

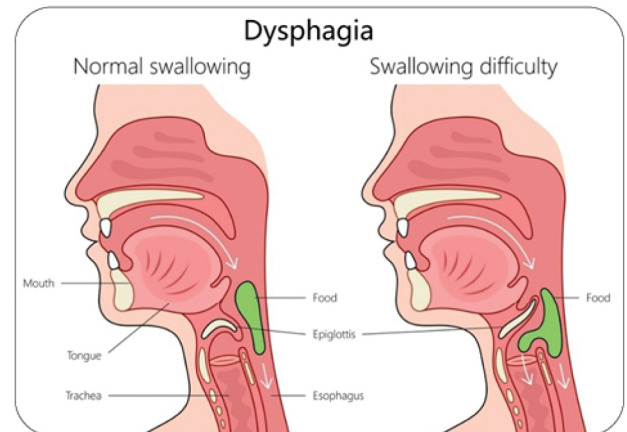


Trouble Swallowing?

Swallowing may seem easy, but every time you eat, drink, or even swallow saliva, your body is performing a complex process to move food safely from your mouth to your stomach. As we get older, swallowing can become more challenging. Muscles in the mouth and throat may lose strength, reflexes can slow, and less saliva can make chewing and moving food down the esophagus harder. This condition is called dysphagia.

Signs to Watch For:

- ⚠️ Clearing your throat frequently during or after meals.
- ⚠️ Food feels like it "sticks" before going down.
- ⚠️ A sensation of a lump in your throat.
- ⚠️ Losing weight without trying because eating feels tiring.
- ⚠️ Recurring chest congestion or pneumonia from tiny amounts of food entering the lungs.



SPEECH THERAPY CAN HELP:

Swallowing is a skill your brain and body can relearn. Speech-language pathologists (SLPs) are trained to identify exactly what is making swallowing difficult. They assess how your mouth, tongue, and throat work together, and create exercises to strengthen these muscles. Since swallowing is partly controlled by the brain, SLPs help retrain the brain so it can coordinate your muscles more efficiently. With practice, many people improve their swallowing, reduce the risk of choking, and feel more confident while eating and drinking.

If you're having trouble with swallowing, talk to your doctor. An SLP can help you enjoy meals safely and comfortably again.