

# Swallowing exercises:

## HAWK exercise (base of tongue strengthening)

This leaflet is for patients who are experiencing swallowing difficulties and have been advised to complete the HAWK exercise for rehabilitation. This exercise should only be used by the individual named below and under guidance from your speech and language therapist.

Patient name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Why do I need to do this exercise?

Dysphagia can make it difficult to eat, drink and take your medication and you may be at risk of food, fluids or saliva 'going down the wrong way'. If this happens, it can result in choking and/or chest infections known as 'aspiration pneumonia'. The below exercise may help to improve your swallowing.

### The exercise

To control the food and fluid during your swallow, the back of your tongue contacts the back of your throat and squeezes food and drink down into your oesophagus (food pipe). This swallow technique is designed to strengthen the base of your tongue and improve this action. You should feel effort when doing this exercise, but **STOP** if you experience any pain. Please raise any concerns you have with your speech and language therapist or doctor.

Please complete \_\_\_ times per day for \_\_\_ weeks.

### How to complete 'HAWK' exercise:

- Practice saying the word 'HAWK' as powerfully as possible – feel how the back of the tongue dips and raises.
- Try and particularly focus on the 'k' sound. Try to get a good contact for the 'k' sound and push back as far as possible with your tongue.

### Contact details:

Speech and Language Therapy Department – 0118 322 5205 Monday to Friday.

Email: [rbft.speechlanguage@nhs.net](mailto:rbft.speechlanguage@nhs.net)

### Further information

To find out more about our Trust visit [www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk](http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk)

**Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.**

Speech & Language Therapy, July 2023. Next review due: July 2025

Compassionate

Aspirational

Resourceful

Excellent

<b>Week 1</b>	<b>Reps</b>
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	

<b>Week 2</b>	<b>Reps</b>
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	

<b>Week 3</b>	<b>Reps</b>
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	

<b>Week 4</b>	<b>Reps</b>
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	

<b>Week 5</b>	<b>Reps</b>
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	

<b>Week 6</b>	<b>Reps</b>
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	