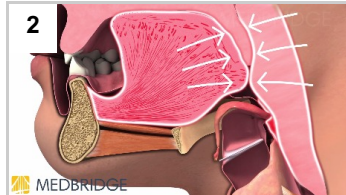


Clinician Notes

General Oral Motor exercises for dysphagia

Effortful Swallow



Goal

The goal of this activity is to keep food or fluid from getting stuck in your pharynx, or throat, by improving the force and timing of your swallow.

Directions

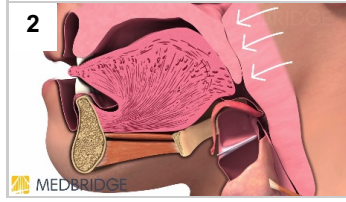
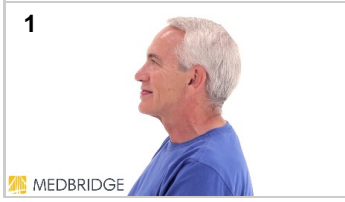
1. Swallow normally, but tightly squeeze your tongue and throat muscles throughout the swallow.
2. Try to swallow with as much effort as you can.
3. Repeat as instructed by your therapist.

Explanation

The muscles of your tongue and pharynx work together to help you swallow properly. By swallowing with as much effort as possible, you can keep food from getting stuck in your throat.

Practice this activity to prevent food from getting stuck in your throat by improving your coordination and force when swallowing.

Masako Maneuver



Goal

The goal of this activity is to increase the movement of your pharyngeal, or throat, muscles.

Directions

1. Place your tongue between your teeth and gently bite down to hold your tongue in place.
2. Swallow your saliva without releasing your tongue.
3. Repeat as instructed by your therapist.

Explanation

The muscles of your tongue and pharynx work together to help you swallow properly. In this activity, you create more open space in your throat when you hold your tongue between your teeth. When you swallow, your pharyngeal muscles then perform larger movements to make up for the extra open space.

Practice this activity, swallowing only your saliva, to increase the movement of your pharyngeal muscles.

Shaker Maneuver



Goal

This is a 2-part exercise that will strengthen the muscles that help open the entrance of your esophagus when swallowing.

Directions

Part 1:

1. Lie on your back on either a firm bed or the floor without a pillow.
2. Lift your head, tucking your chin to your chest to look at your toes, while keeping your shoulders flat on the surface.
3. Hold for as long as you can up to 1 minute.
4. Rest for at least one minute and repeat the prolonged head raise for a total of 3 holds.
5. Go to part 2.

Part 2:

1. Lift your head, tucking your chin to your chest to look at your toes, while keeping your shoulders flat on the surface.
2. Hold briefly, then lower your head, and repeat for 30 repetitions.
3. Rest for at least one minute and repeat the 30 head raises for a total of 3 times.
4. Perform part 1 and part 2 three times a day.

Reminders

You may need to gradually work up to performing the prescribed sets and repetitions for each exercise.

Do not hold your breath during the exercise.

Do not perform within thirty minutes of food or liquid consumption.

Chin Tuck Against Resistance with Towel



Setup

Begin sitting upright with a small, soft ball or rolled towel in your hand.

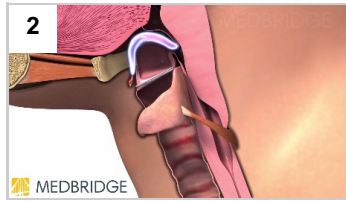
Movement

Place the ball or rolled towel under your chin. Squeeze the ball/towel by tucking your chin toward your chest as hard as you can. Hold briefly, then relax and repeat.

Tip

Be sure to keep your shoulders down and your chin touching the ball/towel throughout the exercise.

Mendelsohn Maneuver



GoalThe goal of this activity is to keep the opening of your esophagus open longer by holding your larynx, or voice box, in a raised position.

Directions

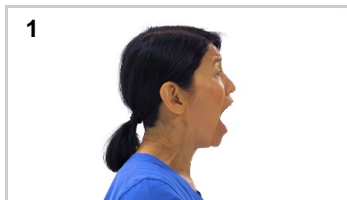
1. Place your finger on your larynx.
2. Swallow normally, and feel your larynx rise up during the swallow.
3. On your next swallow, feel your larynx rise up and hold it at its highest point for 3 seconds. Release and repeat as instructed by your therapist.
4. Keep your larynx in a raised position by squeezing the muscles of your throat and tongue.

Explanation

During the swallowing process, your larynx rises up while your epiglottis folds down to keep food or fluid moving toward the esophagus. During this activity, the larynx rises up to keep the epiglottis closed over the entrance to your airway. When you hold your larynx in a raised position, it allows the esophagus to stay open longer to let food or fluid pass through to the stomach.

Practice this activity to improve your swallow and help facilitate the correct passage of food and fluid toward your stomach.

