

Clinical Nutrition Highlights

eNewsletter



Resources for nutritional management of patients with COVID-19

INTRODUCTION

Since 31 December 2019 and as of 14 December 2020, there have been over **71 million reported cases of COVID-19 worldwide**¹.

Oropharyngeal dysphagia (OD) is a **common complication** in COVID-19, either directly due to the trauma of intubation or secondary to respiratory damage, neurological and cognitive deficits, deconditioning, or critical illness myopathy and neuropathy.²⁻⁴

OD leads to some significant medical consequences. Up to **73%** of patients present **nutritional risk (NRS2002>3) at admission** and **37.7%** develop **malnutrition** during hospitalisation, according to GLIM criteria, with a mean weight loss of **9.35 ± 6.03 Kg**.⁵

Up to **43.7%** of patients **need thickeners** to be safely hydrated and **54.5%** have impaired mastication and **need texture-modified diets**⁵. In the acute and post-acute phases, **70%** of patients **with severe OD** are fully or partially dependent on tube feeding⁶.

Mortality rate is present in **9.32%** of these patients with **oropharyngeal dysphagia and malnutrition**.⁵

It is necessary to use **uniform, reliable protocols to identify and ameliorate dysphagia in COVID-19 patients**.



AIM

This issue offers some relevant articles on COVID-19 and dysphagia published in the last months.

RELEVANT PUBLICATIONS ON COVID-19 AND DYSPHAGIA

ESSD COMMENTARY ON DYSPHAGIA MANAGEMENT DURING COVID PANDEMIC

Schindler A, Bajjens L, Clave P, Degen B, Duchac S, Dziewas R, Farneti D, Hamdy S, Michou E, Pokieser P, Speyer R, Walshe M, Verin M, Rommel N.

Dysphagia. 2020 Oct 27;1-4. doi: 10.1007/s00455-020-10194-z.

The European Society for Swallowing Disorders (ESSD) provides some recommendations during the COVID-19 pandemic based on the literature available and preliminary clinical experience of European dysphagia experts within the ESSD, considering different perspectives from different countries. Five questions are addressed in this paper: **1)** When should patients suspected of dysphagia be assessed? **2)** How should patients suspected of having dysphagia be assessed? **3)** When should instrumental swallowing assessment be performed? **4)** How is the expert in swallowing disorders protected? **5)** How is dysphagia treated during the COVID pandemic?

[See Publication](#)

DYSPHAGIA CARE ACROSS THE CONTINUUM: A MULTIDISCIPLINARY DYSPHAGIA RESEARCH SOCIETY TASKFORCE REPORT OF SERVICE-DELIVERY DURING THE COVID-19 GLOBAL PANDEMIC

Miles A, Connor NP, Desai RV, Jadcherla S, Allen J, Brodsky M.

Dysphagia 2020;1-13. doi: 10.1007/s00455-020-10153-8.

This document summarises the current understanding of dysphagia in patients with COVID-19 and provides recommendations for healthcare professionals to protect themselves while conducting swallowing assessments and therapeutic procedures. It includes a review of multidisciplinary dysphagia care activities that can be conducted with physical distancing and via telehealth.

[See Publication](#)

SOCIETY OF SWALLOWING AND DYSPHAGIA OF JAPAN: POSITION STATEMENT ON DYSPHAGIA MANAGEMENT DURING THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK

Kimura Y, Ueha R, Furukawa T, Oshima F, Fujitani J, Nakajima J, et al.

Auris Nasus Larynx 2020;47(5):715-726.

This position statement provides information and advice on managing dysphagia during the COVID-19 outbreak, including “clinical swallowing assessment and examination”, “dysphagia rehabilitation”, “oral care”, “nursing care”, “surgical procedure for dysphagia” and “tracheotomy care”.

Dysphagia treatment includes a broad range of clinical assessments and examinations, dysphagia rehabilitation, oral care, nursing care and surgical treatments.

