

Cognitive feeding impairment

Information for families and carers

What is a cognitive feeding impairment?

There are many things a person needs to do to eat and drink safely.

You need to

- be awake
- know that there is food in front of you
- remember there is food in your mouth
- give yourself enough time to chew food properly
- remember to swallow

People who have difficulty with these things have a cognitive feeding impairment.

A person with a cognitive feeding impairment may

- get a chest infection
- choke
- not get enough to eat or drink

What causes cognitive feeding impairment?

Any disease or damage to the brain that makes it difficult for the person to stay awake, concentrate or remember. This can include delirium, dementia or stroke.

A speech pathologist can

- recommend safe food and drink
- provide tips for eating and drinking safely

Will the cognitive feeding impairment get better?

- sometimes a cognitive feeding impairment can improve
- sometimes a cognitive feeding impairment can stay the same or get worse

Tips for family and friends

- make sure the person is wearing their glasses to help them see the food and drink
- make sure the person is wearing their hearing aids to help them hear what you are saying
- turn off the TV or radio
- give the person one spoonful at a time
- make sure the person has swallowed each mouthful

Talk to your speech pathologist for more information.

Your speech pathologist is:

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