

My patient is coughing when drinking. Now what?



Here are some strategies to help your patients swallow comfortably.

Positioning

Make sure your patient is sitting straight up, at 90 degrees! Not leaning over, listing to the side, or reclined.

Use applesauce

If a patient is having difficulty swallowing medications with water, **try floating them applesauce.** If necessary, **always check if a med is crushable** & obtain an order for crushing meds

Medications

If your patient is having a hard time with medications, have them take 1 at a time and cut larger pills in half.

Refer to Speech

Thickened liquids cannot be provided to a patient without a doctor's order. Use all of the above strategies first. If you downgrade a patient to thickened liquids, you should refer to speech therapy as well.