

# Foods to Avoid

Living with swallowing difficulties can be hard and upsetting, whether you have the condition yourself or you are a family member of someone with the condition. Park Place Seniors Living understands that there are many residents who have swallowing difficulties and who therefore require modifications to their meals.



## SOME FOODS MAY BE HARD TO MANAGE AND SHOULD BE AVOIDED:

- 1** Dry or crumbly foods: *crackers, rice, toast, bread, popcorn, cookies*
- 2** Sticky or stringy foods: *spinach, peanut butter*
- 3** Small or hard pieces of food: *raw vegetables, raw fruit, grapes, corn, peas, hard candies, chocolate, chips, gum*
- 4** If thickened fluids are needed, avoid thin fluids\*: *coffee/tea, water, milk, juice, broth, jello, ice cream*

\*Thin fluids will be thickened in the correct consistency as recommended by your dietitian.



### OUR MISSION:

Park Place Seniors Living strives to provide enriched life experiences to seniors through innovation and creativity.

### OUR VISION:

At Park Place Seniors Living we are known for our unwavering commitment to enriching the lives of those we serve by providing a "voice and a choice" with dignity, respect and empathy.

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# Swallowing Difficulties



# Signs

## WHAT CAN HAPPEN IF SOMEONE HAS DIFFICULTY SWALLOWING?

Difficulty swallowing, also known as **Dysphagia**, means a reduced ability to chew or swallow foods or liquids. It can be caused by a physical or nervous system problem. When a swallowing problem is present, there may be a high risk of food, fluid and saliva entering the windpipe or lungs. This is known as **aspiration**. It can be an uncomfortable feeling for an individual resident to experience although sometimes the person may be unaware that it is happening (silent aspiration). Aspiration can also be dangerous because it can cause pneumonia (an infection in the lungs). To help reduce the risk of choking or getting foods or fluids into the lungs, food texture or the consistency of liquids can be changed.

## WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF DYSPHAGIA WHEN EATING?

- Coughing or throat clearing
- Fluid leaking from the mouth
- Keeping food in the cheeks (pocketing)
- Waiting for a long time before swallowing (10 seconds)
- Decreased chewing

# Be Safe

## WHAT CAN HELP YOU OR YOUR LOVED ONE BE SAFER WHILE EATING?

An assessment of how one eats and swallows will be made by the staff, and as required by a registered dietitian, who will assist you to have food and fluids changed to meet your unique needs.

### FOR EXAMPLE:

- 1 Solid Foods can be made easier to swallow or chew**
- 2 Consistency of liquids can also be changed to make them easier to swallow or chew**
- 3 Liquids are sometimes thickened to help reduce the risk of liquid going into the windpipe leading to the lungs**
- 4 Thickened liquids move more slowly, allowing for better control of liquids in the mouth so that swallowing can occur more safely**

*Reviewed by a group of Park Place Family Representatives in April 2022*

# Helpful Tips

## TIPS TO HELP WITH SWALLOWING DIFFICULTIES

Keep yourself informed and talk to the staff to know what diet has been ordered by your family doctor or dietitian. If you require more information, you can speak with members of the care team and /or ask the doctor, dietitian or nurse.

The dietitian can help explain the specific difficulties you or your family member is having with swallowing and how the diet can be modified.

### HERE ARE SOME IMPORTANT POINTS:

- Sit upright while eating and do not lie down for 30 minutes after eating
- Anyone who has difficulty swallowing should be given foods slowly and in small amounts, by teaspoon
- The mouth should be empty before giving the next mouthful
- Food should be soft, moist and without lumps
- Food of mixed consistency, such as a vegetable or noodle soup, may need to be blended
- Have good fitting dentures that are worn for meals