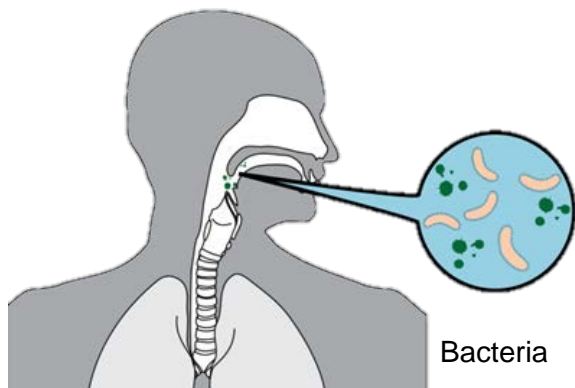


## Take the Team Approach to Mouth Care

Everyone – you, your family, caregivers, and health professionals – helps keep you healthy and out of the hospital. Proper and regular mouth care can protect you from oral disease and aspiration pneumonia, and prevent the rest of your body from getting infections.



## Reduce the Risk of Aspiration Pneumonia



Dysphagia can trap liquids, food and bacteria in your food-pipe (esophagus), which can get into your wind-pipe (trachea) or lungs by accident.

When liquid or food is inhaled (aspiration) into the wind-pipe, the bacteria can cause a lung infection (pneumonia).

## Products to Use



- ✓ Regular soft toothbrush and/or electric toothbrush
- ✓ A smear of non-foaming toothpaste
- ✓ Gloves (for caregivers)
- ✓ Mouthwash (optional)
- ✓ Suction toothbrush (optional)
- ✓ Water-soluble lubricant (optional)

## Products to Avoid



- ✗ Foaming toothpaste increases the risk of choking when swallowed.
- ✗ Petroleum jelly (Vaseline) on your lips is not absorbed by your skin. Bacteria sitting on it can get into your lungs.

[www.fraserhealth.ca](http://www.fraserhealth.ca)

This information does not replace the advice given to you by your health care provider.

Catalogue #266036 (December 2018)  
To order: [patienteduc.fraserhealth.ca](mailto:patienteduc.fraserhealth.ca)

## Oral Care for People with Dysphagia

When you have trouble swallowing (dysphagia), cleaning your mouth properly and regularly will help you maintain a healthy heart, lungs, and body.



**Health Services for Community Living**  
Supporting adults with developmental disabilities



## Brush Before and After Meals

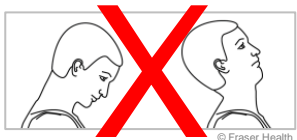
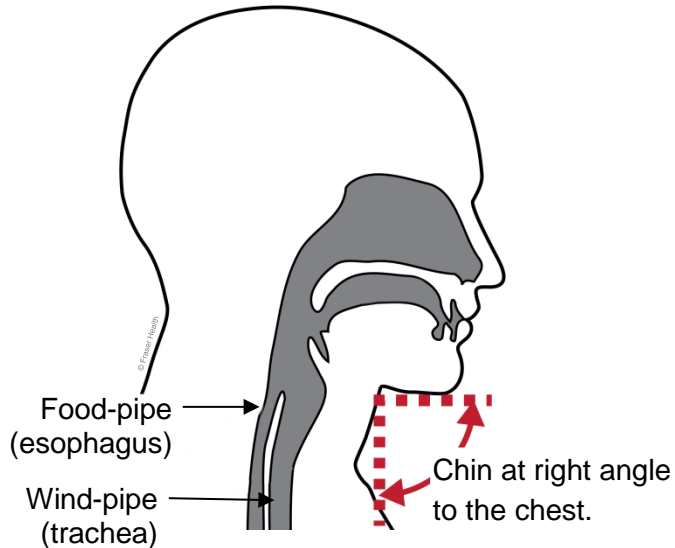
Brush as carefully as possible before and after meals to reduce bacteria and prevent infection if choking occurs.



## Position the Head and Neck to Protect the Airway

Prevent choking during brushing:

- Sit up or stand up straight.
- Position your head with your chin at a right angle to your chest.



Do not hyperextend the neck.



## Use Proper Mouth Care

Follow these steps every time:

- ✓ Keep all fluids to a minimum.

- ✓ Place a smear of non-foaming fluoridated toothpaste.



**OR**

- ✓ Dip the toothbrush lightly in mouthwash and dab off the excess.



- ✓ Place the brush head so the bristles are half on the gums and half on the teeth and guide the brush along.

- ✓ Focus on brushing well along the gum line.

- ✓ Make sure you have brushed all your teeth – inside, outside, top, bottom, and chewing surfaces.

- ✓ Brush your tongue as well as you can by using forward swipes of the toothbrush. Then sweep the cheeks and roof of the mouth.

- ✓ Finish by rinsing your toothbrush under running water.

- ✓ Place it in a clean cup with the head pointing up for the bristles to air dry.