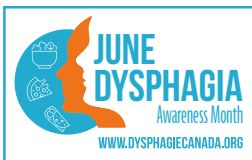


WHAT IS DYSPHAGIA?



Dysphagia is a swallowing disorder, meaning difficulty swallowing food, liquids, or even saliva. It corresponds to a problem in the passage from the mouth to the stomach, at any stage of the swallowing process.



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WHAT DOES THIS MEAN IN PRACTICE?

Dysphagia can manifest in several ways:



Difficulty swallowing certain foods or liquids, or a complete inability in severe cases.



Food getting stuck in the mouth or throat. Coughing choking, or a wet voice after eating or drinking.



Coughing, choking, or a wet-sounding voice after drinking or eating.



Leaking food or liquid from the lips.



Difficulty chewing or food rolling around in the mouth.

These difficulties can affect the muscles, nerves, or coordination necessary for swallowing.

Why it's important

Dysphagia isn't just uncomfortable; it can lead to serious complications if left untreated:

- Weight loss and malnutrition
- Dehydration
- Lung infections, including aspiration pneumonia when food or liquids enter the airways

WHAT CAUSES DYSPHAGIA?

The causes are varied:

- Neurological diseases (stroke, Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis),
- muscular disorders,
- aging,
- surgery or radiation therapy to the head and neck,
- structural disorders of the esophagus.

How is it assessed?

Assessment is generally performed by a specialized team:

- speech therapist
- nutritionist,
- occupational therapist,
- physician,
- sometimes with imaging tests to observe swallowing.

If someone shows signs of dysphagia, it is important to consult a healthcare professional for an appropriate evaluation.

