

SWALLOWING HOME EXERCISE PROGRAM

Due to the location of the cancer or side effects of cancer treatment (chemotherapy, radiation treatment, or surgery) you are at an increased risk for developing swallowing difficulties, known as *dysphagia*.

This home exercise program will target the muscles of the mouth and throat to limit or prevent permanent swallowing problems. Completing your exercises will help you continue to swallow food & liquids safely without restriction.

EXERCISE INSTRUCTIONS

- Complete exercises seated upright in a chair
- Maintain good posture
- Use a mirror or a friend to help monitor your performance
- Take breaks to rinse your mouth and rest as needed

Please immediately stop any exercise should you feel new discomfort and notify your speech-language pathologist or doctor

DURING CHEMORADIATION:

- Five to 10 repetitions of each exercise
- Three times a day
- Seven days a week

AFTER CHEMORADIATION*:

- Five to 10 repetitions of each exercise
- One time a day
- Two to three days a week

**Unless otherwise specified by your SLP*

RED FLAGS

- Changes in production of saliva
- Difficulty opening your mouth or swallowing
- Frequent coughing or throat clearing while eating or drinking
- Wet vocal quality during or after meals
- The sensation of food getting stuck in the throat
- Increased effort or number of swallows to clear food, and more...

Please immediately notify your speech-language pathologist or doctor if you are experiencing any of the above RED FLAGS!

LINK TO YOUR EXERCISE VIDEOS:

<https://www.stamfordhealth.org/care-treatment/cancer/cancers-we-treat/head-and-neck-cancers/speech-therapy/swallowing-therapy/>

Please feel free to reach out with any questions, updates, or concerns:
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