



Feeding difficulty and dysphagia: which evaluation to choose?

For children, a huge role in their growth and development is the ability to eat and drink. If a child is struggling with a feeding disorder, they're likely to miss important milestones. The speech language pathologists and occupational therapists at Cook Children's are here to help. Our feeding team has experience working with a wide variety of feeding disorders. Feeding therapy also reduces the risk of aspiration and related illness.

Selecting the appropriate type of feeding evaluation can facilitate faster access to evaluation and treatment for patients.

Evaluation types:

- Acute swallow function study
- Routine swallow function study
- Speech oral motor feeding evaluation
- Occupational therapy feeding evaluation

When to consider acute or priority swallow function study:

- Infant (0-4 months) with suspected aspiration despite trials of supportive strategies
- Frequent or chronic upper respiratory illness
- Diagnoses often associated with swallow dysfunction and no prior instrumental swallow assessment
- At risk of hospitalization for respiratory or nutrition/hydration concerns
- Surgery or change in status that may impact swallow function

When to consider routine swallow function study:

- Routine recheck of patient’s swallowing ability, with no significant changes in medical status

When to consider speech oral motor/feeding evaluation:

- Difficulty transitioning to solids
- Difficulty transitioning from bottle to cup
- Only reporting concerns with purees or solids; gagging and coughing on solids in the absence of difficulty with liquids may indicate an oral or sensory deficit
- There is significant concern about patient’s ability to participate in the swallow study
- NPO or very limited oral acceptance
- No history of feeding therapy.
- If concerns of aspiration are noted, the referring provider will be contacted to request a swallow function study

When to consider an occupational therapy feeding evaluation:

- Over 2 years old
- A picky eater
- Sensory-based feeding concerns
- Feeding aversion to certain textures/tastes



We offer these services in:

- Fort Worth
- Hurst
- Mansfield

To schedule, call 682-885-3898.

Learn more about our services by calling 682-885-4063 or scanning this code.



Visit epiccarelink.cookchildrens.org to access the referral platform and view mutual patients.