



# Difficulty Chewing or Swallowing

Difficulty chewing and swallowing may happen when you have a dry or sore mouth or throat. This handout provides food ideas to help you meet your nutrition needs when you are having trouble chewing or swallowing.

- Choose soft, moist foods. Ground meat, poultry or fish, mashed potatoes, eggs, cottage cheese, yogurt, custard, pasta, canned fruit, cooked vegetables, and cooked cereals.
- Cook foods in liquid, such as broth, milk, fruit or vegetable juice, until they are soft and tender.
- Moisten foods by adding butter, gravy, sauces, mayonnaise or salad dressing.
- Cut or mash foods into small pieces.
- Use a blender or food processor to mince or puree foods.
- Limit foods and beverages that are uncomfortable. These may include dry or rough textures, acidic, spicy, or salty flavors, and hot or cold temperatures.
- Try drinking milkshakes, smoothies, or nutrition supplements such as Boost® or Ensure®.
- Eat small amounts of food every 2 - 3 hours during the day.
- Rinse your mouth frequently with an alcohol free mouthwash or the mouthwash recipe below to help remove food and bacteria.

## **Mouthwash Recipe**

Stir ¼ tsp baking soda or salt  
with 1 cup of water until dissolved

- Ask your doctor about pain medicine if your mouth or throat are sore.
- If you haven't been able to consume solid foods for more than three days in a row, contact your care team for assistance.

**If you have tried these ideas and are unable to eat or are losing weight, ask to speak to a registered dietitian at the cancer centre.**