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# Tips for Chewing and Swallowing

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Cancer treatments and/or surgery can make it difficult to chew and safely swallow foods and liquids. If you have difficulty chewing and/or swallowing, there are several things you can do to make eating and drinking easier and safer.

- Choose soft moist foods such as:
  - Scrambled eggs
  - Macaroni and cheese
  - Soups and stews
  - Ice cream, custard and puddings
  - Mashed potatoes and gravy
  - Cooked cereal without lumps such as oatmeal
  - Yogurt or gelatin made with soft canned fruit
  - Cooked vegetables
  - Cottage cheese
- Chop, puree or blenderize foods you have difficulty chewing or swallowing.
- Add gravy, sauces, broth, butter, margarine, mayonnaise or sour cream to soften and moisten foods.
- Soften hard foods such as toast by dunking it into milk, cocoa, coffee or tea.
- Cut food into small bites and eat slowly. Chew well and swallow your food before taking another bite.
- Keep mealtime relaxed.
- Sit as upright as possible when you eat and remain that way 2 hours after the meal.

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- Do not talk and swallow at the same time.
  - Take a small sip of beverage after each bite of food but do not try to wash down solids with sips of liquids. Be sure to follow any guidelines provided by the speech or swallowing therapist.
  - Contact your healthcare provider, dietitian or speech pathologist if your swallowing worsens, you cough when eating or drinking solids and/or liquids or are losing weight.