretch.

TONGUE RETRACTION

Don't use the tip of your tongue. Instead, pull the back of your tongue as far into the mouth as you can and hold.

EFFORTFUL PITCH GLIDE

Say "eee" in as low a pitch as possible and then gradually raise the pitch of your voice until the highest tone possible. Hold this tone for the length of time directed by your clinician.

LIP RANGE OF MOTION

Pull your lips into a smile and hold the stretch. Next, open your jaw wide and then stretch your lips into a smile and hold.

UNDERSTANDING DYSPHAGIA

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS & CARERS

www.liquidmedicine.co.uk

REFERENCES: 1. National Foundation of Swallowing Difficulties. Available at: <https://swallowingdisorderfoundation.com/oral-exercises-to-strengthen-the-swallowing-function-entry-page/> Accessed 28 February 2022. 2. National Foundation of Swallowing Difficulties. Available at: <https://secureservercdn.net/198.12.144.78/62e.0b2.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Clinician-Template-V9.pdf> Accessed 28 February 2022.