Jaw Opening



Setup

Begin sitting upright.

Movement

Open your mouth as far as you can, as if you are saying "ah," until you feel a good stretch. You should feel the stretch even into your cheeks. Hold your mouth open for 5 seconds, then relax and repeat.

Tip

Try doing this exercise in front of a mirror to check the accuracy of your movement.

Alternating Pucker-Smile with Mouth Closed



Setup

Begin sitting upright.

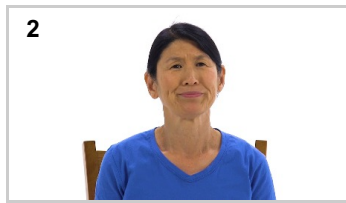
Movement

Pucker your lips as much as you can, as if you are saying "oo" or giving someone a kiss. Then smile as big as you can, keeping your lips closed the whole time. The smile will be one in which you are not showing your teeth. Alternate between the pucker and smile at a pace of one movement per second. You may want to tap along with the movement to help your coordination. Rest and repeat.

Tip

Try to really exaggerate the movements. The bigger the movements the better, as long as you do not feel any spasms or pain. Try doing this exercise in front of a mirror to check the accuracy of your movement.

Alternating Pucker-Smile with Mouth Closed



Setup

Begin sitting upright.

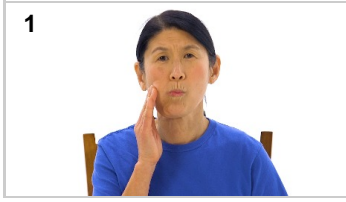
Movement

Pucker your lips as much as you can, as if you are saying "oo" or giving someone a kiss. Then smile as big as you can, keeping your lips closed the whole time. The smile will be one in which you are not showing your teeth. Alternate between the pucker and smile at a pace of one movement per second. You may want to tap along with the movement to help your coordination. Rest and repeat.

Tip

Try to really exaggerate the movements. The bigger the movements the better, as long as you do not feel any spasms or pain. Try doing this exercise in front of a mirror to check the accuracy of your movement.

Tongue Resistance with Cheek



Setup

Begin sitting upright.

Movement

Place one hand over your cheek. Inside your mouth, push your tongue into your cheek and use the hand on your cheek to resist against the push. Repeat.

Tip

Make sure to give the same amount of resistance with your hand each time.

Tongue Resistance with Front of Tongue



Setup

Begin sitting upright with a tongue depressor or shallow spoon in your hand.

Movement

Stick out your tongue. Then push the front of your tongue hard against the tongue depressor or spoon. Repeat.

Tip

Make sure to give the same amount of resistance with the tongue depressor or spoon each time. Try to keep your tongue straight and as far out as you can.

Tongue Retraction



Setup

Begin sitting upright.

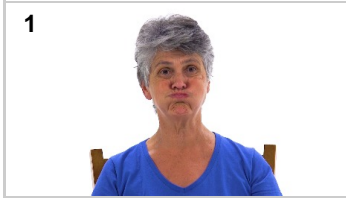
Movement

Pull your tongue back in your mouth as far as you can. Pretend you are trying to scratch the back wall of your throat with the back of your tongue. Hold your tongue there in this most backward position for 5 seconds, then relax and repeat.

Tip

Try doing this exercise in front of a mirror to check the accuracy of your movement.

Cheek Puff



Setup

Begin sitting upright.

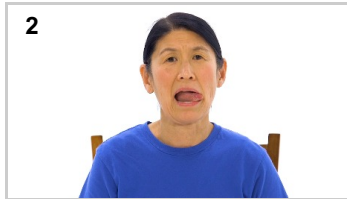
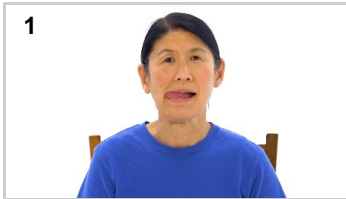
Movement

Take a breath and puff up your cheeks. Hold the air in your cheeks by keeping your lips tightly sealed so you do not lose any air. Relax and repeat.

Tip

Do not hold your breath for longer than 1-3 seconds to decrease overall strain during the exercise. Push on your cheeks as you try to keep your lips sealed tightly to not lose any air. You can also try moving the air from one cheek to the other.

Tongue Lateralization



Setup

Begin sitting upright.

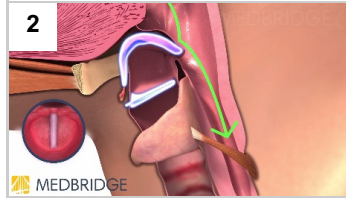
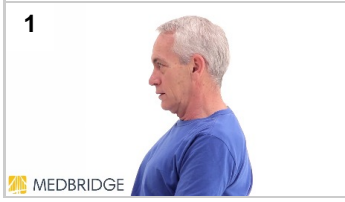
Movement

Move your tongue to one side of your mouth as far as you can until you feel a good stretch. Hold your tongue there for 5 seconds, then relax. Next, move your tongue to the opposite side of your mouth as far as you can until you feel a good stretch. Hold your tongue there for 5 seconds, then relax and repeat.

