



ABIOS

Acquired Brain Injury Outreach Service

FACTSHEET: **Dysphagia or Swallowing**

Audience: Person with an ABI

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

Ph: (07) 3406 2311

Email: abios@health.qld.gov.au

Top tips for Eating and Drinking if you have difficulty

Swallowing:

- ⊗ Reduce background noise and distractions
- ⊗ During meals, the safest way to eat is to be sitting supported, in an upright position, with your feet on the floor
- ⊗ Eat slowly, one mouthful at a time. Make sure that each mouthful is swallowed before you take the next.
- ⊗ Coughing between mouthfuls can help to make sure your throat is clear
- ⊗ Follow any specific instructions provided by your health professional. For example - turning your head to one side while you swallow, using a specific utensil, the positioning of your body.
- ⊗ Sit upright for approximately ½ hour after every meal to make sure food and fluid goes into the stomach
- ⊗ Ensure good oral hygiene- your mouth should be clear of all food after meals and your teeth should be brushed regularly
- ⊗ Specialised adaptive equipment can be purchased to promote maximum safety and independence
- ⊗ Try to have someone around at mealtimes to maximise safety, particularly if food is getting stuck in your throat
- ⊗ If you are experiencing obvious difficulty at mealtimes, seek medical advice from a Speech Pathologist or doctor

Adapted from Speech Pathology Department, Princess Alexandra Hospital, Brisbane QLD

