Swallowing Strategies for Mysathenia Gravis (MG)

Everyday Nutrition

MG can leave you feeling too tired to eat. Use these tips to get the nutrients and calories your body needs:

- Eat 6 small meals a day instead of eating 3 large meals.
- Eat when you feel your best. You may have more energy to eat 30 minutes after you take medicines in the morning. If it takes longer for medicines to take effect, wait to eat until you have the energy.
- Eat your largest meal early in the day when you have the most energy.
- Make sure you rest before eating. If you just finished a long conversation or exercise, wait until you feel rested to begin eating.

Tips for Swallowing

- Sit upright when you eat or drink.
- Take small bites of food when eating.
- Drink plenty of fluids with meals. Take small sips after each bite of solid food.
- Use sauces, gravies and condiments to moisten foods and make swallowing easier.
- Avoid hard, sticky or chewy foods that require a lot of energy to chew. This includes peanut butter, steak, taffy, hard candy and bagels.
- Cool down hot foods by taking bites of ice chips in between hot foods to cool your throat.

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If your swallowing problems get worse

Weakness in your tongue, throat, jaw and mouth over time can make eating difficult. Use these tips to get the nutrition you need:

- Eat foods high in protein and calories. Avoid foods with low nutrition or empty calories.
- Foods that may be easier chew and swallow:
  - Soft foods such as yogurt, pudding and very ripe bananas.
  - Soft and moist foods such as casseroles, cooked vegetables and canned fruits.
  - Pureed foods such as applesauce.
  - Add supplements such as shakes or powders to improve nutrition.
- For more food ideas, read or ask for patient education handouts on Dysphagia Pureed Diet (Level 1), Dysphagia Mechanically Altered Diet (Level 2) or Dysphagia Advanced Diet (Level 3). Talk to your SLP or dietitian for help.
- If you get tired while eating, stop. Rest and reheat your food later.
- If you have trouble swallowing a bite of food, spit it out and rest.

Call your doctor if you:
- Have trouble eating enough soft foods to get enough calories
- Are unable to swallow your pills
- Cannot swallow your saliva

Talk to your doctor or others on your health care team if you have any questions. You may request more written information from the Library for Health Information at (614) 293-3707 or email: health-info@osu.edu.