

Eating through the stages of HD

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HD Center of Excellence



Hennepin County **Medical Center**

Outline

- ▶ Patient interview
 - ▶ Nutrition and swallowing issues in each stage
 - ▶ Helpful tools and resources
 - ▶ Questions?
- 

Dietitian & Speech Path roles

▶ HCMC HD Clinic

- See the pt/family together
- Nutrition history – typical day
- Oral mechanism/motor speech exam
- Swallow exam

Interview

- ▶ Patient interview with RD/SLP



Eating well with HD–Early

Pre–symptomatic & early stages of HD

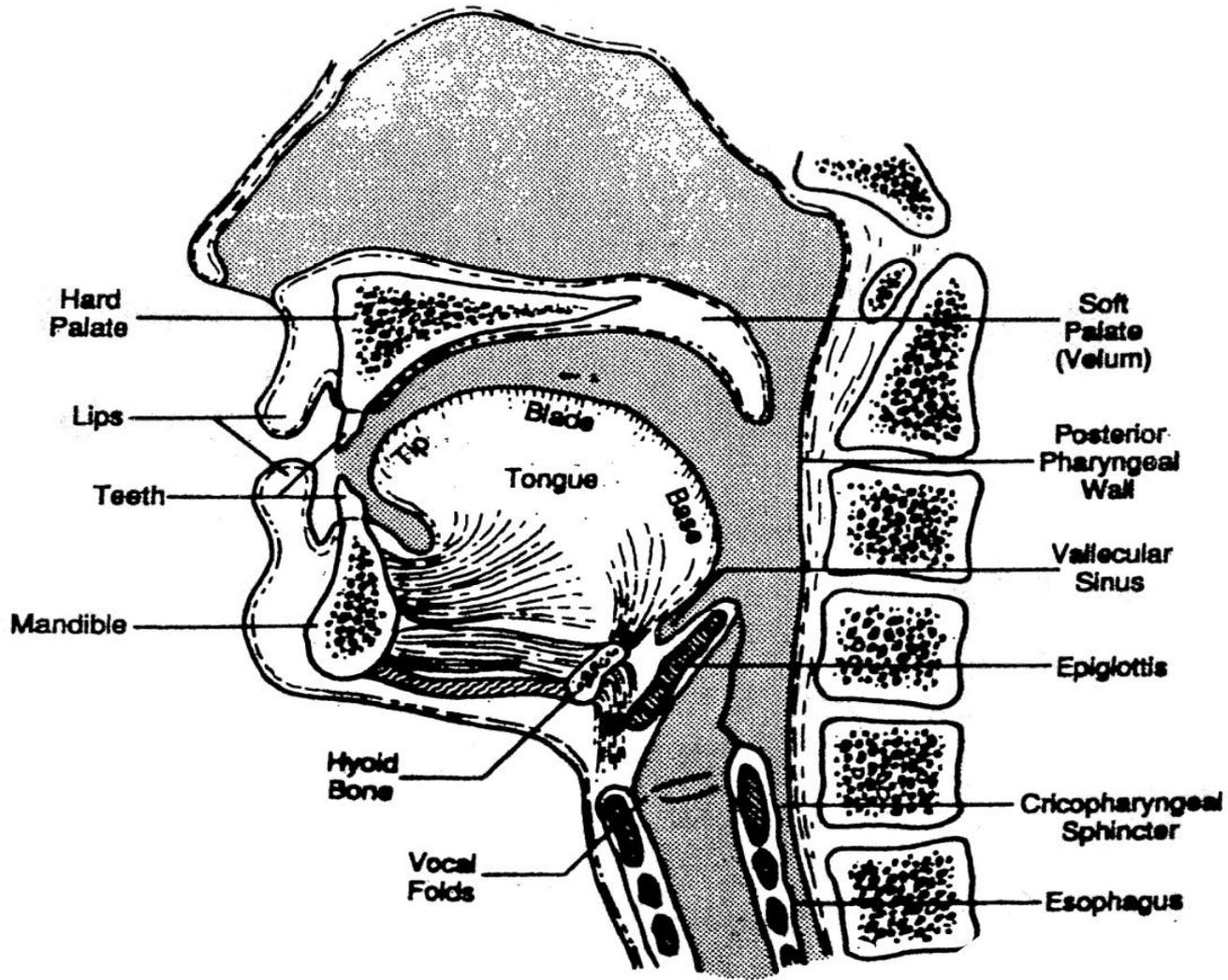
- ▶ If weight loss then weight repletion
- ▶ Eat a variety of foods & textures
- ▶ Myths about “super nutrients” or “superfoods”
 - Antioxidants
 - Omega–3 fatty acids
 - B vitamins
- ▶ Eat at the table
- ▶ See a Dietitian to learn about ideal body weight & calorie needs
- ▶ See a Speech Pathologist for a baseline exam and tips/ strategies for safe swallowing

Eating well with HD– Middle

Middle stages

- ▶ Increased chorea
- ▶ Increased calorie needs – can be >3000
 - Don't skip meals
 - Supplement/snacks as needed
- ▶ More difficulty with self-feeding, meal preparation
- ▶ May become forgetful about meal times
- ▶ Talk about tube feeding wishes early
- ▶ Dysphagia may be apparent

Swallowing Mechanism



Swallowing

- ▶ What happens with people with HD?
 - Involuntary movements
 - Decreased muscular control
 - Sudden inhalation, coughing, choking
 - HD can affect every phase of the swallowing process

Eating well with HD – Middle

Middle stages (cont):

- ▶ Initial signs of dysphagia may be noted; coughing or choking
- ▶ Problematic foods:
 - Particulates
 - Crunchy
 - Chewy
 - Stringy
- ▶ See an Occupational Therapist for ideas for adaptive equipment if needed

Warning signs of dysphagia

- ▶ Clearing the throat frequently
 - ▶ Stuffing food in the mouth
 - ▶ Tilting the head back to eat or drink
 - ▶ Swallowing several times for one bite
 - ▶ Food or liquid spill from the mouth
 - ▶ Coughing during or after the swallow
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More warning signs ...

