

DYSPHAGIA

Speech-Language Pathologists Can Help.



What is Dysphagia?

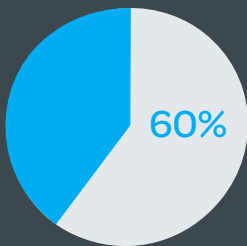
Dysphagia (*dis-fay-juh*) is the medical term for a swallowing disorder, meaning a difficulty or inability to swallow. Dysphagia can affect people of all ages. Left untreated, this disorder can have a devastating effect on a person's social, emotional and physical well-being.

SYMPTOMS:

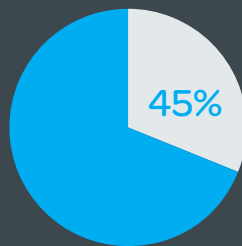
- Food, drinks or saliva falling from mouth
- Finding it hard to chew and swallow food
- Wet or gurgly voice when drinking or eating
- Coughing episodes when drinking or eating
- Feeling as though food gets stuck in throat
- Recurring chest infections
- Unexplained weight loss
- Extra effort or time needed to finish a meal

DYSPHAGIA IS MORE COMMON THAN YOU THINK.

As many as **60%** of people living in long-term care have a swallowing disorder



As many as **45%** of typically developing children have feeding or swallowing problems.



Identifying and Treating Dysphagia

Dysphagia is often caused by damage to the brain or muscles of the head, neck and mouth. These structures are also important for speaking. With their extensive knowledge of the anatomy involved in swallowing and speaking, **speech-language pathologists** are uniquely qualified to offer **comprehensive care** for people with dysphagia.

Treatments for dysphagia can restore swallowing function or compensate for a person's inability to swallow. Speech-language pathology researchers were the first to develop and advance **innovative imaging techniques** to assess dysphagia as well as **evidence-based treatments** that can help restore the ability to eat and drink normally.

Speech-language pathologists are experts in dysphagia assessment, treatment and management.



If you or someone you know is having difficulty swallowing, contact a speech-language pathologist today.

www.communicationhealth.ca