

## Swallowing Problems

Inform the Empath Health nurse if you notice the patient has problems swallowing, such as trouble getting food or liquid down without gagging, coughing, spitting or pain when trying to swallow.

### **What to Do:**

- Change diet to liquid or very soft foods.
- Puree soups and stews in a blender before serving.
- Add gravy or sauce to dry foods.
- Eat while sitting in a straight chair at a table or raise head of bed when eating.
- Drink carbonated beverages with food.

### **What Not to Do:**

- Do not force the person to eat if they are having difficulty swallowing.
- Avoid foods that require a lot of chewing, such as meats, chewy candy, raw whole vegetables or fruits.
- Avoid hot, spicy foods or liquids.
- Avoid alcohol, citrus fruits or drinks, crackers, nuts or chips.

**Call Empath Health if the patient is coughing, choking or experiencing a sore throat.**

Call Empath Health with any questions (888) 855-2838: \_\_\_\_\_