

Dysphagia

Useful tips if you're recovering from COVID-19

Some people who have had COVID-19 may have difficulties eating and drinking. You may have managed to eat and drink enough whilst in hospital, or you might have needed a tube to feed you. Swallowing uses many different muscles and it can therefore become more difficult than usual if you have not had anything to eat or drink for a period of time.

Eating and drinking might take more effort than usual. You may become tired more easily, or feel breathless at times. There are things you can do to help manage this at home.

Tips for eating and drinking comfortably

- Always sit up fully for any food or drink, you might want to use pillows or cushions to support you
- Eat or drink at a slower pace, taking smaller mouthfuls than you usually might
- Stop and rest if you are feeling breathless or tired
- Try and eat smaller amounts often throughout the day, rather than three normal sized meals
- If chewing feels like an effort and makes you tired or out of breath, try eating softer foods until you are feeling stronger



If you are still having swallowing problems after following this advice, or you are experiencing coughing or choking when eating or drinking, a wet, gurgly voice after eating or drinking, or a sticking sensation in the throat, please contact your GP and ask to be referred to Speech and Language Therapy.

Please ask any member of the team caring for you if you need help understanding this leaflet, or if you need the information provided in an alternative format. This includes translations, large print, Braille, easy read, on audio tape, or via email.