

Co-Creating Safe and Enjoyable Meals for People with Swallowing Difficulty



**Signs and Symptoms of Swallowing Difficulty:
Extract from Additional Resources**

Signs and Symptoms of Swallowing Difficulty



Some signs or symptoms of swallowing difficulty to look out for during or after a meal:

- Coughing during or after a meal
- Throat clearing during or after a meal
- Choking, either with a partially blocked airway (can hear a struggle to breathe) or completely blocked airway (no breathing sound)
- Decreased chewing, or swallowing without chewing
- Taking a long time to chew, or a long time to finish a meal
- Food or drink falling from the mouth
- A wet, gurgly voice during or after a meal
- Changes to the colour of a person's face during a meal
- Food stuck in the mouth after a meal

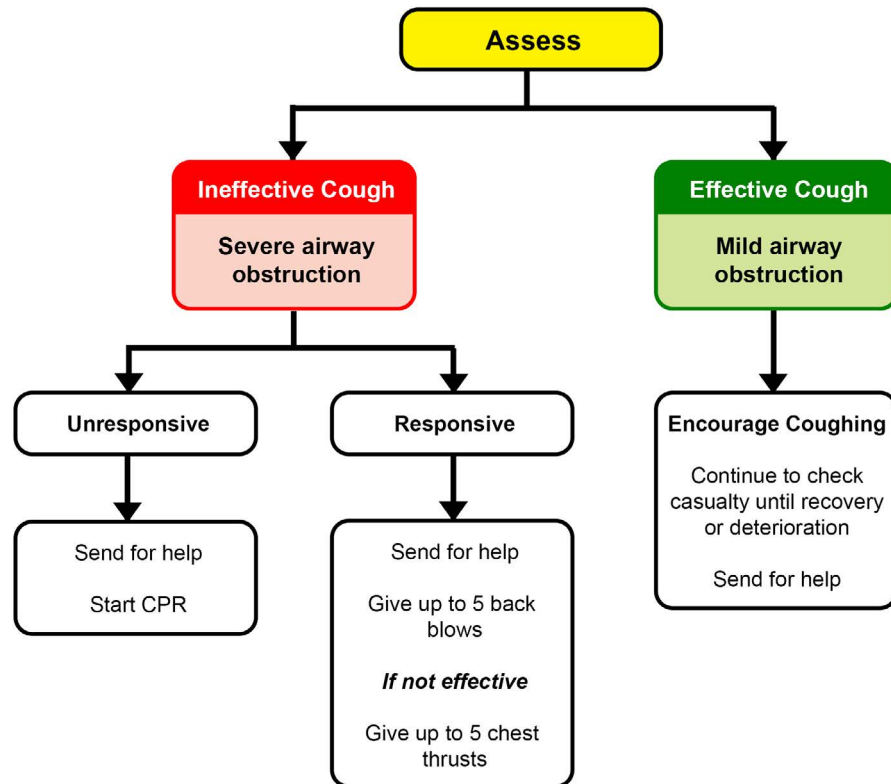


Some signs and symptoms of swallowing difficulty cannot be seen during a meal, here are some other factors to consider

- Silent aspiration: when food or drink enters the airway without triggering a cough. There is no outward sign of silent aspiration, it needs to be assessed at a hospital. There are some secondary symptoms of silent aspiration after the fact, including
 - Raised temperature
 - Wet/rattling breathing
 - Chest infections
- Fatigue during a mealtime may present as eating less, which may result in unintended weight-loss. It is important to monitor people with swallowing difficulty to ensure they maintain a healthy weight.

Figure 4 of the Australian Resuscitation Council and the New Zealand Resuscitation Council guidelines on management of the airway

Foreign Body Airway Obstruction (Choking)



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