

Eating and Drinking for Comfort

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When people are very sick and frail they can have problems with eating and drinking. It is important to keep them comfortable. You should read through this resource with your speech pathologist. The resource and your speech pathologist will provide advice on how to help someone who is very sick and frail with eating and drinking safely.

Ways to make eating and drinking easier

- Give food and drinks only when awake.
- Sit up the person up straight when they are eating and drinking. Use pillows to make sure their head is not falling back.
- Give small mouthfuls. It may be better to use a teaspoon.
- Soft or pureed food may be easier.
- Give food and drink slowly.
- Be careful drinks are not too hot.



Stop providing food and drink if the person

- Falls asleep or gets very tired.
- Says they do not want any more.
- Becomes uncomfortable or upset.

What should I do if the person is very sleepy?

- They might not be hungry or thirsty. Do not make them eat and drink if they do not want to.
- It may be better to provide very small tastes of favourite flavours. This can be done with a mouth swab dipped in a drink.

Talk to a doctor or your speech pathologist if eating and drinking looks uncomfortable.

Interpreter Services

Professional interpreters are available if you need help understanding or speaking in English. You may have a family member or friend present, but all communication about treatment should be through a professional interpreter. Interpreter services are free and confidential.

If you need to use an interpreter to contact us, please call the telephone Translating and Interpreter Service on 131 450.