

# Swallowing manoeuvre: Supraglottic swallow (airway protection)

This leaflet is for patients who are experiencing swallowing difficulties and have been advised to complete the supraglottic swallowing manoeuvre. This manoeuvre 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 has may help to improve your swallowing.

## The exercise

When you swallow, there are certain mechanisms required to protect your airway from any food and drink entering your lungs. This swallow technique is designed to maximise your airway protection when you swallow. 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 'Supraglottic swallow' manoeuvre:

- A) Breathe in through your nose and hold your breath in your throat.
- B) Let a little air out (say 'ah').
- C) Next, put food and drink in your mouth.
- D) As you swallow keep holding your breath and tighten all the muscles in your throat, **swallow hard**.
- E) Immediately after the swallow, let some air out that you have been holding with a grunt or a small cough while visualizing lifting a heavy load.
- F) Please note: you may leave out step B if you find this too difficult.

## Contact details:

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

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

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Week 6	Reps
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### 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

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