**Dysphagia**

*Symptoms and diagnosis*

**What is dysphagia?**

*Dysphagia* is a problem with swallowing and moving food and liquid from the mouth into the stomach. Some symptoms of dysphagia are:

- Coughing when eating or drinking, or soon after eating or drinking
- A wet, gurgly voice after drinking
- Feeling that food or pills stick in your throat

**What is aspiration?**

*Aspiration* is when liquid or food goes into the *airway* (the tube that carries air to and from the lungs). It often occurs in people who have dysphagia.

*Silent aspiration* is when liquid or food goes into the airway, but there is no coughing or choking.

**What is a barium swallow study?**

A *barium swallow study* may also be called a *video fluoroscopic swallow study*, or a *modified barium swallow study*.

This study will show what happens to food or liquid when you swallow. For the study:

- You will be asked to swallow white liquid barium. It will be thin or thick (you may be asked to swallow both kinds).
- A special kind of X-ray will create a video of your throat as you swallow. The barium is easy to see on the X-ray.
- Seeing what happens to the barium when you swallow will help us understand your swallowing problems.
- A speech pathologist and radiologist will study your X-ray and provide the results. The provider who referred you for this study will be able to see their report.
- You should not have any pain or discomfort from this test.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns.

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