The current set of statements on dysphagia management in the COVID-19 outbreak is a guide for all healthcare workers involved in the treatment of dysphagia during the COVID-19 epidemic to prevent SARS-CoV-2 infection.

[See Publication](#)

MOVING FORWARD WITH DYSPHAGIA CARE: IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND BEYOND

Fritz AM, Howell RJ, Brodsky MB, Suitner DM, Dhar SI, Rameau A, Richard T, Skelley M, Ashford JR, O'Rourke AK, Kuhn MA.

Dysphagia 2020;1-9. doi: 10.1007/s00455-020-10144-9.

The objective of this review was to create a clinical algorithm and reference for dysphagia clinicians across clinical settings to minimise the spread of COVID-19 cases while providing optimal care to patients suffering from swallowing disorders.

[See Publication](#)

NUTRITIONAL STRATEGIES FOR THE REHABILITATION OF COVID-19 PATIENTS

Azzolino D, Passarelli PC, D'Addona A, Cesari M.

Eur J Clin Nutr 2020;9:1-3. doi: 10.1038/s41430-020-00795-0.

The authors present a three-step process for the diagnosis of swallowing disorders, three-step protocol for screening and nutritional intervention at admission and during hospital stay, and a rehabilitation plan post COVID-19.

- **Diagnosis of swallowing disorders:** 1.-Screening such as EAT-10; 2.-Clinical Assessment; 3.-Instrumental assessment.
- **Nutritional intervention:** 1.-Dietary counselling and/or food modification; 2.-EAA supplementation and/or oral dysphagia product; 3.-Enteral (EN) or parenteral (PN) nutrition if needed.

[See Publication 1](#)

[See Publication 2](#)

RECOMMENDATIONS AND PRACTICES FOR DYSPHAGIA ATTENTION DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Escalante-Ornelas AP, Herrera-Bandín AS, Gutiérrez-Canencia U, Paola Alatrístete-Cequera JP, Martínez-Sánchez L, Pérez-Alba, Yáñez-Cabrera MF, Hernández-Camacho MA.

Journal of Audiology, Otoneurology & Phoniatrics 2020;2:1-14.

This article provides guidance on outpatient, hospital management, and follow-up of patients with COVID-19, based on the recommendations issued by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and from associations dedicated to the study and treatment of dysphagia.

[See Publication](#)

AEROSOL GENERATING PROCEDURES, DYSPHAGIA ASSESSMENT AND COVID-19: A RAPID REVIEW

Bolton L, Mills C, Wallace S, Brady MC.

Int J Lang Commun Disord 2020;10.1111/1460-6984.12544. doi: 10.1111/1460-6984.12544.

The COVID-19 Advisory Group of the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) aimed to review the evidence underpinning the current healthcare policies in relation to aerosol-generating procedures (AGPs), dysphagia assessment, and risk of COVID-19 transmission and infection in response to urgent clinical information needs.

[See Publication](#)

POST-INTUBATION DYSPHAGIA DURING COVID-19 OUTBREAK - CONTEMPORARY REVIEW

Frajkova Z, Tedla M, Tedlova E, Suchankova M, Geneid A.

Dysphagia 2020;35(4):549-57. doi: 10.1007/s00455-020-10139-6.

The aim of this review is to summarise available information and recommendations on the diagnosis and management of post-intubation dysphagia in the COVID-19 patients.

[See Publication](#)

REFERENCES

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5. Martín A, et al. Prevalence of oropharyngeal dysphagia and malnutrition in patients with Covid-19 at a general hospital during spring 2020 pandemics. 10th ESSD Online Virtual Congress 2020. Dysphagia Management across Lifespan-A New State-of-the-Art post COVID-19?
6. Kalf J.G., et al. Severity Profiles of dysphagia after COVID-19 from acute to post-acute phase. 10th ESSD Online Virtual Congress 2020. Dysphagia Management across Lifespan-A New State-of-the-Art post COVID-19?