



# ABIOS

Acquired Brain Injury Outreach Service

## FACTSHEET: Dysphagia or Swallowing

Audience: Family and Support Workers

For further information contact the  
Acquired Brain Injury Outreach Service (ABIOS)

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### Top tips to help someone with a swallowing difficulty:

- ⊗ Reduce background noise and distractions
- ⊗ Meals may need to be supervised
- ⊗ During meals, the person should be sitting supported, in an upright position.
- ⊗ The person should eat slowly, one mouthful at a time. Make sure that each mouthful is swallowed before the next one is taken.
- ⊗ Encourage the person to cough between mouthfuls to make sure his/her throat is clear
- ⊗ Follow any specific instructions provided by a health professional. E.g. turning the person's head a certain way while they swallow, using a specific utensil, positioning of their body, etc
- ⊗ If the person is having obvious difficulty with the meal, stop and seek medical advice from a Speech Pathologist or doctor
- ⊗ The person should sit up ½ hour after every meal
- ⊗ Ensure good oral hygiene-the person's mouth should be clear of all food after meals and teeth should be brushed regularly
- ⊗ Specialised adaptive equipment can be purchased to promote maximum safety and independence

(Adapted from the Speech Pathology Department, Princess Alexandra Hospital, Brisbane QLD)

