

# Dysphagia | definition of dysphagia by Medical dictionary

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## dysphagia

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**REVIEWED**

By Chris at 12:01 pm, Oct 29, 2020

### dysphagia [dis-fa'jah]

difficulty in [SWALLOWING](#); see also [APHAGIA](#). There are numerous underlying causes, including stroke and other neurologic conditions, local trauma and muscle damage, and a tumor or swelling that partially obstructs the passage of food. The condition can range from mild discomfort, such as a feeling that there is a lump in the throat, to a severe inability to control the muscles needed for chewing and swallowing.

Dysphagia can seriously compromise the nutritional status of a patient. Temporary measures such as [TUBE FEEDING](#) and [PARENTERAL NUTRITION](#) can remedy the immediate problem, but long-term goals for rehabilitation must focus on helping the patient recover the ability to swallow sufficient amounts of food and drink to assure adequate nutrition.

Measures intended to accomplish the goal of oral feeding are implemented only after determining the particular techniques that are most helpful for the individual patient. In general, placing the patient in an upright position, providing a pleasant and calm environment, being sure the lips are closed as the patient begins to swallow, and preparing and serving foods of the proper consistency are all helpful techniques. Stroke victims who have difficulty swallowing should be turned, or should turn their heads, to the unaffected side to facilitate swallowing. If dry mouth is a problem, there are artificial salivas available to moisten and lubricate the mouth. When drinking fluids, dysphagic patients should sip the liquid in small amounts.

**esophageal dysphagia** dysphagia caused by an abnormality in the esophagus, such as a smooth muscle disorder that interferes with peristalsis or an obstruction from external compression or a stricture.

**oropharyngeal dysphagia** dysphagia caused by difficulty in initiating the swallowing process, so that solids and liquids cannot move out of the mouth properly.

Miller-Keane Encyclopedia and Dictionary of Medicine, Nursing, and Allied Health, Seventh Edition. © 2003 by Saunders, an imprint of Elsevier, Inc. All rights reserved.

### dys·pha·gi·a , dysphagy (dis-fā'jē-ă, dis'fă-jē),

Difficulty in swallowing.

See also: [aglutition](#).

[dys- + G. *phagō*, to eat]

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## dysphagia (dĭs-fā'jə, -jē-ə)

*n.*

Difficulty in swallowing.

**dys·phag'ic** (-fāj'ĭk) *adj.*

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**dysphagia** Internal medicine Difficulty or inability to swallow, a finding that may indicate a brainstem tumor. See **Malignant dysphagia**. Cf Deglutition.

McGraw-Hill Concise Dictionary of Modern Medicine. © 2002 by The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.

## dys·pha·gi·a , dysphagy (dis-fā'jē-ă, dis'fă-jē)

Difficulty in swallowing.

Synonym(s): **aglutition**.

[*dys-* + G. *phagō*, to eat]

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**dysphagia** Difficulty in swallowing. See also **PHARYNGEAL POUCH**, **ACHALASIA** and **GLOBUS HYSTERICUS**.

Collins Dictionary of Medicine © Robert M. Youngson 2004, 2005

## Dysphagia

Medical term for any difficulty, discomfort or pain when swallowing

Mentioned in: **Achalasia**, **Esophageal Pouches**, **Lower Esophageal Ring**, **Myositis**

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## Patient discussion about dysphagia

**Q. mouth ulcer and difficulty to swallow, below right side of inner tongue** guggle salt water and vinigar dose'nt help

**A.** how big is it? mouth ulcers has a reason why they happen. sometimes a broken tooth, biting a sharp metal, a

prosthetic that doesn't sit well..that sort of things. but sometimes it is caused by other stuff. any way, oral hygiene may relieve some of the symptoms. Topical (rubbed on) antihistamines, antacids, corticosteroids, or other soothing preparations may be recommended for applying on top of the ulcer. Avoid hot or spicy foods.

### More discussions about dysphagia

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