

## Long-Term Care Survey Alert

### Clip -n- Save: 6 Expert Tips To Tackle Swallowing Problems

Residents with swallowing problems require a juggling act to ensure they eat and drink safely and still enjoy their meals. These strategies can help:

1. Try serving thickened iced tea and coffee, which resemble a coffee milkshake in texture and taste.
2. When serving thickened liquids, always add the thickener just before serving the liquid. It becomes too thick when it stands for any length of time.
3. Save some frozen drink containers from local fast food restaurants and ice cream shops for serving thickened juices. The presentation helps the palatability since we "expect" such drinks to be "thick" and "slushy."
4. Have nursing assistants who are very patient feed residents who have swallowing disorders. Staff who have a hard time "slowing down" themselves will grow impatient with the time it takes to feed such a resident. Their tension will transfer to the resident and increase the likelihood of a choking episode.
5. If there is a microwave handy, reheat food after 20 minutes to make it more palatable.
6. Teach your staff how to perform the Heimlich maneuver on a person confined to a wheelchair.

Source: National MS Society's, Nursing Home Care of Individuals with Multiple Sclerosis: Guidelines and Recommendations for Quality Care.