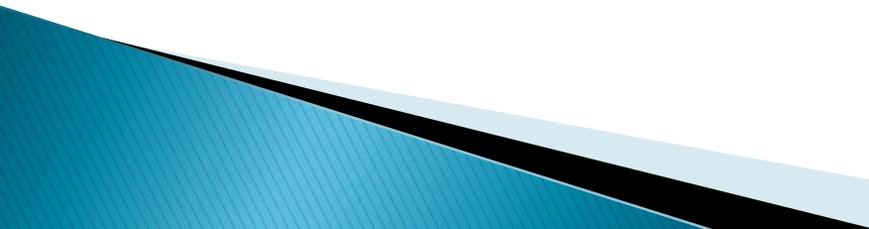
- ▶ Impulsivity
 - ▶ Wet sounding voice
 - ▶ Difficulty controlling the rate of food intake
 - ▶ Difficulty initiating the swallow
 - ▶ Difficulty chewing or controlling food or liquid in the mouth
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Pay attention to texture

- ▶ Particulates
- ▶ Crunchy
- ▶ Chewy
- ▶ Stringy

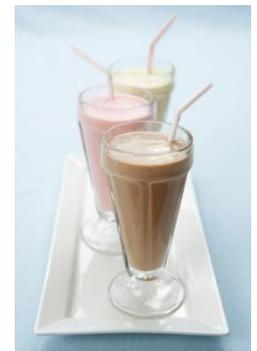


Diet modifications

- ▶ Eliminate target foods from the diet
 - ▶ Change from a Regular diet to a Soft diet
 - Cut meats into small pieces
 - Grind and moisten meats
 - Cook all vegetables
 - Limited options with fresh fruit
 - Canned fruit, applesauce, baked fruit
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Diet modifications

- ▶ Change from a Soft diet to a Pureed diet
 - Dysphagia Diet – Levels 1, 2, 3 may be recommended by a Speech Pathologist
 - Increased dependence on others for assistance with feeding
 - Might be a struggle to get enough calories each day
 - Supplements, high calorie shakes, 1000 Calorie Shake, Super Cereal, etc.



Thickened liquids

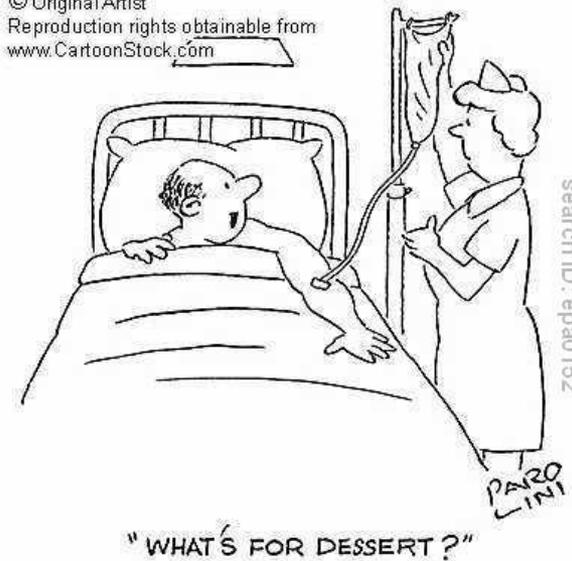
- ▶ Rarely a desirable option
- ▶ Aspirating thin liquid – may be inconsistent
 - Utilize strategies to avoid thickening liquids
 - *SMALL sips*
 - *Head in a neutral position*
 - *Small size straws*
 - *Avoid gulping*
 - *Go slow*
- ▶ Variety of thickeners and thickened beverages available

Eating well with HD-Late

Late stages

- More pronounced dysphagia
- Pureed diet
- Weight loss is common
- Tube feedings, if appropriate

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Nutrition and HD summary

- ▶ High calories needed
 - ▶ Plan ahead for meals / snacks
 - Keep pureed leftovers in freezer, single size portion
 - Sauces, gravies to flavor and moisten foods
 - ▶ Keep ready to eat snacks or supplements on hand
 - ▶ Consider purchasing food processor, blender for ease of meal preparation
 - ▶ Calorie containing beverages with meals
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FAQ's

- ▶ What should I eat to prevent HD?
 - ▶ Do I need to take a vitamin?
 - ▶ What if I'm supposed to follow a low fat diet for my high cholesterol?
 - ▶ Can I eat when I have a tube feeding?
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In conclusion...

- ▶ Dietitian and Speech Pathologist roles and how we can help
 - ▶ Good food and safe textures can help improve quality of life
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Questions?

Contact information:

Slides available at www.hdsa.org

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Thank You!



The logo consists of three stylized human figures in shades of blue, arranged in a row. The tallest figure is on the left, the middle one is shorter, and the shortest is on the right. They are positioned to the left of the organization's name.

Huntington's Disease Society of America

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