

## Compensatory Strategies for Early Changes in Speech/Voice and Swallowing

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### Speech/Voice

- Swallow saliva before starting to speak.
- Take a breath before speaking. Stop to take in more air before running out of breath.
- Try to speak louder, but do not strain.
- Open your mouth and exaggerate the movements of your lips and tongue when speaking.
- Face your listeners, so that they can see your facial expressions and lip movements.
- Do not try to speak above noise.

### Diet Type

- Eat softer foods that are easier to chew and swallow.
- Add minced or pureed foods to your diet if solid foods require a lot of effort to chew and swallow.
- Avoid very dry foods and foods with tiny particles, such as seeds.
- Add extra gravy/sauce/condiments on food for additional moisture.
- Avoid mixed consistencies – food that has solid and liquid (e.g., cereal with milk, chicken noodle soup etc.)

### Swallowing

- Sit upright when eating and drinking.
- Take smaller amounts per each bite or mouthful.
- Swallow more than once to clear food through your throat. If necessary, take a sip of liquid to wash down any remaining food.
- Drink 1 sip at a time if you frequently cough or choke when drinking liquids. Hold liquid at front of your mouth with chin down, then swallow. Use a straw if you are able to suck in the liquid in small amounts.
- Drink thicker liquids such as smoothies or thicken thin liquids with a thickener, if you cannot prevent yourself from coughing on thin liquids.
- Avoid talking or distractions when eating or drinking.
- Avoid sucking on hard candies.

### Pills/Tablets

- Put pills/tablets in applesauce or yogurt for swallowing.

### Mouth Care to Minimize Risk of Bacterial Infections

- Brush your teeth, tongue, and roof of mouth after eating.
- Check your mouth to be sure it is clear of all food particles.
- Clean mouth with water/baking soda mixture and/or mouthwash.