

Speech & Language Therapy

Feeding safely poster

- **Alert & Comfortable:** Make sure they are awake and alert, do not give food and drink if they are drowsy or asleep. Ensure they have been to the toilet if needed and pain has been managed.
- **Glasses/Hearing aids** to be worn as needed.
- **Position:** Sit people out in their chair or upright in bed (90 degrees with head supported in neutral position) for all food and drinks and for at least half an hour after a meal to avoid reflux.
- **Position Yourself:** Be at eye level and to the side or facing the person you are assisting. Make sure you are sat on their 'good' side.
- **Teeth:** If they have dentures, make sure they have them in and they are well fitting.
- **Food:** Have you checked the diet is the right consistency?
- **Drinks:** If needing thickener have you measured the thickener and fluids correctly?
- **Utensils:** Are you using the right cup and cutlery for the person?
- **Independence:** People should be encouraged to feed themselves as much as possible.
- **Time:** Do not rush mealtimes, make sure they have time to eat their meals. Avoid very big mouthfuls and prompt if needed to ensure they are clearing their mouth before taking the next. Avoid alternating drinks between mouthfuls if causes coughing.
- **Oral care:** Perform oral cares after each meal. This reduces the risk of thrush and chest infections.
- **Record:** Make sure you record how much and what they have eaten and drunk. If they do not eat their meal, ensure they are offered options for dessert or snacks / nourishing drinks later.