Tip

Try doing this exercise in front of a mirror to check the accuracy of your movement. If you need to work on coordination, try doing the side to side movements faster and rhythmically. Think of doing it to the beat of music or a metronome.

Supraglottic Swallow



Goal

The goal of this activity is to improve your ability to close your trachea, or windpipe, before you swallow, and clear any remaining food or liquid.

Directions

1. Take a moderate breath in and hold it.
2. Consciously hold your breath and swallow.
3. Before taking another breath, immediately cough and swallow again.
4. Repeat as instructed by your therapist.

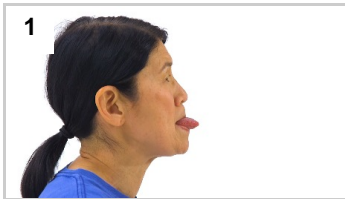
Explanation

Your epiglottis and vocal folds work together to prevent any food or liquid from traveling into your trachea when you swallow. When you swallow, your vocal folds close together, and your epiglottis folds down, to form a barrier to protect your airway.

When you consciously hold your breath in this activity, your vocal folds close together so nothing can pass through to your trachea. Then by immediately coughing and swallowing again you clear any remaining food or fluid in your throat.

Practice this activity to help better protect your airway by focusing on closing your vocal folds before swallowing.

Tongue Protrusion and Retraction



Setup

Begin sitting upright.

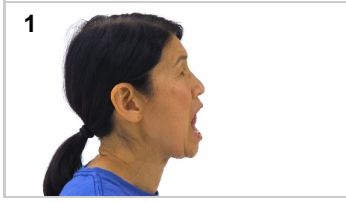
Movement

Stick your tongue out as far as you can until you feel a good stretch. You should feel the stretch even into your throat. Hold the stretch for 5 seconds, then relax. Next, pull your tongue back in your mouth as far as you can. Pretend you are trying to scratch the back wall of your throat with the back of your tongue. Hold your tongue there in this most backward position for 5 seconds, then relax and repeat.

Tip

Try doing this exercise in front of a mirror to check the accuracy of your movement. If you need to work on coordination, try sticking your tongue out and in faster and rhythmically. Think of doing it to the beat of music or a metronome.

Tongue Elevation Inside the Mouth



Setup

Begin sitting upright.

Movement

Open your mouth wide. Stretch the tip of your tongue up to the ridge behind your upper front teeth until you feel a stretch. Hold for 5 seconds, then relax and repeat.

Tip

Try doing this exercise in front of a mirror to check the accuracy of your movement.

Smile



Setup

Begin sitting upright.

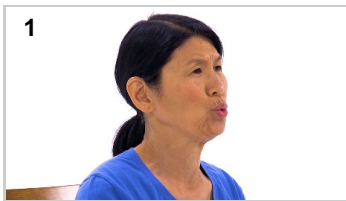
Movement

Smile as big as you can, as if you are saying "ee," until you feel a good stretch. You should feel the stretch even into your upper face, cheeks, and neck. Hold for 5 seconds, then relax and repeat.

Tip

Try doing this exercise in front of a mirror to check the accuracy of your movement.

Pucker



Setup

Begin sitting upright.

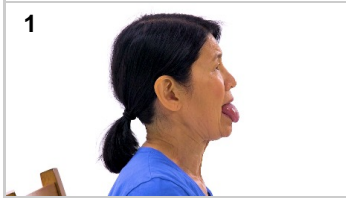
Movement

Pucker your lips as much as you can, as if you are saying "oo" or giving someone a kiss. You should feel a good stretch even into your cheeks. Hold your lips there for 5 seconds, then relax and repeat.

Tip

Try doing this exercise in front of a mirror to check the accuracy of your movement.

Tongue Elevation and Depression Outside the Mouth



Setup

Begin sitting upright.

Movement

Stick out your tongue as far as possible. Lift the tip of your tongue up towards your nose and hold for 5 seconds. Then point the tip of your tongue down towards your chin and hold for 5 seconds. Alternate the up and down movements of your tongue, holding each for 5 seconds.

Tip

Try doing this exercise in front of a mirror to check the accuracy of your movement. If you need to work on coordination, try doing the up and down movements faster and rhythmically. Think of doing it to the beat of music or a metronome.

Tongue Resistance with Top of Tongue



Setup

Begin sitting upright with a tongue depressor or shallow spoon in your hand.

Movement

Place the tongue depressor or spoon into your mouth, being careful if you have an active gag. Push the top of your tongue hard against the tongue depressor or spoon. Repeat.

Tip

Make sure to give the same amount of resistance with the tongue depressor or spoon each time.