



# swallowing problems

Cancer and its treatments can sometimes cause trouble with swallowing. If you're having problems swallowing, try eating soft or liquid foods. You may be able to swallow thick fluids more easily than thin liquids. If you're unable to eat enough regular foods to meet your nutritional needs, drink high-calorie and high-protein liquids.

Your doctor may refer you to a speech therapist. This is an expert health professional who can teach you how to swallow better and how to decrease coughing and choking when you eat and drink..

## WHAT TO DO

- Follow your speech therapist's instructions for any special eating techniques.
- Call your cancer care team right away if you cough or choke while eating, especially if you have developed a fever.
- Eat small, frequent meals.
- Use canned liquid nutritional supplements if you're unable to eat enough food to meet your needs.
- Chop or puree your food in a blender or food processor.
- Drink 6 to 8 cups of fluid each day, and thicken the fluid to the consistency that's easiest for you to swallow.

### Try these thickening products:

**Gelatin:** Use to help soften cakes, cookies, crackers, sandwiches, pureed fruits, and other cold food. Mix 1 tablespoon unflavored gelatin in 2 cups hot liquid until dissolved; pour over food. Allow food to sit until saturated.

**Tapioca, flour, and cornstarch:** Use to thicken liquids. Note that these must be cooked before using.

**Commercial thickeners:** Follow label instructions, and use to adjust a liquid's thickness.

Pureed vegetables and instant potatoes: Use in soups. Note that these change the food's flavor.

**Baby rice cereal:** Use to make a very thick product.

- If thin liquids are recommended for you, try these: coffee, tea, soft drinks, liquid nutritional supplements, Italian ice, sherbet, broth, and thin cream-based soups.
- If thick liquids are recommended for you, try these: buttermilk, eggnog, milk shakes, yogurt shakes, and ice cream



If you have any questions please contact or  
make an appointment with our dietitian at

**505-727-3040**



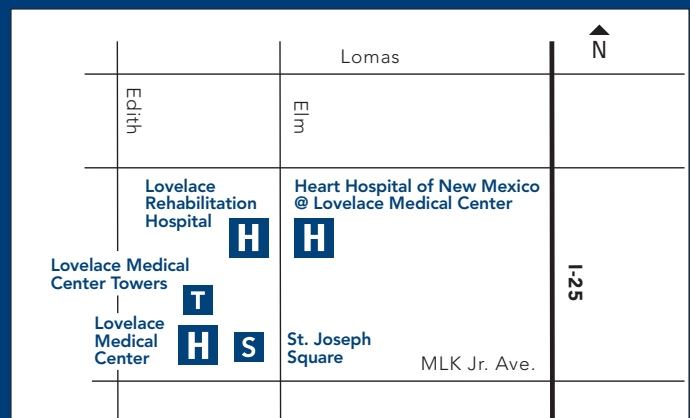
## WHAT TO EAT WHEN YOU HAVE TROUBLE SWALLOWING (PURÉED AND THICK-LIQUID DIET)+

	EAT	FOODS THAT MAY CAUSE PROBLEMS
<b>HIGH PROTEIN</b>	Thickened milk, yogurt without fruit, cottage cheese, sour cream  Casseroles  Soft-scrambled eggs  Puréed meat, poultry, and fish	Milk, yogurt, cheeses, sour cream  All eggs  Ground meats and ground-meat casseroles, fish, sandwiches made with ground meats or spreads
<b>BREADS, CEREALS, RICE, AND PASTA</b>	Puréed fruit and vegetables without seeds and skins  Mashed potatoes	Bananas  Canned fruit  Soft, well-cooked, or puréed vegetables
<b>FRUITS AND VEGETABLES</b>	Potatoes (baked, boiled, or mashed)  Juices  Canned or fresh fruits, vegetables as tolerated (do not eat if appetite is poor or nausea is severe)	Potato chips, French fries, hash browns  Breaded, fried, or creamed vegetables; vegetables with strong odor
<b>DRINKS, DESSERTS, AND OTHER FOODS</b>	Thickened juices and nectars  Thick milk shakes  Thickened broths and cream soups  Custards, puddings  Slurried^ cakes and cookies  Syrups, honey, butter, margarine  Spices as tolerated	All beverages  Soft desserts that don't require much chewing (like ice cream, sherbet, flavored gelatin, pudding, custard), soft cakes and cookies  Syrups, honey, butter, margarine  Spices

### About Us

With over 37 years of experience, Hematology Oncology Associates is committed to providing the best cancer care possible for their patients. Hematology Oncology Associates is a Quality Oncology Practice Initiatives (QOPI) certified site that demonstrates rigorous standards for quality cancer care and safety measures established by the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) and the Oncology Nursing Society (ONS).

We gladly accept most major insurance plans, including Blue Cross and Blue Shield, Molina Healthcare, TRICARE, UnitedHealthcare Community Plan, United Retiree Health Care Authority, Medicaid, Medicare, and many others.



### CONTACT US

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