This handout gives tips that may help when it is hard to swallow. It also tells about when to call the doctor. Make it easier to eat.

**Sit up when you eat or drink.**
- Lean forward.
- Do not hold your chin up.
- Take small bites and sips.

**Eat slowly.**
- Wait a moment before the next bite or sip.
- It may help to cough gently after each bite.
- Sit up for 30 minutes after eating.

**Eat in a quiet place.**
- Stay calm when you eat or drink.
- Do not eat when you are tired.

**Eat soft, wet food.**
- Add water if food is dry.
- Chew dry food well.
- Cut food into small, bite-size pieces.

**What NOT to eat:**
- Sticky food like peanut butter, mashed potatoes, and pudding
- Acidic food like tomatoes, orange juice, and grapefruit juice
- Unripe bananas, raw apples, or other fruit hard to chew or swallow
- Salty food
- Fried food
- Spices like chili, pepper, and curry
- Bakery food, crackers, and cereal that can get sticky when chewed

**Drink thick, icy drinks.**
- Thick drinks are easier to swallow.
- Do not wash food down with a drink.

**Eat high-calorie food.**
- Add butter, margarine, or oil to food.
- Add potato flakes to soups.
- Use gravies and sauces on food.
- Add pureed fruits or sherbet to juice.
- Drink milkshakes and eat ice cream.

**When to call the doctor:**
- Hard to chew or swallow
- Cannot control tongue well
- Cough or choke when you eat or drink
- Spit food out or food comes back up
- Feel like food is stuck in throat

The content in this letter is intended as general information and may not apply to you or your condition. Talk to your doctor about how to best use this information and how to take care of your medical condition. This information is not intended to provide or replace professional medical advice or services.

Contact Facey’s Patient Education department for information about classes offered.