

Thoracic Oncology safe swallowing

A patient's advice sheet

- Make sure you are sitting upright, preferably in a hard backed chair.
- It is safer to eat soft foods which you could mash with a fork.
- Avoid mixed consistencies like soup with bits, or hard cereals with milk.
- Take your time, as rushing and gulping food down will lead to more problems.
- Don't talk and chew or swallow at the same time.
- If the food sticks in the mouth or throat, take alternative swallows of food and a drink to help 'wash the food down'.
- Ensure that each mouthful has been swallowed before the next is taken.
- You need to go at your own speed, not that of others.
- Make sure that you stay sitting up for at least 30 minutes after you have had something to eat or drink.
- If swallowing is effortful, then use a chin tuck: 'Sip, chin down and swallow'.
- Stop eating and drinking if you are tired, if you start coughing or your voice becomes 'gurgly'.
- If drinks make you cough or choke, try a thicker drink such as a 'smoothie', or ask your

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